

[Investigative Work being done in the Sound for Mid-Currituck Bridge](#)  
*Firm to collect soil samples for bridge*

*By Cindy Beamon*

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*A company will be collecting soil samples in the Currituck Sound and inland through next month to aid the design of the mid-county bridge.*

*Golder Associates in Raleigh began its geotechnical investigation of the sound and property near the proposed seven-mile span about a week ago.*

*The work involves drilling into the ground's subsurface to determine soil types. Analysts can then determine what type of foundation is needed for the bridge, said Tim Griffin, operations manager for Golder.*

*He said the six-man team is using a cone penetrometer to collect the data. The instrument is hydraulically pushed into the ground with up to 40,000 pounds of pressure. Sensors at the tip determine the physical properties of the floor bottom of the sound.*

*The company notified about 20 property owners last fall about where the work on land would be done. The \$660 million bridge would connect the county's mainland near Aydlett to the Outer Banks at Corolla.*

*The geotechnical investigation is expected to take until July 23.*

*The construction consulting company will then analyze the data and recommend what size, depth, width and number of pilings are needed to hold up the bridge.*

*The information will be used in to determine a final design for the project, said Jennifer Harris, director of planning and environmental studies for the N.C. Turnpike Authority, the state agency overseeing the bridge's development and construction.*

*Harris said Golder is a subcontractor for Currituck Development Group, a group of 17 private companies that has contracted with the state for the pre-construction phase of the project. The project's major contractor ACS Infrastructure Development has signed a \$5 million contract with the Turnpike Authority for the pre-development work.*

*Harris said the next step in the bridge project will be winding up*

*environmental negotiations with state and federal agencies and the release of the Final Environmental Impact Statement by the end of summer.*

*The Turnpike Authority is aiming to have a record of decision by fall, which would allow the Turnpike Authority to proceed with final design plans and to obtain construction permits.*

*If the project goes according to schedule, the bridge could be open to traffic by 2016, Harris said.*

*Under the proposed timetable, right-of-way acquisition could begin by late 2012. According to preliminary plans, an estimated eight residences and businesses would be displaced by the construction project. Other properties would also be affected but would not require displacement. The number of affected properties may change, however, after plans are finalized.*

*Last winter, the Turnpike Authority announced its preferred route for the bridge. On the mainland, the plan calls for a U.S. Highway 158 toll plaza interchange north of Aydlett. The approach would include a two-lane bridge over Maple Swamp.*

*In Corolla, the approach would intersect N.C. Highway 12 between the first phase of Corolla Bay subdivision and the northern end of Monterey Shores about 300 feet away from homes and lots west of N.C. 12.*

*Harris said no other site work at the bridge site is currently scheduled.*