



News Release

Pinellas County Communications Department
333 Chestnut Street • Clearwater, FL 33756
(727) 464-4600 • FAX (727) 464-4432
www.pinellascounty.org

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Contact: Meg Korakis
Pinellas County Communications
(727) 453-3052

Historic Milestone Engineered at Belleair Causeway Bridge

Pushing the limits of conventional bridge construction is fast becoming the legacy of Pinellas County's Belleair Causeway Bridge. By this Friday, Dec. 19, the innovative bridge construction technique called *Incremental Launching* will complete one part of the \$72.3 million Belleair Causeway Bridge Replacement Project.

Used only once before in the United States, incremental launching represents state-of-the-art bridge construction and worker safety. Engineers and contractors applied this method to construct the main channel bridge's east- and west-end approaches. In total, 1,320 ft., or one-quarter of a mile, of the 3,350 ft.-long Intracoastal Waterway bridge was cast in place on solid ground and launched or pushed into place via a large, sophisticated hydraulic system.

A slow rocket launch is the comparison given by Pinellas County Project Engineer Tony Hornik, P.E., S.I. At a force of 33,000 lbs. per square inch, concrete and reinforced steel are thrust into alignment on a carefully guided, calculated path. It takes approximately four hours to launch each of the 36 deck sections. The three contracted firms, Johnson Bros., Misener Marine Construction and EC Driver & Associates, are working together on construction.

The Belleair Causeway Bridge is a Pinellas County capital improvement project, funded through federal funds and the Penny for Pinellas program. It is a designated emergency evacuation route for the communities of the outlying barrier islands. When completed in the fall of 2009, the new bridges and causeway will feature sidewalks, bicycle lanes and a wider roadway as well as other improvements for the safe use of all travelers.

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Visit www.BelleairCausewayBridge.com for more information.