



Central Region

Director's Quarterly

Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities

Spring Edition

March 2015

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.

For comments or questions about the newsletter:
DOT.CR.Director@alaska.gov

During a recent flight from Juneau I had the good fortune of spending some time with a freshman legislator. As our discussion unfolded, this legislator asked questions about the Department and its budget and expressed an interest in learning more about how the Department is funded. In this issue of the Director's Quarterly, I touch on answers to some of the questions asked of me during that flight including the sources of the Department's funding and the difference between our capital and operating budgets.

Next, as spring approaches, many highway improvement projects begin their construction season roll-out. This season is shaping up to be a banner year for projects all across central region. A summary of what to expect for 2015 is included.

In addition, I thought it opportune to discuss what can be a very popular topic related to construction and maintenance projects – tree clearing. Have you ever wondered what happens to the trees that are cleared from highway rights of way? Now, you'll know.

Finally, I touch on a new mobile app for 511 on smart phones and highlight our successful 2015 Anchorage Transportation Fair.

As always, my door is open, and I invite you and your staff to drop by for a visit when time allows.

THE BUDGET

As the Legislature works its way through Gov. Walker's budget proposal, we've received a lot of questions about how cuts might affect the Department. We often find that people have a hard time understanding how the Department is funded and the effect reductions have on our operations.

One way to break the question down is to look at capital vs. operating budgets, and state general fund vs. federal receipts:

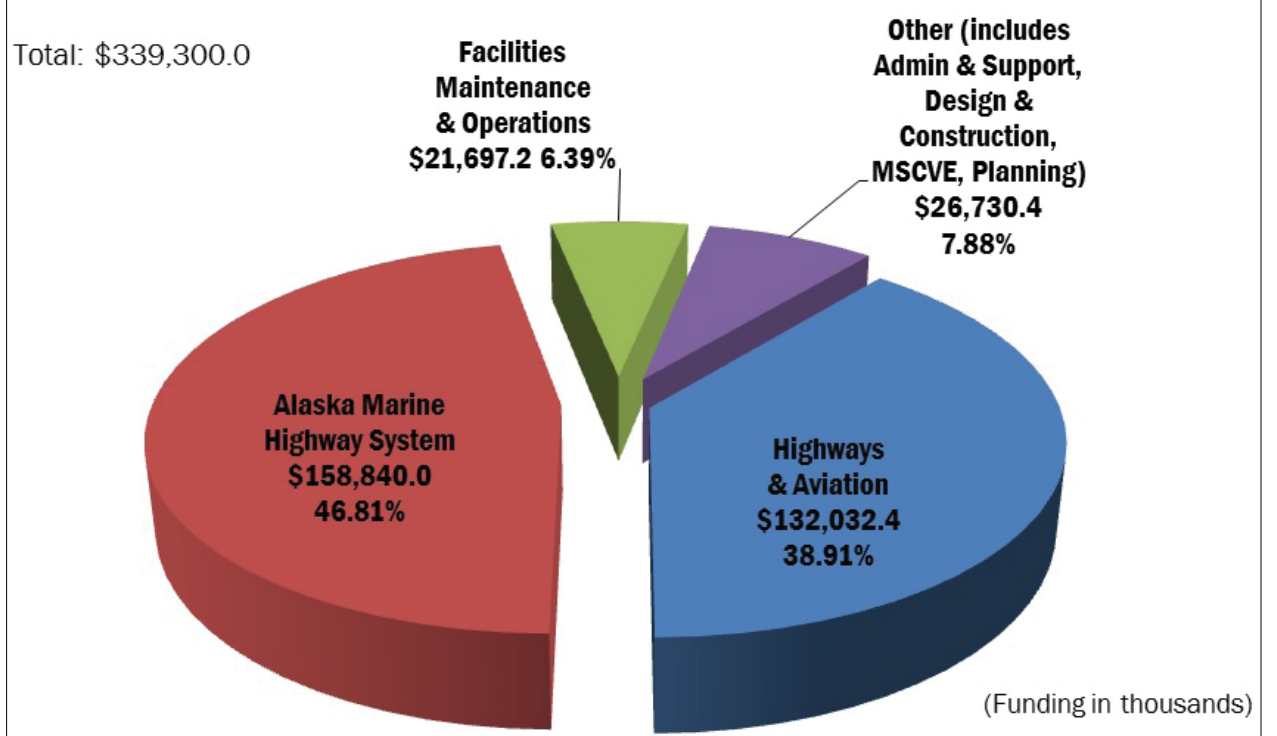
Capital budget (projects) – The Department's capital budget is the vehicle through which infrastructure improvement projects are funded and built. Generally, the lion's share of the department's capital budget is federally funded. The governor's endorsed capital budget for fiscal year 2016 shows federal funding at 89 percent. Federal match requirements account for about half of the remaining monies. Typically, State funded (GF) projects are individual appropriations that vary each year.

Operating budget (maintenance and operations) – The Department's operating budget funds operations and maintenance — from street sweeping to plowing — the general upkeep of our transportation infrastructure. The vast majority of the department's operating budget is funded through various state general funds. (The chart at right illustrates the distribution of these funds.) The federal contribution toward operating costs is about one percent.

State general fund reductions – State general funds remain the primary funding source of our operations budget. These same funds account for a relatively small share of the department's total capital budget. As shown in the chart, about 92 percent of the operating monies go to road, airport and facilities maintenance and to operation of the Alaska Marine Highway System, so changes in GF funding will directly impact these components.

FY16 General Fund Governor's Endorsed Operating Budget by Allocations

Total: \$339,300.0



Federal funding reductions – While federal funding of our capital budget has seen some decreases in recent years (total highway construction funds reduced from \$520 million to \$485 million for the current fiscal year), we expect federal funding levels will remain relatively flat in the near term.

What could this mean for our customers?

A reduction in GF money will mean a reduction in services provided by the department. In particular, customers will see a decrease in the level of service for highways, aviation and facilities maintenance and the Alaska Marine Highway System.

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/

TRANSPORTATION FAIR



Anchorage Transportation Fair, February 2015

In February 2015, ADOT&PF held a Transportation Fair in the new UAA Alaska Airlines Sports Complex in Anchorage. ADOT&PF was joined by Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Solutions, Alaska Railroad Corporation, Anchorage Water and Wastewater Utility, Municipality of Anchorage (MOA) Public Works and MOA Public Transportation to host the evening.

Modeled after the highly successful Mat-Su Transportation Fair, the event offered the public a one-stop-shop to review and comment on over 40 transportation projects across the community. The evening included experts and factsheets, giveaways, a children's activity corner, and a privately sponsored refreshment station. The Department relied heavily on social media to get out the word, and nearly 400 Anchorage residents attended along with local media—including two live broadcasts of the event. Event coordinators continued with social media outreach by using Twitter throughout the evening to keep those who could not attend updated on the evening's events.

INTRODUCING THE NEW ALASKA 511 PHONE APP

The all-new Alaska 511 phone app gives users updates about road conditions and construction activity on their mobile devices. The app features a zoom and scroll enabled color-coded map that uses GPS technology to display traffic, construction, and detours based on the user's location, and allows users to submit traffic reports or general comments via voice recording.



To download the app visit Google Play or iTunes.

In addition to mobile options, Alaska 511 traveler information updates can be accessed by dialing 5-1-1 from any phone in Alaska, visiting 511.alaska.gov or by following Alaska 511 on Facebook and Twitter.

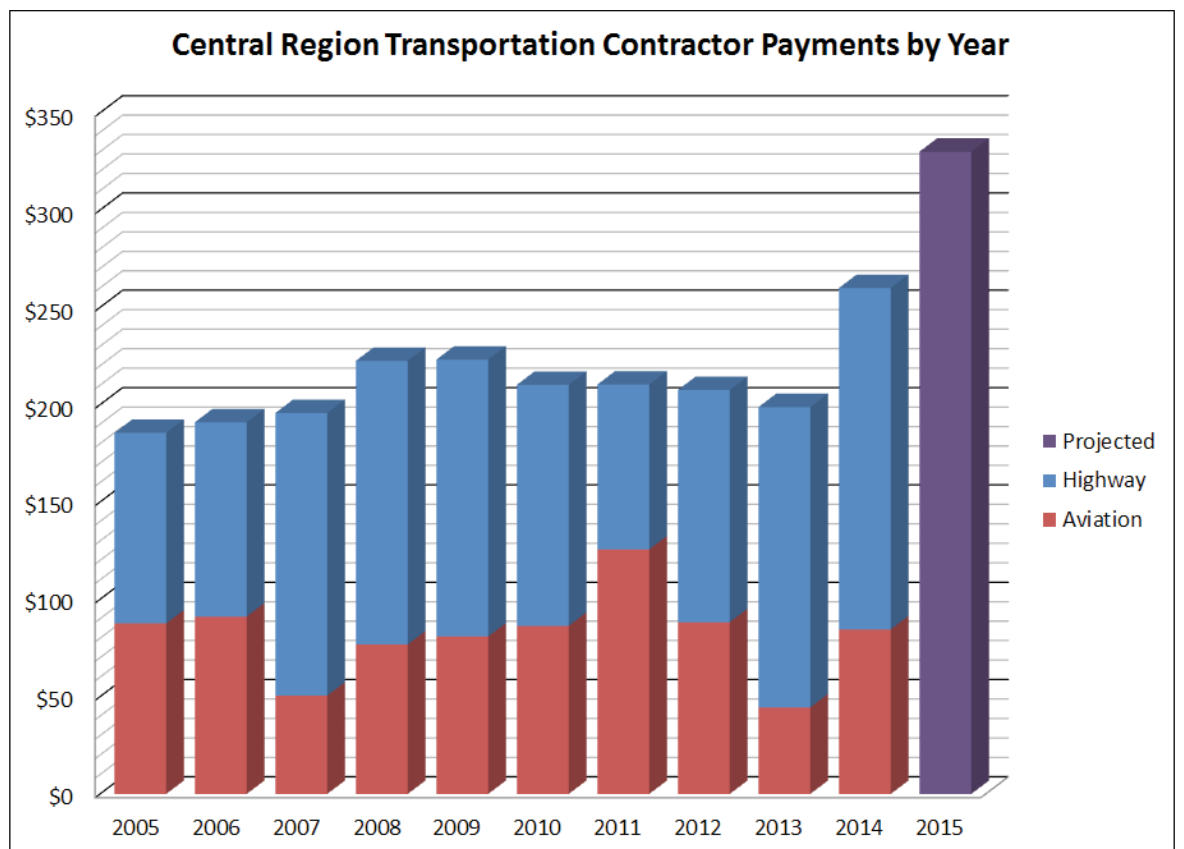
Motorists are reminded that it is illegal to use mobile hand-held devices while driving. To use Alaska 511 mobile services while en route, motorists should pull off the roadway to a safe location or have a passenger access the service.

2015 CONSTRUCTION SEASON

The 2015 construction program is gearing up to be ADOT&PF's most significant year in terms of size and scope of transportation improvements in southcentral Alaska. This year's projects focus on pavement preservation, safety improvements and upgrades to our National Highway System routes. Early estimates have over \$330 million in highway and aviation projects.

Some of the 2015 highlights include:

- West Anchorage Pavement Preservation (Jodhpur Street, Kincaid Road, Sand Lake Road, and West Dimond Blvd: Sand Lake to Jewel Lake Road)
- Eagle River Road MP 0-5.3 Pavement Preservation
- Muldoon Road Channelization Highway Safety Improvement
- Parks Hwy Reconstruction Phase II, MP 44.5-to 48.8 (Church to Pittman)
- Glenn Hwy Chickaloon River Bridge Replacement
- Sterling Hwy MP 135-150 Improvements
- Sterling Hwy Soldotna Urban Pavement Preservation
- Aleknagik Wood River Bridge Construction – Phase I
- Kakanak Road: D Street to Squaw Creek Road Resurfacing



Approximately 80% of 2015 payments are federal funds

For a full listing of construction projects for 2015, please visit the Central Region website: http://dot.alaska.gov/creg/project_info/

WOOD CUTTING



A continuing question for the department is, "How do I get some of the wood being cut down?" The answer, as you suspected, is not simple. Not all of the trees cut down for projects or maintenance belong to the state; in such cases, we ask the owners if it can be offered to the public. If the right of way is owned by the state, we assess how best to distribute the wood. For some projects, there is no danger for the public to simply pull over and load up a truck full. In other cases, the wood is stacked in a safe area for the public to access at certain times. In summary, we try to make wood available to the public when it is safe to do so.

APPOINTMENTS

In January, Gov. Bill Walker appointed Marc Luiken as ADOT&PF Commissioner. Luiken previously served in the role from December 2010 to October 2012. In his announcement, Gov. Walker cited Luiken's "efficient use of existing resources" and said, "His philosophy is a prudent one given our current fiscal challenges."



Marc Luiken

James Boyle was recently promoted to the position of Planning Manager of Aviation and Programs for Central Region. Previously, he was the Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Solutions (AMATS) Planner.



James Boyle