

# STATE & LOCAL

## Road Conditions Deteriorate in NC

Meghan Grady, Staff Writer

Road conditions in North Carolina are growing increasingly bad as each year passes, and the snow and ice that was dropped across the state during the past few months has not helped with road condition issues. Such wintery precipitation has led to the increased development of potholes which are the result of water seeping into cracks in the road and then expanding when temperatures lower and the water freezes. This expansion pushes outward, thus creating a hole beneath the surface. Following the snow, the DOT requested that motorists contact them in order to pinpoint the worst potholes and to allow the process of restoration.

The roadways are in dire need of repairs. However, along with repairs follows a rather large price tag, and frankly the funds are just not in the budget. There have been discussions that Interstate 95 may need the most work of all. As Bruce Siceloff of the News and Observer puts it, I-95 has become "a 182-mile-long pothole from Virginia to South Carolina." For those of you who travel this road, you can probably attest to this statement. It is estimated that I-95 repairs would cost around \$5 billion dollars. This cost factors in the

addition of two lanes both ways, as well as means to raise bridges that pose a threat to large trucks from the Virginia to the South Carolina border. A suggestion for raising funds would be to add tollbooths at each end in order to collect money from out of state visitors and residents that frequent the highway. This plan is a possibility but legislature changes are a requirement. As for now, repairs are being done in the areas with the greatest need, and plans to create a toll booth infrastructure have not been instated.

Not only are these road-needs costing the state of North Carolina money, they are also diving into the wallets of the North Carolinians that travel them. A report from TRIP, a group of construction engineers, estimates that the cost to motorists is around \$1350 per person. They allotted \$733 for time wasted in traffic delays, \$238 for damage and accidents, and \$379 for maintenance on vehicles due to the roads. They account the worsening conditions to the population spike in North Carolina since 1990, which have led to increased travel on roads that have not seen increased repair



Photo courtesy of LA Potholes

funding. The NC legislature will have to find the funds to improve roads--hopefully without pricey dips into citizen pockets. And in

the meanwhile, take caution to these conditions when traveling the roadways.

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