



Central Region

Director's Quarterly

Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities

Fall Edition - Kenai Peninsula Borough

September 2013



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. He has worked at DOT&PF for more than 30 years.

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

As we approach the fall season, Alaska's DOT&PF is beginning its annual transition from summer to winter operations. While work on our construction projects will continue until complete or when forced by Mother Nature to shut down, by the time my next newsletter reaches your desk in December, we will be fully transitioned to wintertime operations. I'd like to take this time, then, to recap our construction season and share with you our view of the transportation world as we see it heading toward winter.

In the following you'll find some updated information about the continued roll-out of the federal highway authorization bill (known as MAP-21) provisions and the impacts we are seeing with its refocus on the National Highway System (NHS). This refocus has significantly impacted our project delivery, as reflected in a re-shaped Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) (<http://www.dot.alaska.gov/stwdplng/cip/stip/map21.shtml>). In turn, this federal emphasis, along with other budgetary realities, shifts the Department toward a refocus on the NHS as well. You'll find a short discussion of how that could also affect on-going maintenance and operations.

In closing, I hope that everyone had a great summer and is looking forward to an enjoyable winter season. As always, my welcome mat is out if you would like to stop by and visit.

Comments on the Newsletter
DOT.CR.Director@alaska.gov

LEGISLATIVE LIAISON



We say a fond farewell to Rick Feller, who has retired; and introduce Jill Reese, who has taken his place as the Media Liaison and assistant to Director Rob Campbell for the Central Region AKDOT&PF. She is the primary point of contact for the media, legislators, and the public for inquiries regarding Central Region.

Jill joined the Department in April of 2009 as a Right of Way Agent in Central Region, managing real estate purchased through projects as well as handling community outreach activities. This experience provided Jill with a broad knowledge of AKDOT&PF projects and its interworking. She has also assisted both state and federal agencies in a variety of special projects and has been active in leading community meetings and public information campaigns.

An Alaskan resident since 1960, Jill comes from private sector work with over 25 years of experience as a commercial real estate broker and property manager and over 17 years of experience as an entrepreneur and developer. Jill holds a Bachelor of Education Degree with an English major from the University of Alaska, Anchorage. She enjoys getting outdoors and spending time with her grandchildren.

Please feel free to contact Jill with questions, comments, or just to say hello at (907) 269-0772 or at Jill.Reese@alaska.gov.

WINTER MAINTENANCE AND OPERATIONS

As revenues shrink, belt tightening is the only responsible reaction for DOT&PF. Through the years, the Department has worked to make our operations more efficient and affordable, as our mission expands and resources are flat or on the decline. This year, through equipment fleet efficiencies, a shift in maintenance station locations, and the expanded use of tow plows, we continued to seek out ways to deliver a quality service for less money. But while efficiencies are gained, "just in time" delivery of services does not allow for redundancy in the system.



For our maintenance and operations branch, the impact of this shallower bench may not be noticeable to most that we serve. A mild to average winter may not reveal the compromises made to gain our greater efficiencies. However, another record-setting snow fall could result in a noticeable increase in plow response times for our secondary roads. As always, we will continue to prioritize the NHS routes for first response. As a quick reference, here is a link to the "M&O" stations in your area:

<http://www.dot.state.ak.us/stwdplng/mapping/dataproducts/MaintenanceStations.pdf>

PUBLIC OUTREACH EFFORTS

AKDOT&PF does extensive public outreach in the Planning, Design, and Construction project phases so that public input is incorporated into decisions at every stage. In February, AKDOT&PF held an open house to discuss upcoming projects in the Soldotna area. Borough, city staff, assembly members, and the public attended. The Birch Street Signal of the Sterling Highway Project and the Kalifornsky Beach Pathway Project were presented. Other discussions included upcoming signal improvements in Soldotna and the Borough.

The Homer Transportation Fair was held August 5th at City Hall with over 40 attendees. Staff presented 10 separate projects and discussed design, scheduling, and costs. There were formal public comment opportunities and a chance for business owners, city council members, neighbors, and citizens to discuss the various projects important to them.



OTHER IMPORTANT LINKS

Where can I go to....

- Find a previous Central Region newsletter?
- Find websites for Central Region projects?
- Find project advertising dates, contract status/award information, or Capital projects out for bid?
- <http://dot.alaska.gov/creg/newsletter.shtml>
- http://dot.alaska.gov/creg/project_info/
- <http://www.dot.state.ak.us/procurement/index.shtml>

Sterling to Soldotna Safety Corridor Study



AKDOT&PF is seeking comment on a safety enhancement study for the Sterling Highway between Soldotna and Sterling funded by the State of Alaska through a general fund appropriation.

Field crews have been gathering data in the field throughout the summer and fall of 2013. There was a “mobile meeting” RV that circulated between the Soldotna Fred Meyers and Safeway stores, and at the post office and community center in Sterling to elicit public comments on the corridor. A draft of the study will be available in 2014.

For updates check out the website <http://sterlinghwy.com> or for questions contact the Project Manager Cynthia.Ferguson@alaska.gov or call (907) 269-0589.



Summer Construction Activities

Kalifornsky Beach Road Pedestrian Pathway Construction is Underway!

This state funded project will construct a pathway along the north side of Kalifornsky Beach Road from Cannery Road to the existing pathway just north of Mallard Road, approximately 1.9 miles. The contractor anticipates working on embankments and culverts this fall, with completion by end of next summer. For questions, contact the Project Manager Laura.Paul@alaska.gov or call (907) 269-0463.

Seward Highway Passing Lanes and Slow Vehicle Turnouts Nearing Completion

Travelers are already using the newly constructed passing lanes at MP 71-MP 73 and the slow vehicle turnout at MP 75. Construction on MP 108 and MP 111 continues and will extend through the end of October. For questions, contact the Project Manager Alan.Drake@alaska.gov or call (907) 269-0665.

Seward Highway, MP 17.5 - 22.5 Pavement Preservation Continues

Expect road construction through the end of October. There should be delays of no more than 15 minutes Mondays through Saturdays, 7 am - 7pm. The contractor began work at the end of August. Remember to look out for construction crews and flaggers as it gets darker with the approach of winter.

For questions, contact the Project Manager Alan.Drake@alaska.gov or call (907) 269-0665.



ADOT&PF applying test section of Cohoe Loop Road in Kasilof this June. Chip-seal resurfaces the roadway without the use of asphalt and is meant to last for 10 years of wear.

Sterling Highway Pavement Preservation Projects

- MP 37-45 Pavement Preservation project was completed mid-June.
- MP 150-173 Pavement Preservation will be completed late September.
- MP 45-58 Pavement Preservation will be completed by October 1, 2014.

For inquiries about any of these Sterling Highway Pavement Preservation projects, contact the Project Manager Robert.Lundell@alaska.gov or call (907) 269-0448.

Kenai Spur Highway Pavement Preservation MP 0-3

In September, this project finished installing curb and gutter and curb ramps. New permanent traffic counters will be installed at key sites and milling and paving of the roadway will begin. The final part of the project is grading and paving the pathway along the highway. Project will be completed by the end of October.

For questions, contact the Project Manager at Laura.Paul@alaska.gov or call (907) 269-0463.



Roads to Resources Initiative

West Susitna Access Study

The Reconnaissance Study provides a foundation for additional project development should future funding be made available for further evaluation of an access road into the Susitna Basin, west of the Susitna River.

The Study identified the locations of four possible access routes and one variant road option for providing access to mineral, oil and gas, recreational, forestry and agricultural resources within the Susitna Basin.

A public review draft will be available in October. For questions, or to be added to the mailing list, contact Murray Walsh, Roads to Resources Manager Murray.Walsh@alaska.gov or call (907) 465-6973.

