

# econnections



November 2006

The electronic newsletter of MoDOT District 4, Kansas City Area

## MEETINGS/TRAINING

### Tuesday, November 7

Munck Area Team, 8-11:30 a.m.,  
Nashua project office

### Wednesday, November 8, Room 236

Job Status, District 1, 8-9:30 a.m.,  
video conf

Job Status, Group 1, 9:30-10:30

Job Status, Group 2, 10:30-11:30

Job Status, Group 3, 12:30-1:30

Job Status, Group 4, 1:30-2:30

### Wednesday, November 8

Maintenance Superintendents, 12-2:30 p.m.,  
Room 136

### Thursday, November 16

Management Team, 9-11 a.m., Boardroom

### Friday, November 17

Missouri Highways and Transportation  
Commission, St. Louis

### Tuesday, November 21

Stock Area Team, 8-10 a.m.,  
87<sup>th</sup> Street Project Office

### Friday, December 1

Missouri Highways and Transportation  
Commission, Sheraton Suites  
Country Club Plaza, Kansas City

## EVENTS

### Thursday, November 9

20-year and up service awards and  
recognition luncheon, 11 a.m.,  
Legacy Park Community Center,  
901 Bluestern Drive, Lee's Summit

### Friday, November 10

Veterans Day holiday – state offices closed

### Tuesday, November 14

Safety Belt Summit, Stoney Creek Inn,  
Columbia

### Thursday-Friday, November 23-24

Thanksgiving holiday – state offices closed

## Elementary students visit 19<sup>th</sup> century farmstead

# MoDOT Archeological Team Shares Findings at Historical Site

By Jennifer Benefield

Union Chapel Elementary School students didn't have to travel far for a hands-on lesson in Platte County history in October. After a brief hike through the woods adjacent to the school, they arrived at a 19<sup>th</sup> century farmstead.

A team of six archeologists, led by MoDOT Senior Historic Preservation Specialist Michael Meyer, had already begun to excavate the house's foundation and explore a nearby well – a process

that will soon tell the story of the Joshua Noland family. The Noland family is presumed to have been among the early families to settle Platte County in the 1830s.

Surveyors taking measurements for a MoDOT project to construct a new roundabout west of the existing Route 45 and K intersection came across the site in 2004 and contacted MoDOT's Historic Preservation Section.

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Jennifer Benefield

MoDOT Senior Historic Preservationist Michael Meyer shows Union Chapel Elementary School 5th graders a counterweight that once operated a window in the Joshua Noland home built in about 1840. The counter weight is one of numerous items unearthed at the Three Monkeys historic site located close to the school near Routes 45 and K in Platte County. MoDOT plans to construct a roundabout southwest of the site in spring 2007.

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The Three Monkeys Site was named for one of several porcelain bisque toys recovered from the site. The Noland family occupied it for more than 100 years until the farmhouse burned down in the 1940s. Initial excavation of the house foundations in 2004 confirmed the presence of late-19<sup>th</sup> century and early 20<sup>th</sup> century deposits, relating to the life of the grandson, Edward. Because the house appeared to have burned accidentally, there were a number of personal and perhaps treasured items that were left behind on the site.

"Because there was a fire, nothing was thrown away," Meyer explained to the students. "We are finding things at this historic site that we don't normally find." Items found to date include porcelain



Jennifer Benefield

**MoDOT interns Courtney Blair (left) and Rosanna Runyon (right) sift through soil and look for artifacts at the Three Monkeys historic site located near Routes 45 and K in Platte County.**

figurines; toys, such as clay marbles; souvenirs from a trip to Chicago; World War I uniform insignia; and household items, such as tableware, pots, plates, and pieces of hand-painted china.

"Does anyone know what this is?" Meyer asked the students. "It's a rusty nail. Why is this important? Well, I can look at a nail and tell you when the nail was made, and therefore, when the house was built. Every artifact gives me a little more information."

Meyer also showed the students a handle presumed to come from a cup belonging to a tea service. "We can learn a lot about people who lived here by the quality of the things they owned."

Artifacts are important because they help us learn about the history of the people and the area in which they lived."

Four groups of 5<sup>th</sup> graders visited the site over a two-day period. Each group spent about an hour at the site listening to Meyer, looking at the artifacts, exploring the site, and asking questions.

"I thought it was really interesting," said 5<sup>th</sup> grader Madison Hill. "I learned that it really does take a long time to carefully dig, and some time to figure out where you should start, depending on what you want to learn."

Grant Brady appreciated being shown the items found. "I liked seeing the silverware. The trip out here was cool and I really learned a lot."

Meyer said one unique aspect of this project is the opportunity to acquire oral history from the surviving family members, several of whom still live in the area, in an attempt to develop a more complete history of the region, the site, and the family itself.



Jennifer Benefield

**MoDOT Senior Historic Preservationist Michael Meyer shows Union Chapel Elementary School 5th graders a 20-foot well hand-dug by a member of the Joshua Noland family about 160 years ago.**



Jennifer Benefield

**MoDOT Intermediate Historic Preservationist Jane Lee unearths artifacts from the Three Monkeys historic site.**

## Route 24 Rehabilitation Winds Down



Jackson County Executive Kathryn Shields, Jim Mangas, executive vice president of APAC-Kansas, Inc., and Perry Allen, Operations Engineer for MoDOT in District 4, joined MoDOT Area Engineer Jesse Skinner, Transportation Project Manager Susan McCubbins and Senior Construction Inspector Albert Janssens in cutting a ribbon Oct. 27 to mark the imminent completion of the project.

Two bridges and more than three miles of Route 24 pavement that dated to Harry Truman's days on the Jackson County Court are now fresh and strong again, thanks to an \$8½ million rehabilitation project in 2006.

The stretch of Old Route 24, from Blue Mills Road to Route 7, includes

bridges over the Union Pacific Railroad and the Little Blue River. The two eastbound bridges were rehabilitated, and the two westbound bridges – which date to the early 1930s – were replaced. The project also included grading, pavement, retaining walls and new trails that connect to the regional trail system.

## Rally Touts Seat Belt Usage

It may be hard to say which 90 lives would be saved in Missouri if the state enacts a primary safety belt law.

It will be harder to tell the family members of those 90 that, as a state, we just didn't make it a priority to pass legislation that could have saved your loved one's life.

That was the point of an Oct. 20 primary safety belt rally at Kansas City's Union Station. MoDOT Director Pete Rahn was keynote speaker, and he urged more than 60 stakeholders to keep fighting for a change in the state law.

Current state law allows ticketing adults for failure to fasten seat belts only when the vehicle is stopped for another infraction. Rahn pointed out that there are more than 500 laws on the books governing highway safety, but violating the seat belt law is the only one that officers can't pull you over for.



Speakers also included Jeff McCaffrey, a former Air Force Academy cadet who is paralyzed from the waist down. His three buddies walked away from the accident, because their safety belts were working and latched; his was defective. Jeff speaks to high school students and other groups as part of the Think First program.

Sergeant Scott Meyer of the Missouri Highway Patrol told about attending the funeral of his nephew, who died from injuries in a vehicle accident. His nephew was not wearing a safety belt.

Beth Wright, District Engineer for MoDOT's Kansas City district, called on those present to pledge that they will support efforts to pass a primary safety belt law during the next session of the Missouri General Assembly.



Local officials gathered for a brief ribbon-cutting ceremony Oct. 16 to mark the completion of a new Route 92 bridge over Carroll Creek near Kearney. Pictured from left are Luke Edwards of L.G. Barcus & Sons, Inc.; Ralph Penrod of Penrod's Greenhouse; Maintenance Superintendent Todd Gibson; Assistant DE Chris Redline; Area Engineer Kirsten Munck; State Rep. Doug Ervin; Rue Lovett, president of the Kearney Chamber of Commerce; Sr. Construction Inspector Nick Pino; Resident Engineer Greg Stervinou; and Kearney City Administrator Jim Eldridge.

Steve Porter

Jennifer Benefield

## News from Across the District

**Donations Pour In:** District 4 employees contributed \$10,767 to this year's Missouri State Employees Charitable campaign. Campaign coordinator Dana O'Maley thanks all contributors for their support.

**More Generosity:** Blood drive coordinator Karin Cummins thanks the 28 brave souls who agreed to donate blood Oct. 19. Twenty-seven units of blood were collected during the Red Cross drive at D4's offices.

**Kudos:** Henry County Maintenance Superintendent Ron Faulkenberry and Steve Porter of Community Relations are the latest recipients of the district's Above & Beyond Award. Ron was cited for his actions during the Clinton Elks building collapse earlier this year; Steve earned the award for his ongoing work with the Three Trails Historic District. In addition, Corey Hansen received a \$75 award from the Portal innovations program for building a bridge-inspection database.

**Condolences:** Clifton Scott's father, James Scott, Jr., passed away Oct. 30; Clifton is with the Motorist Assist department and came from the Holmes Park crew.

Barbara Orrison's father, Joseph Stoll, passed away Oct. 31; Barbara works in Business & Benefits as an intermediate financial services specialist.

Norman Henson's brother, Andrew Henson, Jr., passed away Oct. 29; Norman is the assistant supervisor for the roadside enhancement crew.

Retiree Herb Gumm passed away Oct. 19. He was a resident engineer in District 4 when he retired in September 1977. Condolences may be sent to his wife, Mary, at 516 SE 5th Street, Lee's Summit, MO 64063.

**Amber Alert** text messages will begin appearing on MoDOT-issued mobile communication devices (cell phones, pagers and Blackberry), thanks to a recent Executive Order signed by the governor.

**Hot Spots:** Employees with wireless access and a MoDOT laptop configured for wireless operation can now connect to the department network without entering a MoDOT building. In early October, Hot Spots were put into service at the maintenance facilities at Blue Springs/Lee's Summit, Concordia, Harrisonville, Kearney, Platte City, Odessa and Warrensburg,



**District 4 hosted a No MOre Trash! interactive exhibit at the Missouri River Watershed Festival Oct. 6 at La Benite Park in Sugar Creek. After learning more about litter prevention during game of Litter Jeopardy, these students pledged not to litter. Approximately 800 area middle and high school students attended the daylong event.**

and the Lee's Summit main garage. In most cases, those wanting to connect only need to be within 100 feet of a facility's front door. For more information, visit the MoDOT intranet at [wwwi/intranet/IS/telco/HotspotLocations.htm](http://wwwi/intranet/IS/telco/HotspotLocations.htm)

**Space switcheroo:** Survey crews moved from their D4 garage location to the district headquarters building the first weekend in November. Some of them now occupy the space that housed the Paseo Bridge Design-Build team; other crew members are located in the Design area. The Design-Build team moved into the former Survey area to ensure confidentiality requirements associated with their work.

### econnections sources

**Construction** Bev Chrisco, 6341

**Design** Flo Noear, 0455

**Regional Counsel** LeAnn Francis, 6382

**Administration** Judy Magruder, 6309

**General Services** Toni Terry, 0050

**Human Resources** Belinda Fite, 6321

**Right of Way** Melbra Taylor, 6351

**Traffic** Dawn Phillips, 0401

**Editor** Jennifer Benefield, 6328

## Mailbag

Motorist Assist received the following e-mail in October:

*While traveling through Kansas City on September 25, in an RV pulling a minivan on a tow dolly, we hit a piece of a railroad tie that was in the lane of Interstate 70 Eastbound. I managed to miss the tie with the RV, but caught it with the right tire of the tow dolly, causing damage to the tire. By the time I managed to get the RV over to the side of the Interstate, a pickup truck with "MODOT" on the door had pulled in behind us. Our first thought was that he would be urging us off the Interstate as quickly as possible, although we couldn't safely move the RV/tow dolly. Boy, were we wrong. The truck was part of your Travel Services fleet, and the driver helped us with jacking up the bad wheel, with getting the tire replaced and back on the vehicle, and getting us on our way in a very timely fashion. I had to go with him to get a tire, and while we were gone, another MODOT truck stopped by to set out safety flares for the temporarily stranded RV and minivan.*

*In short, Thank Heaven for MODOT Travel Services!!! Even with AAA, we could have never been able to get out of traffic and back on the road nearly as quickly as with your help. Again, thanks ever so much for your roadside "Angels in Disguise."*

*I didn't get the driver's name, but God bless you a whole bunch!!*

Carroll & Ruth Hill  
Owensboro KY

Pat Rath (Customer Service), Mark O'Dowd (Independence maintenance facility) and Jennifer Benefield (Design-Build) received this note in October:

*Thank you for being a part of the 2006 Missouri River Watershed Festival. With nearly 800 students participating, your presentation helped make the event successful.*

*We appreciate your time and hard work.*

Kimberly Foster & MRWF Committee

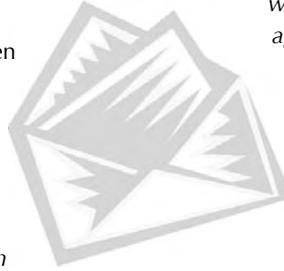
Area Engineer Kirsten Munck received this note in October:

*I would like to take this opportunity to say thank you very much for our cut through on I-435/ I know this project took great effort on your part and we at Southern Platte Fire really appreciate all you did getting it installed.*

*You had said it most likely would not be completed until fall or winter this year – but we found it to be done a couple of months ago. Since it has been completed we have used it five times to turn around on emergency calls. It really saves time, which is in the best interest for accident victims as well as for my crew's safety.*

*Again, thank you – I am glad to have met you. Anything we can do for you just let me know.*

Dean Cull  
Southern Platte Fire Protection District



The Odessa maintenance facility received this note in October:

*As you are well aware, Odessa was the site of a multi-vehicle, multi-fatality accident the late hours of October 9, 2006. Due to the nature and size of the accident scene, local assets of firefighters and equipment were almost immediately exhausted.*

*We realize there are formal mutual aid agreements in place for incidents such as this, but the directors and firefighters of the OFRPD wish to express our heartfelt gratitude that your agency responded willingly and quickly when we called. The loss of life is tragic, but your timely response helped to limit what might have been.*

*In the past our departments have worked well together and the OFRPD will strive to continue that positive arrangement. Please accept this "THANK YOU" for your assistance on this particular incident.*

*Emergency work is physically demanding and emotionally burdensome at times, but your efforts at this incident helped the OFRPD realize as positive an outcome as possible.*

Odessa Fire & Rescue  
Protection District

Project Manager Susan McCubbins, Area Engineer Jesse Skinner and project teammates A.J. Byrd (Community Liaison), Dave MacDonald (Traffic) and John Van Winkle (Design) received this note in October:

*Recently, there have been several MoDOT committee meetings hosted by the Northwest Community Development Center. These meetings have been about the infrastructure changes that are going to take place in the northwest corner of Fairmount (primarily the 24 Highway bridge replacement). Some of the Fairmount neighbors and Fairmount Plaza Board Members were at those meetings as well. We were extremely grateful at how you listened and responded to our questions and issues. We cannot tell you how delighted we were that you were very supportive of our general well being in all aspects of our concerns.*

*Hopefully, we can reciprocate by offering you our support as well. Thank you again for listening because we know of the many demands on your time.*

Sincerely yours,

Betty Sue Cliff, President  
Fairmount Plaza Inc. Board

## Corporate Ladder

### Welcome to District 4

**Crew workers** Amanda Howe, Darren Phillips, Fred Scott and Danny Snider

**Highway designer** Jeena John

**Assistant design technician** Timothy McClaren

**Senior human resources specialist** Jim Taylor, Jr. (transferred from Central Office)

**Senior materials technician** Wanda Wenell

### Promoted

**Community relations coordinator**

Jennifer Benefield

**Maintenance supervisor** Phillip Brant

**Senior crew workers** Craig Burgett, Eric Oakes, Alfred Payton and Milton Valentin

**Intermediate construction inspector**

William Chappell

### Maintenance specialist

Loren Dickmeier

### Senior construction inspectors

Richard Dodson,

Aydogan Girgin,

James Lohsandt and

Todd Matthews

**Intermediate crew worker** Matthew Findley

### Intermediate construction technicians

Marc Hohe and Dallas Russell

### Assistant maintenance supervisor

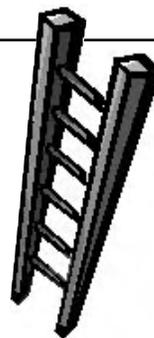
E. Charles Smith

**General services technician** Toni Terry

### Retired

**Maintenance specialist** Elden Knipmeyer

**Maintenance supervisor** Sammy Love



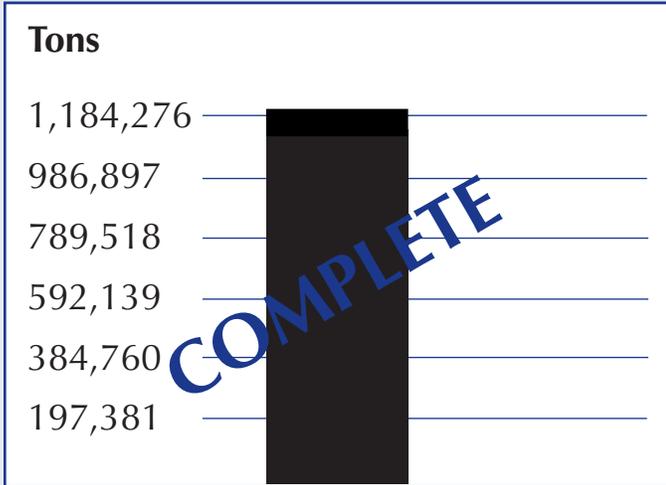
# Smooth Roads Initiative

490 centerline miles of the Kansas City Area's busiest roadways in good condition by December 2006

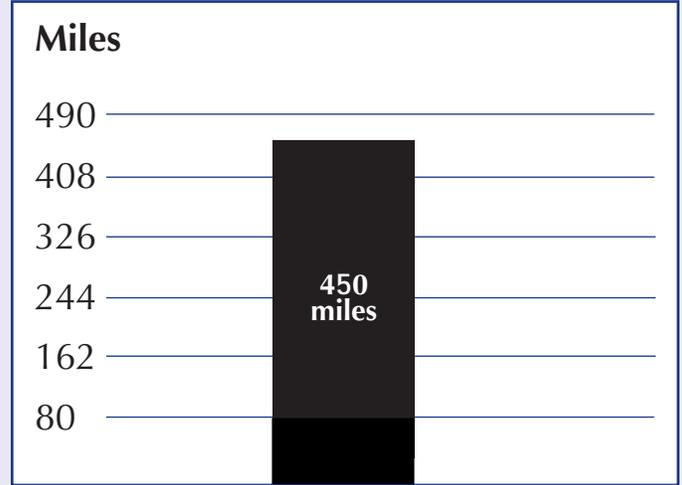
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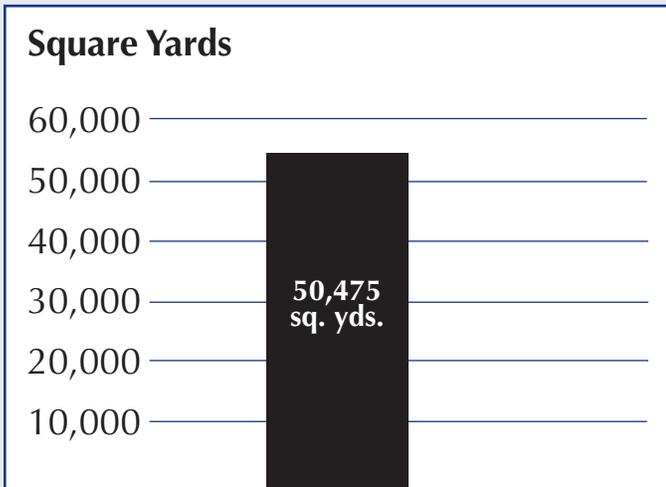
**Smother, Safer, Sooner**  
Amendment 3



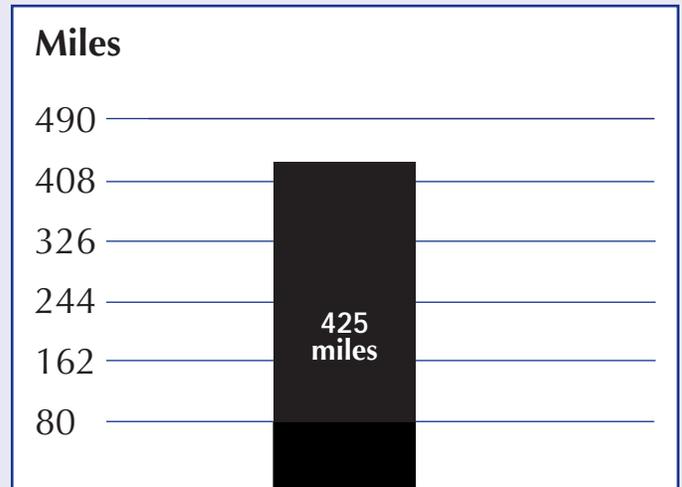
Tons of asphalt



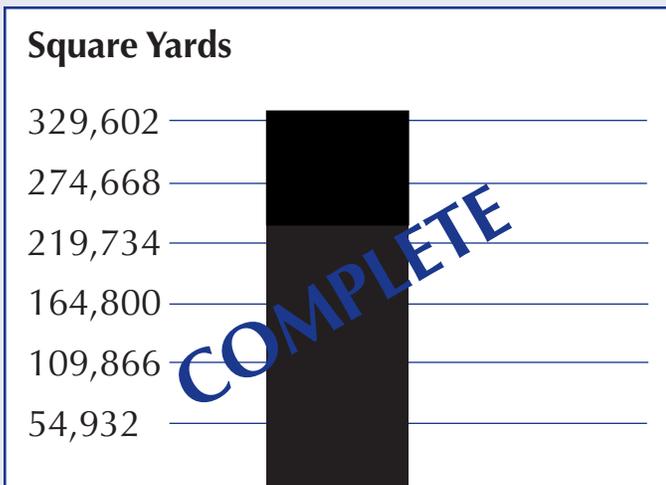
Striping



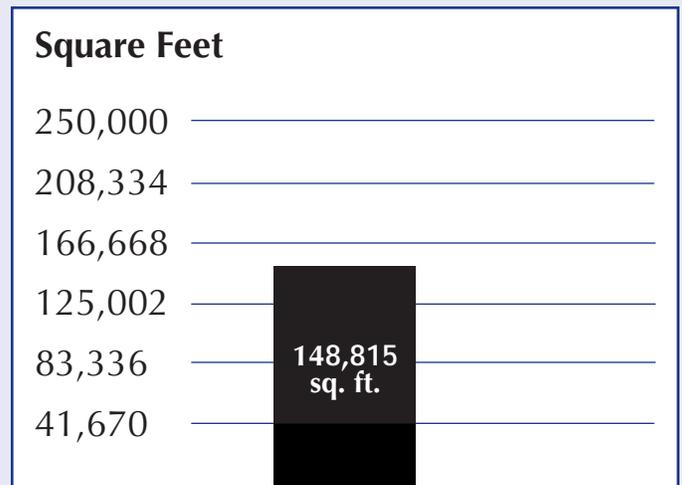
Pavement repair



Delineators



Ultrathin-bonded wearing surface



Signs

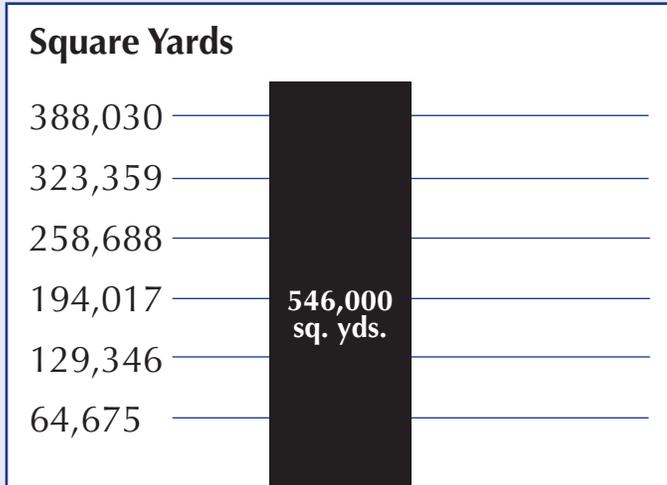
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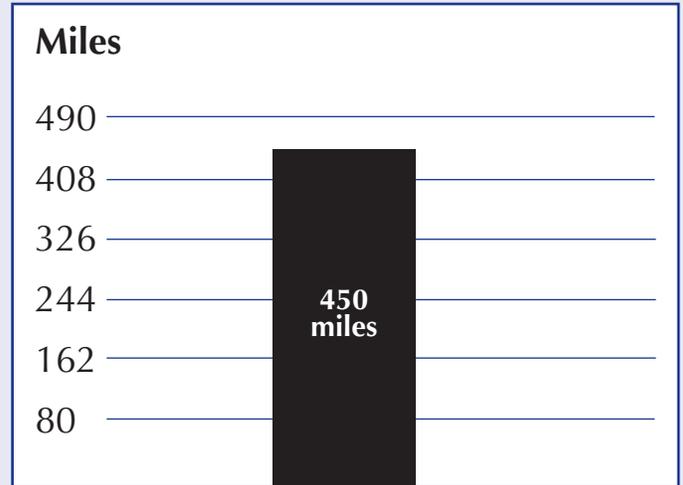
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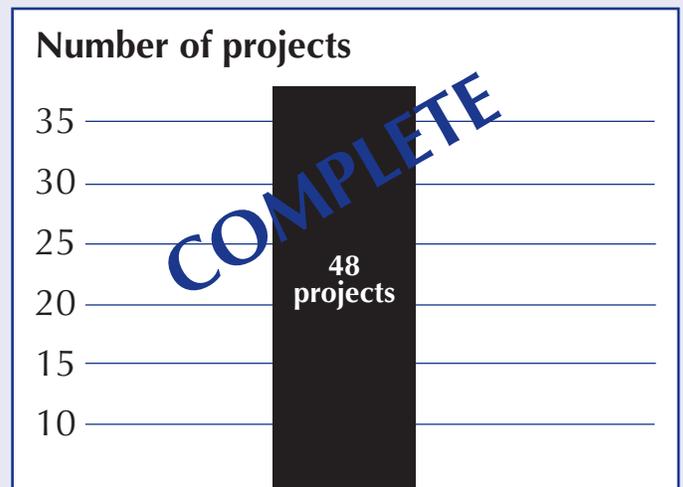
**Smoother, Safer, Sooner**  
**Amendment 3**



Diamond grinding



Clear zones cleared



Projects designed