



Central Region

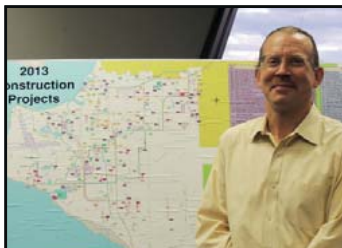
Director's Quarterly

Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities

Fall Edition - Matanuska-Susitna Borough

September 2013

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

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 Alaska 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.



Impacts for our maintenance and operations branch 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, for example, 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 high volume 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>

MAT-SU TRANSPORTATION FAIR

On August 7th, AKDOT&PF's 6th annual Mat-Su Transportation Fair was attended by over 400 people at the Menard Sports Center. This fair had 58 booths with information on borough, city, and state projects as well as information from local community groups and utilities. Project staff was present to provide essential information and answer questions. For those unable to attend, most of our major projects have a website that can be located here: http://dot.alaska.gov/creg/project_info/



IMPORTANT LINKS

Where can I go to...

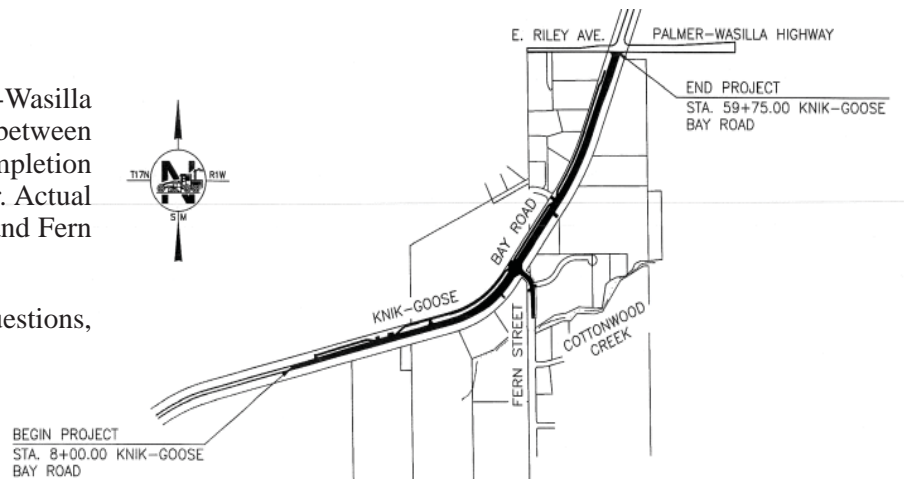
- Find a previous Central Region newsletter? <http://dot.alaska.gov/creg/newsletter.shtml>
- Find Alaska's Highway Safety Corridors? http://www.dot.alaska.gov/comm/safety_corridors.shtml
- Find project advertising dates, contract status/award information, or Capital projects out for bid? <http://www.dot.state.ak.us/procurement/index.shtml>

Construction of Safety Improvements

Knik-Goose Bay Road/Fern Street Intersection - Completion 2014

This project makes necessary safety and capacity improvements between the Palmer-Wasilla Highway Extension and past Fern Street to allow for completion of a new link between KGB Road and Edlund Road along Fern Street. Utility installation is nearing completion and road widening has been completed. Paving is expected to begin in September. Actual signal installation is dependent upon delivery of signal masts and the intersection and Fern Street connection will not be operational until September 2014.

This effort is a partnership between the ADOT&PF and the City of Wasilla. For questions, contact the Project Manager Steven.Jochens@alaska.gov or call (907) 269-0659.



Intersection Improvement at Bogard Road and Peck Street

Completed Road Projects:

Highway Safety Improvement Program: Bogard Road and Peck Street Intersection Improvements

Parks Highway: MP 83 - MP 90: Paving and Weight Restriction Elimination

Parks Highway: MP 146 - MP 163: Pavement Preservation - Anticipated completion in October of this year.

Central Region Highway Safety Corridor Near-Term Improvements: Parks Highway and Pittman Road Signal Modifications

Project will make improvements to the intersection to improve efficiencies and increase operational safety. Expect changes to turning bays and signal phasing. Work is scheduled to begin in October and completion is anticipated in the Summer of 2014.

Maintenance and Asset Management Improvements

Trunk Road Phase II – Opening late September 2013

This project constructs four lanes from the Palmer-Wasilla Highway to Bogard Road and two lanes from Bogard Road to Palmer-Fishhook Road. Major earthwork, paving, and a roundabout at Bogard/Trunk have been completed and a new signal has been installed at the intersection of Palmer-Fishhook Road.

For questions, contact the Project Manager Steven.Jochens@alaska.gov or call (907) 269-0659.



Trunk Road Phase II: 2-Lane Segment between Bogard and Fishhook Road



Parks Highway Alternative Corridor Open House

Approximately 80 people attended the Public Open House for the Parks Highway Alternative Corridor project August 28th at Station 6-1 in Wasilla. Project Manager Allen Kemplen, AICP stated the purposes of the evening event were to provide:

- Background and project history,
- An overview of project objectives and key elements,
- A description of the process used for development and evaluation of corridors,
- A discussion of traffic modeling results.

The project team will incorporate public input while producing a Break-Even Analysis where project costs are compared with project benefits to determine if it still makes sense to move forward with preserving the right-of-way for a future controlled-access corridor. A preferred alternative is expected by early 2014.

For further information, contact Allen.Kemplen@alaska.gov or call (907) 269-0513.

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, please contact Murray Walsh, Roads to Resources Manager, Murray.Walsh@alaska.gov or call (907) 465-6973.

