



Central Region

Director's Quarterly

Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities

Fall Edition - Greater Southwest Area

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.

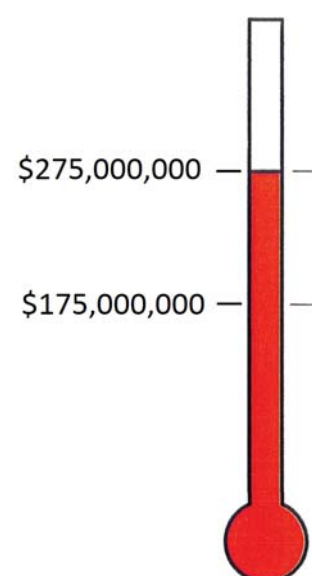
NEW PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER



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/

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS

Alaska Peninsula Highway Pavement Preservation

Knik Construction completed the Alaska Peninsula Highway Pavement Preservation project September 2014. Work included paving the roadway and shoulders, adding new guardrail and end treatments, drainage, signs, and striping. For more information, contact Brian Schumacher at (907) 269-0450 or brian.schumacher@alaska.gov.



New asphalt and striping on Kanakanak Road



Fresh asphalt on the traveled lanes and shoulder of the Alaska Peninsula Highway

Kanakanak Road Resurfacing

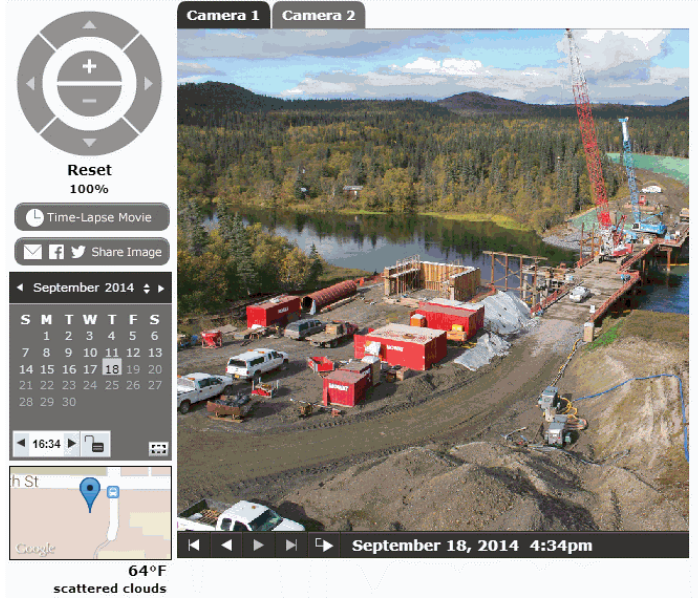
Knik Construction also completed Phase I of Kanakanak Road Resurfacing from Squaw Creek to the hospital. The project included major drainage improvements, such as culvert replacements. Phase II paving from D Street to Squaw Creek will finish in 2015. For more information, contact Matt Morrow at (907) 269-0466 or matthew.morrow@alaska.gov.

Kipnuk Boardwalk

Nearly four miles of new boardwalks were recently completed by Northern Construction Service, using approximately 60% local hires. Two boardwalk styles, “at-grade” and “elevated”, were designed to withstand the seasonal flooding and minimize disturbance to the sensitive tundra. Final project completion is scheduled for mid-October 2014. For more information contact Laura Paul at (907) 269-0463 or laura.paul@alaska.gov.



New boardwalk in Kipnuk



Aleknagik Wood River Bridge construction can be monitored via webcam at <http://www.brooks-alaska.com/aleknagik/>

Aleknagik Wood River Bridge

The Aleknagik Wood River Bridge project will connect the residents on the north side of the Wood River with South Aleknagik and also grant them access to Dillingham via Aleknagik Road. A temporary work trestle has been constructed and excavation for the roadway is nearly complete. Work on the abutments and piers for the permanent bridge is ongoing and the bridge substructure is anticipated to be completed by the end of October. Final completion of the road and bridge connection is scheduled for October 2015. For more information, contact Matt Morrow at (907) 269-0466 or matthew.morrow@alaska.gov.

AIRPORT IMPROVEMENTS

Tununak Airport Relocation

This federally funded project relocates the Tununak Airport to a site approximately one mile southeast of the existing airport. Work includes construction of a 3,300 foot long runway, apron, taxiway, equipment storage buildings, airport lighting system, wind cones, power line extensions, 5,552 foot long access road, community road improvements and bridge.

The project is scheduled for completion by October 31, 2015. The new road and bridge was completed this year as well as the base embankment. The contractor has been crushing locally produced rock for the sub base. Two snow removal equipment buildings are currently 50% complete. For more information contact Matt Morrow at (907) 269-0466 or matthew.morrow@alaska.gov.



Partially completed Tununak Airport equipment buildings

Kodiak Runway Extension Project

The Kodiak Runway Safety Area project extends two runways into the ocean 500 and 600 feet and repairs Devil’s Creek culvert. This \$58 million project is funded by Federal Aviation Administration discretionary funding. Since start-up in July, one-quarter million tons of fill have been placed and the large armor rock will be installed this fall. Work below the high water line will be completed by spring of 2015. Completion is expected in 2016. For more information contact Steve Jochens at (907) 269-0659 or steven.jochens@alaska.gov.

PUBLIC OUTREACH AND PLANNING

Southwest Area Plan Public Outreach Underway

The Planning team for the Southwest Area Plan update traveled to King Salmon and Dillingham this summer to meet with local and borough officials to discuss the plan in relation to the short term funding outlook for transportation. Presentations were also given to the Bristol Bay Native Association at their semi-annual meeting and to the Kodiak Rural Forum.

The online survey asking for input is still active through October 3 at www.swaktransplan.com. For more information, please contact Joselyn Biloon at joselyn.biloon@alaska.gov or (907) 269-0508.



Tribal Leadership from over 30 village comment on the process and progress of the Southwest Area Transportation Plan at their September 17 meeting in Dillingham.