

## **I-73 gets final OK for southern section**

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The state Budget and Control Board this morning approved the sale of 30 acres of Little Pee Dee River Heritage Preserve to the state Department of Transportation for the Interstate 73 route.

The DOT will pay \$750,000 for the property. The money will be used to buy other land for preservation.

The property is needed for a crucial bridge for I-73's southern section, which will run between I-95 near Latta to S.C. 22 between Conway and Aynor.

The board's approval is the last state approval needed for that section of the road. The Federal Highway Administration will sign its final approval in a few weeks.

After that is done, the DOT will begin negotiations to buy about 60 pieces of land that are known to be in the path of the road, said Mitchell Metts, I-73 project manager. Other parcels will be bought after the exact layout of the road is determined, he said.