Federal and State officials announce completion of Pembina border crossing upgrades

The North Dakota Department of Transportation along with federal and state officials from US Customs and Border Protection, US Department of State, US General Services Administration, and Federal Highway Administration recently celebrated the completion of border crossing upgrades at the Pembina-Emerson Port of Entry.

The $9.7 million project included constructing new lanes of traffic to segregate commercial traffic from primary traffic and addresses the increased transportation demand, improves system linkage and safety for Port of Entry staff as well as facilitate international trade between the United States and Canada. As part of the project, the Government of Canada invested $19 million to upgrade their truck inspection facilities in Emerson.

Broadway Bridge Project Completed
Crews are also finishing up construction of the Broadway Bridge replacement project on US 83 in Minot. The two-year project is near completion with a ribbon cutting ceremony taking place mid-November. The NDDOT and the city of Minot worked together on the $20.8 million project.

The NDDOT had a busy and successful construction season with approximately $370 million of projects being worked on throughout the state.

Johnson to serve as Legislative Liaison with NDDOT

Mark Johnson recently started with the North Dakota Department of Transportation (NDDOT) fulfilling a new role of Legislative Liaison. Johnson recently retired as Executive Director of the North Dakota Association of Counties after leading the Association for 35 years.

He brings extensive policy knowledge to the Department as he worked to successfully create a funding mechanism for local infrastructure during his time with the Association. During the legislative session, Johnson will serve as the NDDOT liaison with the legislative body.

Transportation Day on January 10

Businesses, NDDOT and other stakeholders involved with Transportation will host a “Transportation Day” during the 2018 North Dakota Legislative Assembly.

When:
Thursday, January 10, from 9 a.m. until 4 p.m.

Where:
Memorial and Legislative Halls ND State Capitol in Bismarck
In September, the North Dakota Department of Transportation (NDDOT) and Northern Plains UAS Test Site (NPUASTS) successfully completed its first public mission of North Dakota’s Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) Integration Pilot Program in Fargo. North Dakota’s team conducted UAS (drone) operations with Media and Emergency Response crews in flight over people at a tailgating event in Fargodome’s west parking lot before the North Dakota State University football game. The partners working on this mission with NDDOT and NPUASTS include: North Dakota State University, CNN, Botlink, Parazero, AirMap, Cass County Sheriff’s Office, Adams Communication & Engineering Technology (ACET) and others.

This is the first phase of North Dakota’s UAS IPP which is designed to help FAA create new regulations that will enable the safe and secure integration of UAS (drones) into national airspace systems.

In May, U.S. DOT selected the North Dakota Department of Transportation as one of 10 participants in the Federal Aviation Administration’s UAS Integration Pilot Program. NDDOT and NPUASTS are working together with partners and stakeholders to accomplish North Dakota’s pilot program mission to provide operational efficiencies, create new opportunities, build industry to grow the economy and reduce traffic fatalities and serious injuries.

The three-year program gives state, local and tribal governments a chance to establish innovation zones for testing complex UAS operations. Future UAS flights will be taking place in North Dakota throughout the program.

Focus groups on snow and ice control taking place

The NDDOT is gearing up for winter weather and snow and ice control services remain a top priority for the Department. A recently completed study showed the department’s current snow and ice control operations are efficient, but there may also be some other techniques we can use to improve effectiveness in the future. We are still researching and evaluating the information from that study.

As part of continued research, the NDDOT is working with an independent research firm to conduct seven focus groups in rural communities around the state about snow and ice control. Each group will be comprised of between 15 and 20 individuals who regularly drive on two-lane and four-lane highways on the state system. The objective of the groups is to provide additional depth to the current understanding of acceptable snow and ice conditions on state highway in context of driving habits and usage patterns among the state’s rural residents.

NDDOT employees will not be at the meetings and the focus groups will be small because our goal is to hear from community members and local rural residents about snow and ice control in their area and we want everyone to feel free to have an open and honest discussion within the group.

The focus group participants will be randomly selected from eligible residents and recruited by telephone. Easily-accessed facilities will house the closed sessions. Each session will follow a consistent discussion guide, with participants’ comments being captured to become the basis of a report for the department.