



## Southcoast Region

# Director's Quarterly

## Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities

Fall Edition

Oct / Nov 2017

### DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



#### Lance Mearig

Recently appointed as Alaska Department of Transportation's (DOT&PF) Southcoast's Regional Director, Lance Mearig leads planning and operations for state-owned and managed roads, airports, and ferry facilities in Southeast Alaska, Kodiak, and the Aleutians. Lance is back at Southcoast Region after a 25-year stint in private consulting and about a year as DOT&PF's Chief Engineer. Lance has Bachelor's and Master's degrees in civil engineering, and he is a licensed civil engineer in Alaska and three other states.

#### Dear Southcoast Region (SR) communities and DOT&PF employees:

After several months on the job as Regional Director, I am very much enjoying getting to know you, connecting with colleagues, and supporting the variety and complexity of our work together. My passion for this job comes from my enjoyment in solving problems in order to make transportation safer and easier for the traveling public.

Southcoast Region is my home. I was raised in Sitka, and have lived in Ketchikan, Petersburg, and Juneau. I have worked in Juneau for more than 27 years. In college, I spent a couple of summers working on a fishing tender between Ketchikan and Naknek. I saw some of the southwest district of our region from the water and I am hoping to get on the ground soon.

With my background in design and construction, I appreciate the pressures many SR staff experience on a daily basis and I understand how maintenance, construction, and design impact each other. I see SR staff working creatively in a challenging environment and with high levels of skill. A big part of my job, I believe, is to support staff and help you do your best work.

I look forward to enhancing DOT&PF's connection to the communities we serve and to getting to know many more DOT&PF staff and community members across the region. For those living in or traveling through Juneau, please feel free to stop in and say hello at any time.

I'm honored to support our shared work improving transportation corridors including highways, airports and ferry system infrastructure.

#### Winter:

Winter has come to Southcoast Region, with Iliamna getting ten inches of snow last week! At DOT&PF, trucks are being converted to snow plows and equipped with flows on the front, blades underneath, and storage for sand or anti-icing materials in the bed. The department's State Equipment Fleet is getting snow tires on trooper vehicles and checking all state vehicles for winter readiness.

Here are a few tips so you can be ready for winter driving too:

Take the time now to prepare your vehicle; get it winterized (change to winter weight oil, have fluids topped off) and put on good tires for snow and ice. Think about storing some extra provisions in your car in case you get stranded, i.e., flares, flashlight, blankets, food, shovel, etc.

In most SR communities, DOT&PF maintenance crews are responsible for state roads and airports. This means that road clearing crews on shift bounce between clearing runways for commercial flights and plowing roads. During a winter storm, winter maintenance activities have to adjust for the timing, intensity, and duration of the storm, and the temperature, humidity, wind and other ground conditions. Priority levels for winter maintenance are established based on several criteria including traffic volume, speed, and how the road is used. See <http://dot.alaska.gov/stwdmno/wintermap/> for a map of local road priorities.



### CONSTRUCTION

#### Projects in Construction

- Gustavus Rink Creek Bridge Replacement
- Haines Airport Drainage Improvements and Pavement Rehabilitation
- Haines Klehini Bridge and Transfer
- Juneau Glacier Hwy. Multi-Use Separated Path to UAS
- Juneau Glacier Hwy. Reconstruction: Fritz Cove Rd. to Seaview Ave.
- Kake Keku Road Rehabilitation
- Ketchikan N. Tongass Hwy. Illumination Upgrade HSIP
- Ketchikan Water Street Trestle #2 Repl. (KTN Off-System Bridges)
- Ketchikan to Shelter Cove Road Stage 2 Construction
- Skagway Capt. William Henry Moore (CWHM) Bridge Replacement.
- Sitka Airport Perimeter Fence & Gate Upgrades
- POW Island RWIS Installation

#### Construction Projects Recently Completed

- Chignik Public Dock
- Cold Bay Airport Crosswind Improvements
- Cold Bay Airport Improvements Main Runway Rehabilitation
- Juneau Douglas Hwy Sidewalk Ext-Gastineau School Lawson Ck Rd
- Juneau N. Douglas Pavement Rehabilitation Roundabout to Fish Crk
- Kake Ferry Terminal Passenger Facility
- Ketchikan Airport ARFF Building Renovation
- Ketchikan N. Tongass Hwy. Illumination Upgrade HSIP
- Ketchikan Roosevelt Dr & Franklin Rd Pavement Rehabilitation
- Ketchikan Trollers Creek Bridge #0864 Replacement
- Kodiak Ferry Terminal
- Port Alexander Outer Harbor Improvements
- Skagway Mine Mountain Repeater Power System Upgrade
- Yakutat Highway Fish Passage Improvements

#### Yakutat Highway Fish Passage

Fish passage improvements were completed this summer. DOT&PF removed and replaced or modified culverts at four stream crossings on the Yakutat Highway that did not meet fish passage standards. These stream crossings support anadromous fish, and the culverts jeopardize their ability to access habitat upstream of the culverts. New culvert designs simulate natural stream conditions and provide adequate fish passage.



Yakutat New Fish Passage Culverts

#### King Cove Airport

New paving and lighting were added on the runway, taxiway and apron to the terminal. Crews worked hard and put in long hours to get the runway open in time for Peter Pan Seafoods to ship seafood out in July. The fish were flying on time, and the project completed in August.

#### Chignik Dock

The Chignik dock won 2017 Best Projects Award from Engineering News-Record in the Highway/Bridge category - ENR Northwest Region. DOT&PF contracted Pacific Pile and Marine (PPM) to construct a new marine docking facility to allow improved berthing and mooring for the Alaska Marine Highway System (AMHS) ferries and other vessels. The dock used open cell sheet pile design, developed by PND Engineers, to provide high load capacity with minimal sheet pile toe embedment. The design can also be modified for increased loading or unforeseen conditions and accommodates for long-term settlement. The communities of Perryville and Chignik Bay, Lake, and Lagoon have depended on the AMHS for decades. Previously, vessels tied up at the privately-owned Trident Seafoods dock which needed repairs. Without a dock, the area risked losing ferry service so the project was a top capital improvement priority for the Lake and Peninsula Borough. AMHS' M/V *Tustumena* completed its first docking at the facility in August. The dock is expected to provide improved access for nearby communities and encourage growth in fisheries and resource development. (Content and photo provided by PPM)



First docking of the Tustumena at the newly constructed Chignik Dock

### IMPORTANT LINKS

• Alaska Navigator for Southcoast Region  
[alaskanavigator.org](http://alaskanavigator.org)

• Subscribe to receive news & updates via email  
[public.govdelivery.com/accounts/AKDOT/subscriber/new?](http://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/AKDOT/subscriber/new?)

• Access department news & updates on Facebook & Twitter  
[@AlaskaDOTPF](https://facebook.com/AlaskaDOTPF)

• Get the scoop on Southcoast Region projects  
<http://dot.alaska.gov/projects-status/>

# PRECONSTRUCTION

## Southcoast Region Major Projects

### Katlian Bay Road Project

This project would construct approximately 9 miles of a new single-lane gravel road with intervisible turnouts. The project begins at the end of Halibut Point Rd in Sitka, Alaska and USFS property boundary. Two bridges would be constructed over the South Katlian River and Katlian River. The project is currently finalizing the US Army Corps of Engineers permit application and once submitted the project is expected to bid within four to six months.

### Juneau Egan Drive / Yandukin / Lemon Road

Southcoast Region has a Planning and Environmental Linkage (PEL) study underway to evaluate alternatives to improve vehicular access and safety for the Egan Drive/Yandukin/Lemon Rd (Fred Meyer) intersection in Juneau. A PEL study seeks to incorporate public and agency input and environmental data early in the process thereby fostering the development of solutions that can be implemented sooner.

### Ketchikan Gravina Island Access Project.

In February, 2016, Alternative G4V was selected as the preferred alternative. This resulted in \$95,815,802 in federal funding to be made available to the Gravina Access Project with the goal of obligating multiple projects for construction by fiscal year 2019 and physical completion by 2021.

The draft supplemental environmental impact statement (SEIS) was completed on June 6, 2013. The final SEIS was signed on June 15, 2017. Eight SEIS projects are now under various stages of project development. Two related but non-SEIS projects are under preliminary design stages. These non-SEIS projects will provide new airport shuttle ferry berths and associated upland access improvements at both the Revilla and Gravina island airport ferry access facilities. Three additional, locally nominated projects also planned for project development if funding allows.

The projects would

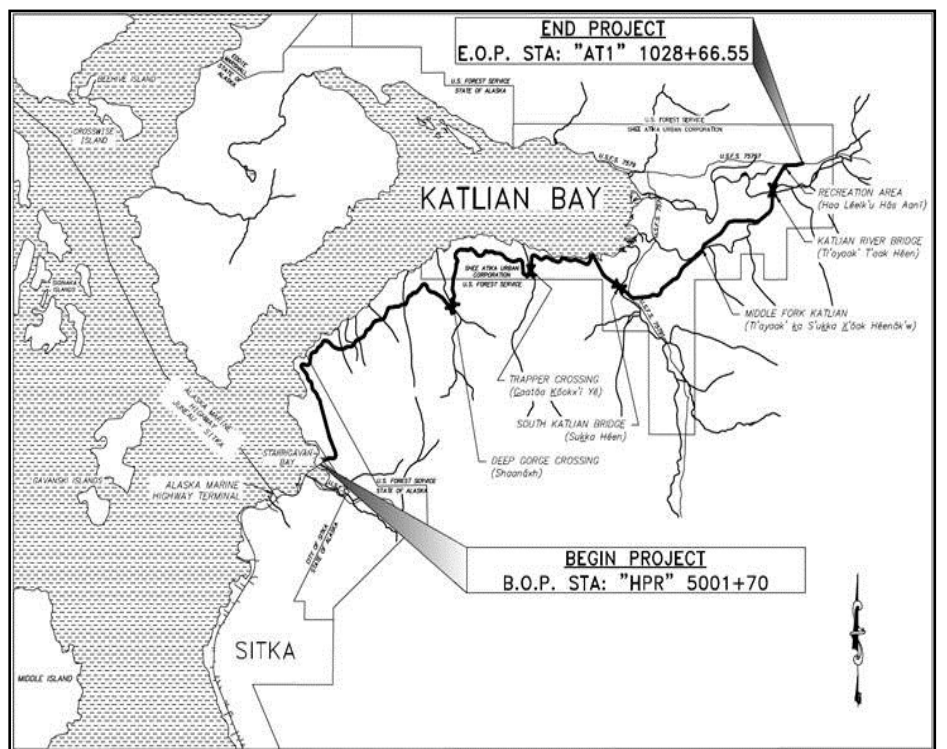
- Reconstruct existing airport shuttle ferry berths.
- Construct two new airport shuttle ferry berths at both the Gravina and Revilla sides of Tongass Narrows.
- Improve pedestrian facilities at the Gravina and Revilla airport shuttle ferry terminals.
- Add new heavy freight mooring facility and a new airport ferry layup dock on Gravina Island;
- Add Shuttle vans for transportation to and from the airport
- Make Upland improvements to the Gravina ferry terminal pedestrian and vehicle access areas.
- Replace the Airport Creek Bridge and reconstruction of portions of Seley Mill Access Road.

### Kodiak- Rezanoff Drive Resurface: Airport to Chiniak Highway Project

This project will resurface Rezanoff Drive from the Airport Road to the start of the Chiniak Highway and repair a section of Rezanoff Drive within the City of Kodiak from Carolyn Street to Marine Way. Proposed work includes new asphalt paving, culvert replacements, striping, sign replacement, and ADA improvements to sidewalk and curb ramps. Design work is ongoing with an environmental document expected this winter and advertisement this spring.

### DOT&PF to Assume Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) Responsibilities

In November, the DOT&PF and the FHWA will enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) allowing DOT&PF environmental staff to approve all levels of environmental documents for Federal-aid Highway projects including Categorical Exclusions, (CE) Environmental Assessments (EA), and Environmental Impact Statements (EIS). Alaska is the sixth state to enter into the NEPA Assignment Program, an agreement in which FHWA assigns its project-level environmental responsibilities to a state DOT. The DOT&PF and Alaskans benefit from quicker project delivery because the department is not required to seek FHWA approvals on environmental documents, department environmental staff can consult directly with federal agencies during the environmental process, and DOT&PF can implement innovative procedures to streamline the process. Since 2009, the DOT&PF has had CE approval authority from FHWA and has achieved improved environmental document approval times. The NEPA Assignment program seeks to expand these improvements to larger-scale projects that have increased potential for time savings.



**Katlian Bay Road Project Vicinity Map**



**Kodiak Rezanoff Drive**

# MAINTENANCE & OPERATIONS

## Kodiak Aleutian District.

Winter operations have started, all stations have received commodities, and have equipment ready for winter. Iliamna gets our reward for most snowfall to season, crew woke to 10 inches of fresh snow Monday October 23, with 8 inches predicted for Monday night.

**Sand Point Airport** - DOT&PF and Sand Point City are working together toward the Sand Point Airport Certification.

# PROJECT AWARDS

## FY18 Project Awards

Contracts Awarded the Sitka Airport Fence and Gate Upgrades to Build Alaska General Contracting in September for \$692,400.

We have advertised the Haines Hwy Reconstruction- MP 3.9-12.2- Phase I. Bids are scheduled to be opened on November 2, 2017. The estimate for this project is between \$30,000,000 and \$40,000,000.

# MEET THE SOUTHCOAST REGION

Southcoast Region has had a few staff changes over the last few months. Below are the recent new additions to our crew, as well as some of those who have retired.

## Preconstruction, Design & Environmental

- Greg Weinert - Southcoast Region Right-of-Way Section Chief
- Chris Goins - Internal promotion. Replaced Keith Karpstein as Preconstruction section Design Group Chief
- Jim Brown - Engineering Manager
- Bill Columbus - Engineering Assistant
- Willow Gaber - Environmental Impact Analyst
- Christy Gentemann - Environmental Impact Analyst
- Ganesha Howell - Survey Technician Journey
- Peter Jackson - Engineering Assistant
- Brett Wells - Engineering Assistant

## Maintenance & Operations & Airports

- Manilyn Alcaide - Kodiak Airport Office Assistant II
- Loren Starr - Ketchikan M&O Foreman retired, Michael Earnest is point of contact until the position is filled.
- Paul Hanson - King Salmon Airport Manager.
- Kyle Heaton - Ketchikan M&O Equipment Operator Journey II.

## Construction

- Noah Molnar- Engineering. Technician.
- Nicole Lupro - Engineering Technician Journey –Previously from the Materials section
- CA Bowman - Engineering. Technician. retired .
- Cole Carnahan promoted from Environmental Inspector to Project Engineer.
- Steven Thater - Promoted from SR Traffic Section into Construction Engineering Technician and later was promoted to Engineering Assistant I as an Environmental Inspector, that was recently vacated by Cole Carnahan.

## Director's Office and Support Services

- Aurah Landau - Public Information Officer (PIO) for Southcoast & AMHS.
- Administrative and Facilities staff re organized into Shared services for centralized Administrative and Public Facilities Support

## Planning

- Andy Hughes - SR planning chief retired. Verne Skagerberg has filled the position.