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FDOT and FLHSMV Monitoring Santa Fe River at I-75 for Potential Impacts Due to Unprecedented Flooding

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. – Upon receiving weather reports late today, the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) announced that it is actively monitoring a small bridge on I-75 at mile marker 408 crossing the Santa Fe River on the northern border of Alachua County. The river is expected to crest at historic and unprecedented levels presenting a potential threat to the safety of travel on this bridge. The Santa Fe River under I-75 has rapidly risen 15 feet within the past 36 hours due to the heavy rainfall over North Florida from Hurricane Irma. An additional rise is expected within the coming days as water levels from upstream move southward down the river. The river level is currently safe at 55 feet. However, if the river were to rise to an unsafe level, the bridge would become impassable both northbound and southbound, and would be closed immediately.

At this time, I-75 remains safe and passable. Floridians that are traveling home should monitor this situation very closely and remain alert to local travel conditions. The Florida Department of Transportation is actively working with WAZE, Google Maps, the Georgia Department of Transportation and other transportation industry partners to communicate the potential reroutes to the public. Floridians should consult www.FL511.com for up-to-date information on road closures and travel routes.

Hydrologists from the United States Geological Survey (USGS) will be conducting an on-site assessment of river conditions tomorrow morning. An update on the conditions will be provided following this assessment. FDOT bridge inspectors are monitoring this structure 24 hours a day to ensure driver safety.

If the Santa Fe River rises to an unsafe level, it will require the full closure of I-75 south of I-10 and north of U.S. 441 in Alachua. Travelers should be prepared for significant delays from tomorrow evening through Saturday. This unprecedented river flooding will also cause closures and extensive rerouting of traffic on U.S. 27, U.S. 41, S.R. 47 and possibly U.S. 121. These routes would not be considered passable.

In the event of road flooding on I-75 at the Santa Fe River, FDOT will reroute traffic to U.S. 19, U.S. 301 and I-95. **Any Floridian planning on traveling to Central or Southern Florida should consider traveling southbound on I-95.**

To plan for the possibility of bridge damage, FDOT will be issuing an emergency procurement to ensure a team of engineers will be on scene to immediately make any needed repairs once the water recedes.

We will keep the public and media informed of any developments. Safety is always our top priority and additional updates will be released as soon as available.

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