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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MEDIA CONTACT: Kirk Stoner, 240-5381

Cumberland County Closes Bishop Bridge

Cumberland County, PA- Cumberland County announced today that Bishop Bridge in Upper Allen Township is temporarily closed. This bridge carries Bishop Road over the Yellow Breeches Creek into Monaghan Township, York County. The annual inspection of the 116 year old, single lane bridge revealed structural deficiencies that would cost over \$500,000 to repair and if repaired, would not improve the weight carrying capacity of the bridge beyond its current 10-ton limit. The county decided to temporarily close the bridge to protect public safety and to assess the long term options for the bridge with York County and the surrounding community.

The county will use several factors to evaluate the long term options for Bishop Bridge including cost, traffic, and proximity of nearby bridges. A full replacement of the bridge is estimated to cost in excess of \$3 million. A \$2 million replacement of Gilbert Bridge, which is located 2800' west of Bishop Bridge, was completed in 2008 and is able to carry the estimated 145 trips per day on Bishop Road during the closure of Bishop Bridge.

The county recently developed a Capital Improvement Plan to replace and maintain its stock of 28 bridges. The 6-year plan details \$11.5 million of bridge replacement or repair projects and estimates that existing revenues will only cover about half of that cost. Faced with a deficit in funding and continued deterioration, the Board of Commissioners is considering the adoption of a new ordinance that will allow the county to charge \$5 per vehicle registered in Cumberland County. These fees will generate approximately \$1.1 million a year and allow the county to address critical bridge needs without additional property tax burden. To generate this level of revenue without the \$5 registration fee, a 2.5% property tax increase each year for the next 6 years would need to be enacted.

The Board of Commissioners will vote on the proposed ordinance in early 2015. For more information on Cumberland County's Bridge Improvement Plan visit the Planning Department's interactive bridge map tool at www.ccpa.net/bridges.

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