"The Bridge to Somewhere"

For three years, the bridge that spans the Intracoastal Waterway near Briarcliffe Acres, stood alone, almost as a monument to the man responsible for its conception. Locals termed the site the "Bridge to Nowhere."

Much of the credit for having the bridge built has been given to Billy Alford, former commissioner of the South Carolina Highway Department. Alford wanted to start at least a portion of the Conway Bypass Project to ensure that someday the project would be completed. The funding of the project stalled shortly after the bridge was built. The "Bridge to Nowhere" was left, available only for onlookers to view, alongside one of Myrtle Beach's most traveled roads, Highway 17.

Three years later, the funding was finally approved, and the second groundbreaking for the Conway Bypass took place. "The Bridge to Nowhere" was finally going somewhere.

A bill sponsored by Senator Dick Elliott, D-North Myrtle Beach, was introduced to name the bridge after Alford. Elliott felt that the Conway Bypass may never have been built if it were not for Alford's courage in building that first and largest bridge.

Black Bear Study

Clemson University has been contracted to perform a study to determine the relative abundance, distribution and population dynamics of the black bear in the Northern Coastal Plain of South Carolina. The bear study is currently in progress and will continue through June 2001. Upon completion of the study, a research report will be submitted to Fluor Daniel and the SCDOT.

Wildlife Relief

Seventeen of Conway Bypass' 31 bridges are flat slab bridges, ranging from 120 feet to 3,980 feet in length, are provided primarily for wildlife relief and to minimize impact to the wetlands.

War Heros Remembered

The Senate has approved a plan to rename the highway in honor of U.S. war veterans. Upon completion the bypass will be called Veterans Highway, and each interchange will honor state recipients of the Medal of Honor for each branch of the armed forces.

Carolina Bays

In one area of the project, there are unique earth formations called "Carolina Bays." These are large depressions theorized to have been formed by meteors that crashed into the earth thousands of years ago. The formations hold ground water almost year-round and have almost no drainage due to the flat topography. Normally, they are filled with trees and lush vegetation.

When the time came to determine how to bridge-fill over these areas, all parties were organized for input. The solution was to utilize a geosynthetic grid material while leaving the existing root mat system in place.

Did You Know

- If all concrete trucks used on the Conway Bypass Project were lined up, bumper-to-bumper, they would span 125 miles. That's approximately the distance between Myrtle Beach and Columbia, South Carolina.
- If all asphalt dump trucks used on the Conway Bypass project were lined up, bumper-to-bumper, they would span 150 miles. That's approximately the distance between Myrtle Beach and Charlotte, North Carolina.
- If all dump trucks used on the Conway Bypass Project were lined up, bumper-to-bumper, they would span 2,650 miles. That's approximately the distance between Myrtle beach and San Francisco.

The 9,000,000 cubic yards of earthwork moved could fill the Empire State Building 2.2 times or a baseball stadium over 20 times.

Weathering Storms

Despite facing three major hurricanes during the project, the team implemented a recovery schedule that allowed for the early completion of the first and vital link, which will allow an additional means of evacuation from the Grand Strand in the event of any future hurricanes. New evacuation signs have been ordered and the route will be implemented before the upcoming hurricane season.