



Central Region

Director's Quarterly

Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
Fall Edition - Municipality of Anchorage

September 2014

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



Rob Campbell, P.E.

Central Region Director, is a lifelong Alaskan. He has a Bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering from Oregon State University, and a Master's degree in Engineering Management from the University of Alaska, Anchorage. He has worked at DOT&PF for more than 30 years.

As fall encroaches on our busy construction season, it is time to take stock of our accomplishments. Having "shovel ready" projects enabled Central Region to secure an impressive \$275 million, 157% of the funding that was originally programmed in the beginning of federal fiscal year 2014 (ending on September 30, 2014). This represents an additional \$100 million in project funding, much of which went towards paving projects. The extra funding is a particularly helpful boost to sustain our infrastructure, since the previously reliable federal transportation funding may have some "potholes" in the future.

Starting in 2005, federal gas tax receipts coming into the Federal Highway Trust Fund have been less than project commitments and state apportionments. Congress recently extended the highway bill and approved a \$10.8 billion bailout for the Highway Trust Fund, carrying the program through May 2015. Our ability to deliver projects for construction next summer will depend on additional Congressional action. This is occurring at a time when some maintenance related issues such as paving and erosion are also impacting our capital program.

For comments or questions about the newsletter:

DOT.CR.Director@alaska.gov

We discussed paving in a prior newsletter, so we are highlighting erosion in this issue. Numerous flooding events and changing weather patterns characterized by heavy runoff threaten critical highway links throughout Central Region.

Lastly, we introduce to you a new member of Central Region's communication staff. Shannon McCarthy has joined us to assist in our outreach efforts. Read more about Shannon below.

As always, we hope you find this newsletter useful and, if you have any suggestions about future editions, please let us know your thoughts.

EROSION: SLOWLY EATING INTO CAPITAL FUNDING

Alaskan topography consists largely of mountains or waterbodies (including wetlands). Hence, much of the state's highway system follows either along the edges of these waterbodies, or along sloping mountain sides, both prone to erosion. In addition, soils in these areas consist of loosely consolidated gravel, dirt, or fractured rock, which adds to the susceptibility of erosion. Recent extreme weather events have exacerbated the problem to the point where erosion issues overextend the capacity of preventative maintenance efforts and need significant capital funding. Unfortunately, erosion projects are carving out an even larger portion of federal funds from the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Some of the erosion projects currently in the STIP include:

• Sterling Highway MP 57	\$10,000,000
• Chiniak Highway	\$4,000,000
• Glenn Highway (various locations)	\$4,000,000 (partially funded)
• Glenn Highway MP 49	\$5,000,000
• Portage Glacier Road	\$2,000,000
• Sterling Highway MP 153-154	\$4,000,000



The Department is currently requesting bids to address the erosion at MP 153 of the Sterling Highway.

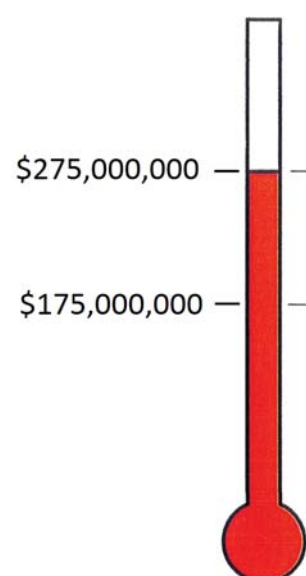
NEW PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER



Transferring to Central Region ADOT&PF from the Knik Arm Crossing project, Shannon McCarthy is joining Jill Reese on our communications team as a public information officer and will be leading the region's proactive communication efforts. Previously, Shannon served as the public information officer for the Department's Northern Region from 2002 through 2007. In this role, she served as the region's media liaison and developed and implemented communication plans to inform the public

on regional and statewide transportation issues. She is excited to be joining Central Region and is looking forward to working on a wide variety of issues. She holds a B.A. in political science from the University of Alaska Fairbanks and is a lifelong Alaskan. You can reach Shannon at shannon.mccarthy@alaska.gov or (907) 269-0448.

ADDITIONAL \$100 MILLION



Central Region design staff and project managers had another stellar year and delivered not only the originally programmed \$175 million in project funding for design, right-of-way and (mostly) construction but ramped up midway through the year to utilize an additional \$100 million that could have otherwise been lost. The majority of the additional funding was directed to needed paving projects. This dynamic response was critical for the Department to efficiently utilize the "use it or lose it" statewide funding received annually from FHWA.

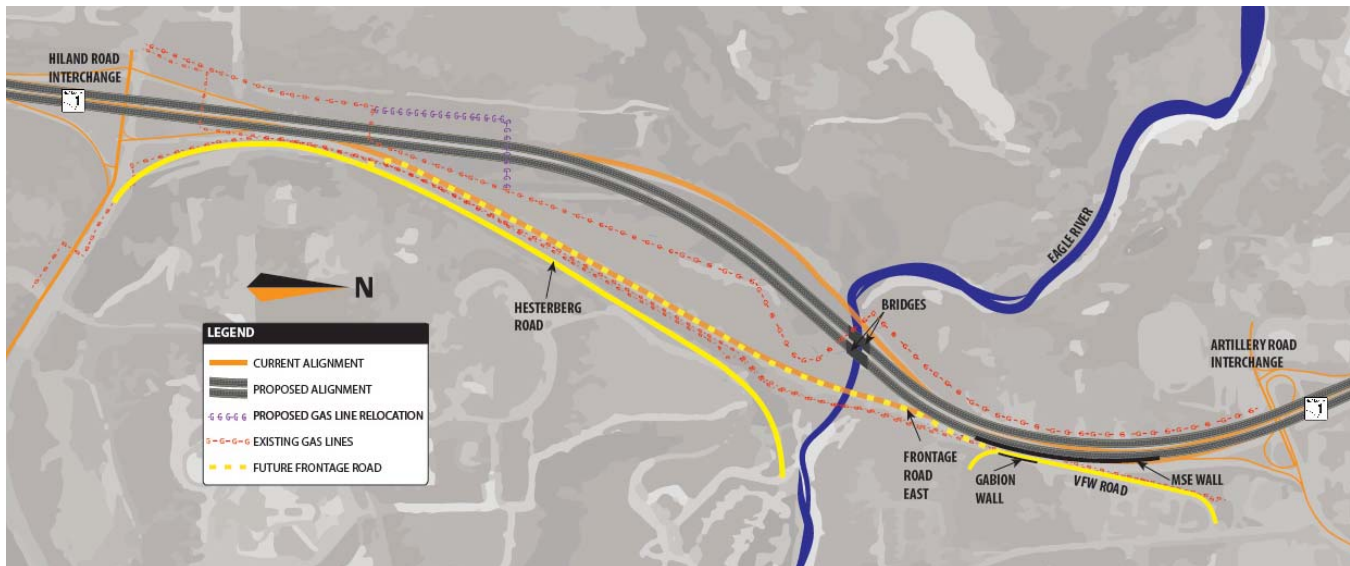
IMPORTANT LINKS

Where can I go to...

- Find information about road construction projects and road closures?
- Find information about road conditions?
- Locate the Central Region Public Involvement Calendar?
- Get summary information about expenditures on active projects?
- Find websites for Central Region Projects?

<http://alaskanavigator.org/>
<http://511.alaska.gov/>
<http://dot.alaska.gov/creg/calendar.shtml>
<http://dot.alaska.gov/projects-status/index.cfm>
http://dot.alaska.gov/creg/project_info/

CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS



Glenn Highway: Hiland to Artillery Road Capacity Improvement Project concept diagram

Glenn Highway: Hiland to Artillery Road Capacity Improvement Project Underway

This project is utilizing \$42.5 million from a voter approved bond package to construct a new and expanded northbound portion of the Glenn Highway between Hiland Road to just past Artillery Road. The project will construct a three-lane northbound section of the Glenn Highway along a new alignment with a reduced gradient, closer to the existing southbound lanes and convert the existing northbound highway to a frontage road. Due to the use of non-federal funds and reliance on a design-build process, the Department is able to expedite the delivery of this first phase of the project.

Clearing and grading for the project began September 15. Crews will be working through the winter, and by spring, it is expected the bridge embankments, abutments and piers will be in place and ready for summer bridge decking and road construction. No significant traffic delays are anticipated during this winter's work. The project completion is anticipated for December 2015. For updates please go to: <http://eagleriverbridgenb.com/> or contact Brian Schumacher at brian.schumacher@alaska.gov or (907) 269-0432.

Eagle River Road Rehabilitation MP 5.3-12.6 Nears Completion

All that remains of this project is to reconstruct and pave 9,000 feet of the existing road bed. A significant portion of this project required major excavation to achieve proper road alignment and grade, and to eliminate poor subsurface material and provide drainage. Glaciation, sedimentation, erosion, and subsurface failures due to inadequate drainage will soon be a maintenance challenge of the past. Final work on MP 6.3 to 8.0 is expected to be completed early next summer. For updates go to: www.alaskanavigator.org or contact Matt Morrow at matthew.morrow@alaska.gov or (907) 269-0466.



Building up the road bed at MP 6.7 of Eagle River Road as fall colors emerge.

ADOT&PF Assumes Knik Arm Crossing Project

In the spring of 2014, the Alaska State Legislature approved the Knik Arm Crossing's financial plan and transferred the project's design and construction to ADOT&PF. Commissioner Pat Kemp said, "ADOT&PF is now taking this transition time to work methodically and carefully. We do not want to lose the substantial work efforts and momentum accomplished to date. Reaching the important milestone of the financial plan approval opens the door to bring this large complex project to fruition." Project information is available at: www.knikarmbridge.com/ and look for further updates in coming newsletters.



Downtown pavement replacement work was accomplished at night to minimize travel disruptions.

Downtown Pavement Replacement Work Wraps up for Season

Surface pavement work will continue until September 28th, resuming the summer of 2015.

- 5th and 6th Avenues from L Street to Ingra Street
- C Street from 3rd Avenue to 6th Avenue
- A Street from 3rd Avenue to 6th Avenue
- I Street to L Street from 5th Avenue to just south of 15th Avenue
- A Street from International Airport Road to 9th Avenue

Since right-of-way needs to be secured before all the curb ramp work can be completed, it is anticipated that some work will be delayed to 2015. For additional information please contact Steve Jochens at steven.jochens@alaska.gov or (907) 569-0659.

Dowling Road Phase II Work Continues

Great progress was made on the Dowling Road project. Bridge abutments are now almost complete and the base work for the roadway approaches are expected to be completed in October. The project is approximately one year away from completion and is expected to be open to travelers in October of 2015.

In addition to the new bridge, once completed, the project will extend W. Dowling Road to four lanes with left-turn lanes at intersections. New traffic signals, bike lanes and separated trails on both sides of the road are also included. For more information please contact Bob Anderson at bob.anderson@alaska.gov or (907) 269-0452. More information is also available on the web at: www.dowlingroad.com.



Bridge abutments nearing completion. Bridge structure will cross over Arctic Boulevard and the Alaska Railroad lines.

HOUSEHOLD TRAVEL SURVEY



Notices have been sent to randomly selected households throughout Anchorage and the Mat-Su Borough inviting residents to participate in the Household Travel Survey

Informed investments in transportation help improve the regional economy through better access to jobs and housing, reduced traffic congestion, improved air quality and increased mobility. A major tool in this investment strategy is the Regional Household Travel Survey which allows AMATS to forecast future travel patterns. These traffic forecasts are used to update AMATS's Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), which guides future transportation investments for the region.

Visit <https://regionaltravelsurvey.com/> for more information on the survey.