

# INFORMATION RELEASE



## Office of the Director

ARKANSAS STATE HIGHWAY AND TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT  
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### **WEIGHT RESTRICTION TO REMAIN ON BLACK RIVER BRIDGE**

**LITTLE ROCK (4-4)** - - The weight restriction for large trucks crossing the Highway 63 Black River Bridge near Black Rock is going to remain in place pending the results of an independent consultant analysis. The bridge, which was built in 1949, is scheduled to be replaced beginning in 2013.

The maximum legal weight limit for five-axle trucks, normally 80,000 pounds, was reduced in February to 66,000 pounds on the bridge. The reduction was based on an engineering analysis and subsequent inspection by the Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department (AHTD). Because of the unique design of the bridge, a consultant with experience in that type of structure has been retained to further evaluate the bridge. Information from the evaluation will be used to determine if interim repairs are possible that would allow the weight restriction to be lifted. Results of that analysis are expected in early June.

The weight restriction was the topic of a public meeting held March 17, 2011, at the Lawrence County Courthouse in Walnut Ridge. At that meeting, local residents asked the AHTD to look into the possibility of making other changes that could allow the weight restriction to be lifted. Specifically, the residents asked that the speed limit be lowered and/or travel across the bridge be restricted to one-lane. The AHTD has since determined that neither option would provide an adequate level of public safety. Reducing the weight on large vehicles is the safest option for the motoring public.

Motorists are reminded that only five-axle trucks are affected by the weight restriction. Additional information will be provided once the results of the consultant analysis are known.

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