



Central Region

Director's Quarterly

Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities

Fall Edition - Kenai Peninsula Borough

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.

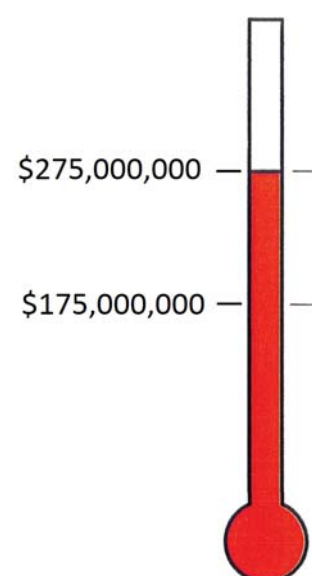
NEW PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER



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/

STERLING HIGHWAY PROJECTS

Sterling Highway MP 57 Erosion Control Project

Placement of rip rap at MP 57 of the Sterling Highway began August 4th just after the peak fishing season. Heavy rains in the area started August 7th, and soon the river was nearing flood stage. The placement of the rip rap may have prevented the erosion from undermining and washing out the highway, isolating most of the Kenai Peninsula and preventing repairs from costing much more in the long run to repair the highway. Realignment of a portion of the highway and additional rip rap could be placed next summer. For more information contact Alan Drake at (907) 269-0665 or alan.drake@alaska.gov.

Sterling Highway- Soldotna to Homer Hill Slow Vehicle Turnouts

This project construction started in Soldotna and is working its way down to Homer. Approximately half the turnouts have been completed and are open for use, while the remaining turnouts will be completed by the end of October. For more information access the project website at <http://sterlinghwysvt.com/> or contact Alan Drake at (907) 269-0665 or alan.drake@alaska.gov.

Sterling Highway Pavement Resurfacing Projects

Significant pavement preservation and resurfacing projects were completed this summer along the Sterling Highway consisting of the following:

- Sterling Highway MP 45-58 (completed)
- Sterling Highway MP 79-82 (completed)
- Sterling Highway MP 173-179 (completion by end of September)

Sterling Highway Reconstruction MP 45-60

The Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) has entered the review phase. The review by Cooperating Agencies (those agencies that will use the SEIS to make NEPA related decisions) will occur in the latter portion of August through mid-October 2014. Subsequent to the adjudication of these comments, a Public Review Draft SEIS is anticipated to be released in early 2015 with the Final SEIS and Record of Decision, including the identification of the preferred alternative, in 2016. For more information please contact Kelly Petersen, P.E. at (907) 269-0546, or kelly.petersen@alaska.gov. Additional information is also available on our website at: <http://www.sterlinghighway.net/index.html>.



Erosion control along the Sterling Highway at MP 57



Building up the road embankment for slow vehicle turnout areas on the Sterling Highway

OTHER PROJECTS

Kenai Dipnetting Traffic Control

ADOT&PF's and the Kenai Peninsula Borough's initiative to manage traffic for dipnet fisheries was a big success this summer. Very few traffic problems were reported associated with the event. Local municipalities, the KPB, other state agencies, and ADOT&PF were able to work together to minimize delays and bottlenecks. ADOT&PF recommendations for this event are at: http://dot.alaska.gov/creg/planning/assets/2013_Dipnetting_Traffic_Control_Report.pdf

Homer East End Road Reconstruction and Paving Projects

Storm drain installation is complete for the MP 3.75 - 5.5 segment and paving will begin late September to place the bottom lift of asphalt prior to winter shutdown.

Further down the road, the five major digouts and ditching will be completed and the digouts paved with a better lift of asphalt prior to shutdown. Final paving and project completion will occur in 2015. For more information contact Laura Paul at (907) 269-0463 or laura.paul@alaska.gov.



Installation of large culvert at MP 4.3 of East End Road

Kalifornsky Beach Road Pedestrian Pathway

Pathway extension was completed in July allowing users to enjoy the facility during the late summer. Project extended the pathway 1.9 miles from Mallard Road to Cannery Road. For more information contact Ericka Moore at (907) 269-4550 or ericka.moore@alaska.gov.

Ninilchik Village Bridge Replacement

The new bridge is open to traffic. Signage and guardrails will be installed and project completed by October 1st. For more information contact Alan Drake at (907) 269-0665 or alan.drake@alaska.gov.



The newly installed Ninilchik Village Bridge.