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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Gov. Beshear Announces Start of Construction on Replacement of County,
State Bridges Damaged by Eastern Kentucky Flooding**

FRANKFORT, Ky. (Sept. 2, 2022) – Gov. Andy Beshear today announced that the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (KYTC) has begun construction to permanently replace county and state bridges damaged by the devastating flooding that occurred in Eastern Kentucky in late July.

The priority projects include publicly owned crossings that were damaged or destroyed and have significantly limited or eliminated access for drivers.

The cabinet will replace or repair more than 170 bridges in Eastern Kentucky that were damaged by flooding. These are bridges serving state and county routes and are among nearly 1,100 sites assessed for damage by KYTC inspectors after the July flooding. Among the 170 bridges already identified for replacement or repair, approximately 100 require full replacement or replacement of the bridge superstructure, which is the area at the top of the bridge.

“Our teams have moved with unprecedented speed to restore access where these bridges were the only way many of our fellow Kentuckians were able to reach their homes,” said Gov. Beshear. “We are utilizing all the resources at our disposal to restore access. This is a great example of how Team Kentucky is working day and night, not just to clean up, but also to rebuild what was lost. The residents need this critical access so they can return to their homes, to their lives and to a sense of normalcy as we rebuild damaged infrastructure throughout Eastern Kentucky.”

Currently, two permanent bridge replacement projects are under construction in Perry County. They are Dan Lane over Big Willard Creek and Macintosh Mt. over Little Willard Creek. Jave LLC, a contractor based in Lexington, began construction this week on the two projects. They are expected to be completed in less than 60 days.

The two bridges are among 33 structures that have been initially targeted for rapid replacements in Perry, Knott, Pike, Letcher and Floyd counties. All of the bridges are expected to be ready for construction by the end of the month and replaced by the end of the current construction season.

A team led by Central Bridge Co. and Bizzack Construction also has expedited work on a damaged bridge in Knott County that was already slated for replacement as part of an ongoing design-build project in Eastern Kentucky.

In just over a month since the flooding, KYTC and its partners have completed temporary crossings at 19 sites to restore vehicle access to homes that were cut off from their communities when bridges were damaged or destroyed during the flooding. Construction of temporary crossings is underway or pending at seven additional sites. These temporary crossings, called diversions, typically consist of culvert pipes overlaid with a hardpacked roadbed, allowing drivers to safely cross streams and creeks.

In addition to the rapid replacement projects, KYTC is working with design consultants to assess needs and prepare plans for more than 60 bridge projects where significant damage has been identified. Department of Highways staff and contractors are also working to repair damage to roadway approaches, retaining walls and embankments at dozens of other bridge sites.

To speed the completion of projects, KYTC has coordinated with contractors and suppliers to secure materials such as concrete and steel bridge beams, fill rock, culvert pipes and other items needed for bridge construction.

“KYTC has accessed every tool available to quickly advance these projects,” said State Highway Engineer James Ballinger. “We are utilizing our state forces and existing contracts with consultants for site survey, design and construction management as well as existing and emergency contracts with contractors for construction and demolition. Each of these partners is moving deliberately and urgently, and our teams won’t quit until the job is done.”

Today, KYTC also launched an Eastern Kentucky [online flood debris removal schedule](#) where residents of flood-affected areas can visit to monitor waterway and roadway debris cleanup efforts. To date, KYTC has collected 4,460 truckloads of debris from waterways and roadways. For more information on the state’s debris removal process, visit governor.ky.gov/FloodResources.

Today’s announcement is the latest step the Governor and his administration has taken to help Eastern Kentucky stabilize and rebuild.

Earlier this week, Gov. Andy Beshear and Gov. John Bel Edwards [announced](#) an agreement where the state of Louisiana will donate up to 300 travel trailers originally acquired to aid Hurricane Ida survivors to shelter Eastern Kentucky flood survivors. The first 27 travel trailer units arrived yesterday from Louisiana, and more are coming today and tomorrow that will be going to Perry County Park, Whitesburg, Jenny Wiley. Additional travel trailers will be moved in phases to various community sites that are out of flood zones themselves, but near flood-impacted areas. The travel trailers are part of the Commonwealth Sheltering Program, and flood survivors can register for a trailer by visiting the Governor’s [flood resources website](#).

The Commonwealth Sheltering Program has now moved a total of 151 travel trailers sheltering 289 individuals. More than 350 flooding survivors are also sheltered at the Kentucky State Parks in the region.

Last week, the Governor signed the [Eastern Kentucky State Aid Funding for Emergencies \(EKSAFE\) relief](#) the nearly \$212.7 million fund, which was designed to be similar to the relief aid for Western Kentucky communities devastated by tornadoes, will be spent to provide crucial help to Eastern Kentucky communities. To read more about the bill's details, [click here](#), or to read the bill, [click here](#).

The commonwealth lost at least 39 Kentuckians, and thousands of families lost their homes and nearly all their possessions due to the flooding. To learn more about the recovery efforts, visit the Governor's [disaster relief resources website](#), and [click here](#) to donate to the Team Eastern Kentucky Flood Relief Fund.

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