

# ANNUAL REPORT

2024





**INTERSTATE 40 HERNANDO DE SOTO BRIDGE, WEST MEMPHIS**

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# ARKANSAS HIGHWAY COMMISSION



## **CHAIRMAN ALEC FARMER**

Governor Asa Hutchinson appointed Alec Farmer, a Jonesboro native, to a 10-year term on the Arkansas State Highway Commission in January 2015. He currently serves as Chairman. He is operator of Farmer Enterprises, Inc., a family-owned farm and property investment and management company. He is also a licensed attorney in the State of Arkansas. Farmer serves on the boards of Arkansas Blue Cross Blue Shield, E.C. Barton & Company, and Childress Gin and Elevator Company.

He has previously served on several state boards including as Chairman of the Arkansas Natural Resources Commission, as a Special Commissioner on the Arkansas State Police Commission and as an original member of the Arkansas Agricultural Board. He served as past Chairman of the Craighead Conservation District, as Finance Committee Chair for the Jonesboro City Council, as a board member for Jonesboro City Water & Light (municipal utility district), and the Jonesboro Regional Chamber of Commerce. Farmer is an inductee into the AACD Arkansas Conservation Hall of Fame and a recipient of the Arkansas State University Distinguished Alumni Award. He graduated from Arkansas State University with a B.S. degree in 1986. He received a J.D. degree from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock School of Law and served on the Law Review's editorial board. He and his wife Carole live in Jonesboro and together they have four daughters. His term on the Commission will expire in January 2025.



## **VICE CHAIRMAN PHILIP TALDO**

Philip Taldo lives and works in Springdale where he is a real estate broker, investor, developer, and builder. He is a Northwest Arkansas native from Tontitown. He attended Springdale High School and the University of Arkansas. He is married to Mary Ann Zulpo-Taldo, with three daughters and nine grandchildren. Taldo is a member of the Northwest Arkansas National Airport Authority, Northwest Arkansas Council, ARVEST Bank Director, and was appointed by Governor Asa Hutchinson as an Arkansas Highway Commissioner in 2017. He currently serves as Vice Chairman. His term on the Commission will expire in January 2027.



## **COMMISSIONER KEITH GIBSON**

Keith Gibson was the owner, operator and president of Pinnacle Communications and Pinnacle Telecom from 1986-2021. Gibson was a co-founder and member of the Board of Directors of Benefit Bank in Fort Smith, Arkansas, where he also served on the Audit Committee for the bank. The bank has since sold to Armstrong Bank. He is the past president of the Arkansas Telecommunications Association, the Oklahoma Telephone Association, and the Lavaca, Arkansas, Industrial Development Corporation. Gibson is also licensed to practice law in Arkansas. He has also served on the boards of several local and area civic, charitable, and political organizations. He previously served as Arkansas' 3rd Congressional District Chairman and Executive Committee Member of the Republican Party of Arkansas. In 2000, Gibson was elected Chairman of the Sebastian County, Arkansas, Republican Committee, one of the largest county political committees in the state. He served in that capacity until 2006 and has also served as Vice Chairman of the Committee. He was married to the late Susan Gibson for 33 years and has three adult children and three grandchildren. He is currently married to his lovely wife Jill Elaine Gibson, and together they have six children and four grandchildren in their blended family. His term on the Commission will expire in January 2029.



## **COMMISSIONER MARIE HOLDER**

Marie Holder was appointed to the Arkansas Highway Commission in 2020. Governor Asa Hutchinson also appointed Holder to the Arkansas Women's Commission. She served on the Arkansas State Medical Board where she represented patient interests as the consumer representative. Holder was the former Finance Director for Asa for Governor, Asa Political Action Committee (AsaPAC) and Executive Director of the Republican Party of Arkansas. Holder is Vice President of the Arkansas Governor's Mansion Association and was honored to be asked to serve on the 2023 Arkansas Inauguration Committee by Governor Sarah Huckabee Sanders. She was honored as Member of the Year by Women's Transportation Seminar (WTS) Arkansas chapter, seeking to promote lifelong careers in transportation — attracting, retaining, and advancing women in the industry. In her free time, she enjoys working with organizations that support young women, including local chapters of the National Charity League, Twentieth Century Club, Arkansas Children's Hospital Auxiliary, Delta Gamma Sorority, Daughters of the American Revolution, and the Juliet Circle of Girl Scouts. She is active in Second Presbyterian Church where she has been ordained as an elder and deacon. Holder, her husband Ryan, and their daughters live in Little Rock. Her term on the Commission will expire in January 2031.



## **COMMISSIONER DAVID HAAK**

David Haak of Texarkana was appointed to the Arkansas Highway Commission by Governor Sarah Huckabee Sanders in January 2023. Haak is a graduate of Henderson State University and is the owner of First Tape and Label in Texarkana. Haak has previously served many roles in public service including the Texarkana, Arkansas, Zoning and Planning Commission; the Texarkana Chamber of Commerce, where he served as Chairman in 2008; and Texarkana Arkansas City Council. At the state level, Haak has served on the Arkansas Waterways Commission, Arkansas Economic Development Commission, and was a member of the Arkansas House of Representatives from 1999-2004. Haak and his wife Debbie have been married for over 50 years and are members of First Baptist Church. They have one daughter Jennifer, son-in-law Michael, and three young adult grandchildren. Since turning the operations of the business over to his daughter, Haak can be found on his pecan farm most days. His term on the Commission will expire in January 2033.

# FOR 2024 AN EMPHASIS ON SAFETY

BY DAVID NILLES

ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED IN THE WINTER 2024  
ARKANSAS HIGHWAYS MAGAZINE



## **T**HE ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION'S MISSION HAS ALWAYS INCLUDED A FOCUS ON SAFETY

The safety of our roads, work zones and employees is of the greatest concern and priority at ARDOT. Within the last two years, ARDOT has lost three employees and friends. These employees made the ultimate sacrifice while performing their job duties to keep the roads safe for Arkansas motorists.

In December 2021, Kurt Cottier was struck and killed by an errant driver within a construction work zone near Morrilton in Conway County. In January 2022, Winfred Petty was struck and killed by a hit-and-run driver while setting up a work zone to repair Interstate 30 in Pulaski County. In May 2023, Timothy Harris was killed when he entered a travel lane along Interstate 430 to remove a shovel in order to prevent a crash from happening. The shovel had apparently fallen off a vehicle, creating a danger for road users.

Tragedies such as these are devastating. It intensifies the desire in everyone to do even more to ensure our employees are working in the safest environment possible. Director Lorie Tudor stated, "When it comes to employee safety, we will always continue to improve. We will never sit back and say – we've done enough. We will never quit striving to find ways to protect our employees as they work to serve and protect the public." As part of ARDOT's new Safety Initiative, the Department created a Safety Task Force with representation from across the Department.

Beginning in 2023, the task force has implemented new components into its safety program. Those components include work zone safety as well as short duration operations such as debris removal. ARDOT is working with the contracting industry to improve work zone safety and has implemented some major

improvements such as speed enforcement cameras in work zones. Many efforts to improve debris removal safety have also been implemented. These include:

### **VERY SHORT-DURATION OPERATIONS WORK ZONE PROCEDURE (VSDO)**

"We had a safety task force made up of ARDOT Maintenance and Construction personnel that got together and researched other states' best practices and then we came up with our VSDO," Steve Frisbee, Assistant Chief Engineer of Maintenance, shared. "The policy is in place, and we are training employees as soon as they start in Maintenance." The VSDO procedure is meant for work crew activity that takes no longer than five minutes in the roadway to complete at one specific location. It is intended to decrease the amount of time workers are exposed to traffic. Examples would be removal of debris from the travel lanes, installation or removal of a work zone device, taking a measurement or survey shot and guardrail inspection at a spot location.

The work vehicle on location should have flashing lights on and be placed on the shoulder in advance of the hazard or work operation to act as a shield to the worker. The activity should be performed downstream of the work vehicle whenever possible. Depending on roadway speeds and traffic volume, a spotter (a person other than the one doing the work) shall be used. When high-speed and high-volume traffic exists, workers shall not enter or cross a live lane of traffic for any reason.

Very short duration work can only be performed from the shoulder in this case. "Every District, and every county office has purchased long-reach poles with hooks," Frisbee noted. The poles will prevent crews from having to step into a travel lane to retrieve debris items.



## ARDOT is working with the contracting industry to improve work zone safety and has implemented some major improvements...

### LANEBLADE UNITS AND GATOR GETTERS

ARDOT has purchased 13 LaneBlade units for Department maintenance trucks and crews that serve our larger interstates. The LaneBlade unit can safely remove debris from live travel lanes while keeping workers safely operating the equipment from the cab of the service vehicle. The new touch screen controller makes simple work of deploying or stowing the LaneBlade and showing the operator debris that is out of their sight line. ARDOT is also purchasing Gator Getter debris removal devices for fast-speed highway debris removal.

These will be installed on dump trucks across the state. This equipment works by scooping up debris while traveling down the road. At regular speeds, it will push the item up and around the barrel to a collection tray which will hold it until emptied. It offers benefits such as not having personnel on the road to remove debris in a traffic stream, no road shutdowns, and no traffic slowdowns. The purchase of these two types of devices is part of an initiative to improve safety for removal of debris from interstate lanes.

"The LaneBlade trucks are beginning to show up out on the roads and eventually these will be in every one of our Districts," Frisbee noted. "It's the same with the Gator Getters, we already have some of those in place and we have more coming." Maintenance workers on the roads will have increased visibility this year.

### 10-POINT BEST PRACTICE PLAN FOR DEBRIS REMOVAL

This plan details a step-by-step process for debris pick up. Large posters featuring the 10-Point Plan have been installed in every county headquarters across the state.

### GREEN FLASHING LIGHTS ON MAINTENANCE AND CONSTRUCTION VEHICLES

ARDOT has recently received approval from the Arkansas Division of Emergency Management (ADEM) for use of green flashing lights in conjunction with amber and white lights for maintenance and construction vehicles in work zones. The addition of green flashing lights will enhance the visibility of vehicles in these zones, especially during bright daylight and inclement weather. "We are in the middle of implementing the new green lights," Frisbee noted. "There are quite a few out there on the roads already."

### GREEN VESTS

ARDOT is also implementing a new policy that requires all new maintenance employees to wear a green vest for their first six months of employment. This vest will be worn in lieu of the orange vest that other employees wear. The green vests will provide a regular visual reminder for the crews to recognize newer employees, and to help monitor and ensure their safety as they are learning their jobs. Both vest colors are equally compliant with national safety standards.

### CONSPICUITY STICKERS

Maintenance workers on the roads will have increased visibility this year. The Department is adding conspicuity stickers to the back of crew pickup trucks. They consist of red and green striped reflective strips across the tailgates. The stickers enhance the visibility of Department vehicles for motorists approaching the work area.

### SPEAK UP: REPORT ANY SAFETY CONCERNS

Another new initiative to improve safety is the development of a



**Kurt Cottier, 12/19/21**



**Winfred Petty, 1/18/22**



**Timothy Harris Jr., 5/8/23**

“safety concern” reporting tool. For employees that have a safety concern, this tool allows them to speak up by scanning a QR code and reporting any safety concerns directly to the Health and Safety Section. All concerns and recommendations turned in will be reviewed by the Health and Safety Section Head and District Safety Teams.

#### **ADDITIONAL SAFETY TRAINING FOR NEW EMPLOYEES**

“All new construction/maintenance employees will go through a New Employee Orientation (NEO) class the first week they are hired,” Eddie Tanner, Section Head of Health and Safety, shared. The training will consist of an overview of the following:

1. ARDOT Safety Manual
2. Bloodborne Pathogens
3. Flagger Training
4. Construction Safety: Working Safely in Work Zones
5. An Overview of the new VSDO policy and guidelines

“New employees will also be required to complete and pass the new Basic Flagger and VSDO quiz before working on the roadway,” Tanner added.

“Having worked for many years of my career in the field, I have

first-hand experience in standing one foot away from live traffic traveling at high speeds and the dangers involved,” Frisbee shared. “We are focused on improving safety for our employees involved with debris removal from the interstates. We need to ensure that ARDOT employees are protected as they work to protect the public by removing debris that could cause a crash. We are really excited about these best practices that we’ve come up with and using ‘out of the box’ thinking on how to remove that debris.”

ARDOT is confident that with these additional safety practices in place for maintenance and construction personnel like Timothy Harris, Kurt Cottier and Winfred Petty, we can prevent serious accidents and ensure workers get home safely at the end of the day. “Timothy was a comedian,” his family shared. “Everybody knew when he was there because he would crack jokes and make his funny little gestures. He was a great father and always enjoyed providing for his children.”

“We hope what happened to Timothy won’t happen to anyone else’s family,” Timothy’s mom Sharon explained. “Timothy’s life was all about his work and providing for his children at all costs.”



# IN THE PATH OF TOTALITY

BY RUTHIE BERRYHILL

ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED IN THE SPRING 2024  
ARKANSAS HIGHWAYS MAGAZINE

## **O**N MONDAY, APRIL 8, 2024, A 117-MILE-WIDE SHADOW CREPT ACROSS THE SKIES IN PORTIONS OF ARKANSAS.

The shadow quietly drifted across the skies of the state – arriving from the southwest, around DeQueen. It traveled in a diagonal line and gradually brought darkness everywhere it touched. The sun seemed to disappear and only the shadow was visible.

For a few minutes, mid-afternoon appeared to be early evening. City streetlights came on and drivers turned on vehicle headlights. Birds returned to their nests and were silent. Insects began chirping. The whole world seemed to pause and hold its breath in awe.

The shadow departed the state near Pochontas at roughly 2 p.m., leaving just as quietly as it arrived. Suddenly, it was bright outside once again, gradually returning to normal daytime brightness. This much-anticipated astronomical event, dubbed the “2024 Great North American Eclipse,” passed over Mexico, the U.S., and Canada. Entering the U.S. in Texas, it traveled across Oklahoma, Arkansas, Missouri, and other states to the east.

Prior to the 2024 Eclipse, the last total solar eclipse to pass over the continental U.S. occurred in 2017 and resulted in millions of people traveling to the path of totality. Arkansas was not in “the path of totality” during the 2017 event.

### **A TOTAL SOLAR ECLIPSE**

What is a total solar eclipse? What is the “path of totality?” During a total solar eclipse, the moon passes between the sun and earth, blocking the light from the sun. The process occurs gradually, starting with a partial eclipse, then moves into a total eclipse, and

then moves back into a period of partial eclipse before the skies return to normal.

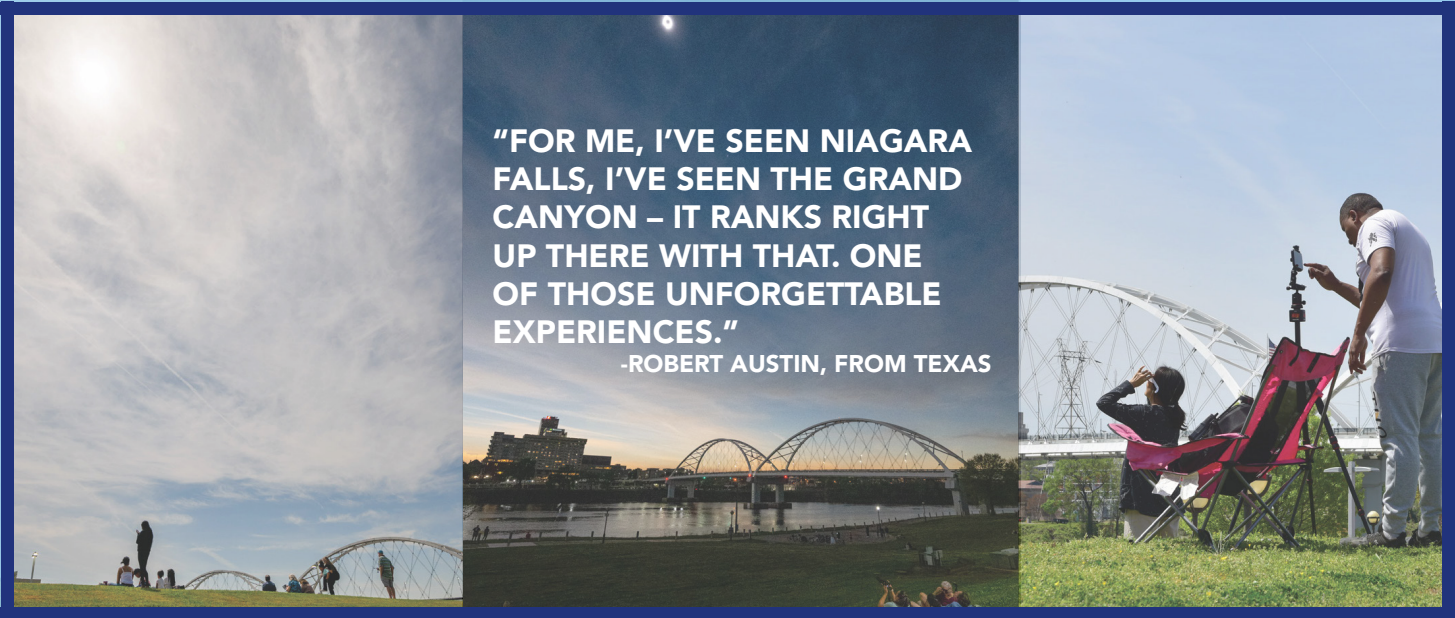
On April 8, two-thirds of Arkansas experienced this daytime period of darkness, similar to what is usually seen at dawn or dusk. Those areas of the state that experienced a total solar eclipse were in “the path of totality.”

Prior to the 2024 Great North American Eclipse, Arkansas has only been in the direct path of two Total Solar Eclipses – one in 1834 when Arkansas was still a territory and then in 1918. In 1834, reports tell us that the weather was clear, and the view of the eclipse was optimal. In 1918, most of the portions of Arkansas within the path of the eclipse experienced cloudy skies and rain, obscuring the view. The next time Arkansas will be in the path of totality for a solar eclipse is 2045.

### **PREPARING FOR UP TO 1 MILLION VISITORS**

A month before the eclipse, Governor Sarah Huckabee Sanders held a joint news conference with state officials at the ARDOT Central Office in Little Rock.

“Next month’s eclipse has the potential to be one of the largest events in our state history and we want to make sure that we were prepared for the influx of visitors that we expect to come here to the state,” Governor Sanders said at the news conference. Officials from the Governor’s Office, ARDOT, Arkansas Department of Parks, Heritage and Tourism, Arkansas Department of Public Safety, Arkansas State Police, Arkansas National Guard, Arkansas Department of Emergency Management (ADEM), Arkansas Department of Human Services, Arkansas Department of Health, Arkansas Office of Preparedness



and Emergency Response Systems, and the Arkansas Department of Education participated in the news conference.

“Many people will be coming to our state for the first time and we want to make sure they keep coming back time and time again,” Sanders said. The Governor said that she anticipated between approximately 300,000 to one million visitors to the state during the eclipse. State officials began planning for the event at least two years prior in order to mitigate any significant issues with travel, lodging, emergency services, and more. With that in mind, a multi-agency effort worked together in advance to prepare for a large influx.

In the time leading up to the eclipse, ARDOT worked to educate people about what to expect before, during, and after the eclipse, and to ask for the public’s assistance in planning ahead. “We just need to make the public aware of what traffic could be like that day and to manage those expectations so that everybody’s prepared for that day,” ARDOT Director Lorie Tudor said during the news conference. As part of the planning process, ARDOT met with officials from other state departments of transportation that had been in the path of totality during previous eclipses.

“Based on prior experiences in other states during Eclipse events we know there’s going to be delays and so, in collaboration with other state agencies and the Governor, we have developed a Traffic Management Plan to help address these anticipated traffic issues,” Tudor said. As part of the Traffic Management Plan, ARDOT asked people to reduce travel, especially on routes of concern, advised school districts to close on the day of the eclipse, encouraged employers to allow employees to work from home or adjust work schedules, and requested that truckers adjust their travel schedules.

All highway construction projects that were let prior to the eclipse included a Total Solar Eclipse Special Provision (SP) that limited main lane road closures in the days immediately before, during, and after the eclipse. Based on data from the 2017 Eclipse, 80% of those visiting the area of the eclipse were predicted to leave immediately after the eclipse ended. A large part of ARDOT’s preparation included plans to handle the extra volume of traffic, keeping our roadways from becoming overwhelmed. The many events and festivals planned around the eclipse also helped keep people in place longer, which spread out the volume of traffic over a longer period of time. The day of the Eclipse, ARDOT employees joined other state officials at the Joint Information Center (JIC) to coordinate efforts and keep the public up to date on highway conditions within the state.

On Friday, April 5, Governor Sanders issued an executive order declaring a state of emergency prior to the Eclipse that remained in effect until Wednesday, April 10. The order released \$100,000 from the Governor’s Disaster Response and Recovery Fund.

### COUNTDOWN TO THE ECLIPSE

In the months and weeks leading up to the eclipse, many hotel and motel accommodations in the path of totality were completely booked. Rates for motels and hotels soared. Colleges, universities, and other schools within the path conducted scientific experiments before, during, and after the eclipse. A NASA team of science and communications experts set up in Russellville days before the eclipse to “help viewers experience the April 8 total solar eclipse through the eyes of NASA.” Russellville had been named one of the top 10 eclipse viewing sites in the country by astronomy.com and had a little over four minutes of totality.

Stadiums, amphitheaters, farms, parks, zoos, and other large venues planned eclipse watch parties and events. Merchandise from commemorative t-shirts to key chains to hats to eclipse glasses could be found throughout the state. Russellville was host to an “Elope at the Eclipse” mass wedding ceremony. Some Arkansans rented out their homes, guest bedrooms, RVs, campers, and even farmland to people wanting a place to stay or camp during the days before and after the event. Many visitors made reservations for accommodations up to a year in advance.

Residents within the path watched from their homes. Many not in the path traveled to other areas of the state to view the eclipse. Even staff members at ARDOT’s Central Office participated in this historic event, heading outside to watch the Eclipse from the campus. While viewing the Eclipse, we caught up with Assistant Chief Engineer for Maintenance, Steve Frisbee, to get his thoughts. We asked him how he felt after having spent almost two years planning for the day. “I’m happy that it’s almost over (laughing). Traffic has been great so far aside from a few backups. But we’re looking forward to moving on to normal operations after this.” Many of the ARDOT Central Office staff also were thinking of their coworkers who were out on the state’s highways and at rest stops to make sure that traffic continued to move safely. “This is history. It’s such a great opportunity to watch this in real-time. We have a lot of crews out there, so I’m glad everyone is safe,” Shaun Addison, Executive Assistant to the Chief Engineer of Operations, said.

### IF YOU DON'T LIKE THE WEATHER...

About a week out, weather forecasters began to caution about possible cloud cover and rain during the time of the eclipse. Luckily the predicted clouds and rain delayed until later in the day and Arkansas experienced mostly clear to clear skies for the duration of the eclipse. Some parts of southwest and southeast Arkansas saw low clouds, but nothing like forecasters had feared. The same didn’t hold true for other states in the path of totality, including Texas. “Originally, we were going to watch the eclipse in Texas, but we were in McKinney and the thunderstorms were coming in,” Mike Rottler, a visitor from California, said. As parts of Texas reported heavy cloud cover and storms in the hours before the eclipse, travelers were sent scrambling to other nearby states for a clear view. Many headed into Arkansas.

“We were going to head into to Texas to see the eclipse. Well, then the clouds happened, and rain happened,” Kathy Smith, a visitor from Pearl River, Louisiana, said. “So we were watching the news and said well, maybe we could go into Arkansas toward Little Rock and it will be clearer. We’ve been

watching the tv news and weather and the Weather Channel on our apps to make sure that we could get to whatever it’s going to be like. And this morning it was 3% rain, so Little Rock it’s going to be.”

### TRAVELING TO TOTALITY

Luis Vargis of San Luis Obispo, California flew to Houston with hopes of seeing the Eclipse in Austin, Texas with friends there. “But then the weather said no and I did the research and came through Sulphur Springs,” Vargis said. He drove for several hours to get to a place with better weather. “It is an experience that I hope everybody gets to see, once in their lifetime. It’s really neat – as you can tell I wasn’t going to miss it.” Chris Beard from Bellingham, Washington traveled from Albuquerque where she met up with her lifelong friend so they could travel together to see the eclipse. She kept watching the weather as she traveled, adjusting her route based on the best place to view the eclipse. “I didn’t come all the way from Bellingham to have clouds or to not have totality.” The Social Hill Rest Stop on I-30 turned out to be a perfect place for her to stop and wake up the next morning to see the eclipse. She was traveling in a camper van. “We ended up discovering that Arkansas rest stops allow you to stay overnight, so here we are.”

Tim Austin, of Peoria, Illinois planned to view the eclipse in Dallas, but the weather changed his plans and left him checking the forecast for a better location. “We were on the countdown clock, looking for where the clouds would open up.” Joe Niddermeyer from Brookfield, Connecticut had also planned to view the eclipse from Texas. “We planned to go to Sulphur Springs, Texas,” Niddermeyer said. “But then the weather got crummy in Texas. We started checking maps and weather and said it looks like it is better close to Little Rock. We spotted this rest stop on Google Maps.” Benjamin Janik, from Atlanta, traveled to Arkansas to view and photograph the eclipse. He is an astrophotographer and celestial cartographer. “We made our way north, just kinda watched the weather. Got very lucky when we pulled into this rest stop which we found very convenient that you can access from both directions safely.”

### THE NUMBERS

The Arkansas Department of Parks, Heritage and Tourism



reported that more than 200,000 visitors from 48 states and several countries visited Arkansas State Parks for the eclipse. Arkansas Welcome Centers reported having more than 41,000 visitors from dozens of states and 14 countries. ARDOT's Continuous Count Stations (CCS) around the state show that most of Arkansas' traffic increases were from day trippers. Overall, Sunday traffic numbers had no change or a decrease from an average Sunday. Vehicle traffic resulting from the eclipse on Monday was heaviest in western and northern Arkansas, but not in Central Arkansas. At Interstate 49 in Alma, traffic counters recorded a 50% increase in traffic with approximately 15,000 more vehicles than usual on the road. On U.S. 65 in north Arkansas, north of Marshall, there was an 80% increase in traffic counts, but only 5,200 vehicles above the average weekday. However, these numbers could include vehicles that came in for the eclipse and then left the same day.

The day of the Eclipse, Arkansas Highway Patrol Chief, Jeff Holmes was prepared for the extra traffic in the state. "It's a once-in-a-lifetime thing to be able to see. We have a lot of people out helping motorists and we're on top of it. We have officers all over the state helping drivers," Holmes said.

Numbers show that Central Arkansas did not see an increase in traffic and, in fact, counting stations in the Little Rock area saw a dramatic decrease. Interstate 430 north of the Arkansas River saw a 30% decrease or 28,000 fewer vehicles below average. Interstate 30 at the Pulaski County/Saline County line saw a 25% decrease or 30,000 fewer vehicles. Most likely, this can be attributed to ARDOT's advance planning. "There were some backups later in the evening from Jonesboro towards Memphis and Russellville towards Fort Smith. Traffic was moving, but it was extremely heavy," Holmes said. According to Denise Powell, ARDOT Digital Content Coordinator, on eclipse day, ARDOT's

IDriveArkansas.com was accessed by more than 112,000 users, including 78,000 new users. On an average Monday, the site usually sees closer to approximately 13,700 users and 7,700 new users. On April 8, IDrive's traffic cameras were streaming at 8.76 terabytes (TB), up almost 2 ½ times that of a typical Monday's 2.39TB. IDriveArkansas.com is ARDOT's website platform and mobile app that travelers can use to check road conditions and view live traffic cameras. NASA reported that their live eclipse broadcast from Russellville had more than 13 million views. Also in Russellville, the "Elope at the Eclipse" mass wedding ceremony had more than 250 couples from 24 states participating.

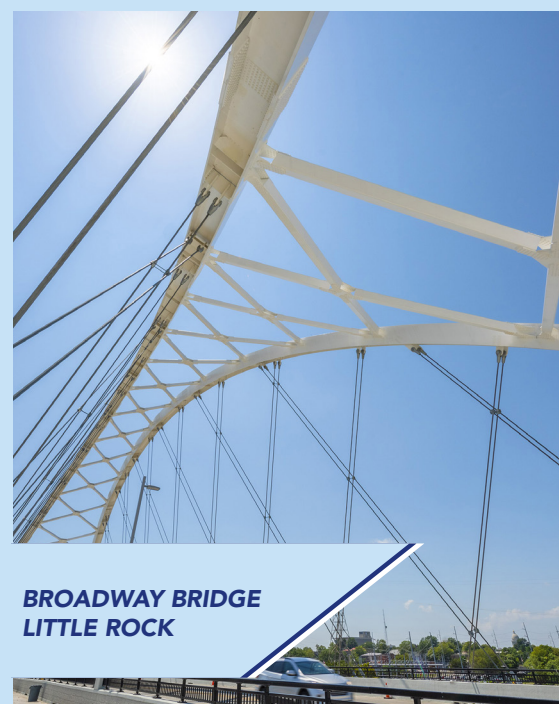
### A TOTAL ECLIPSE OF ARKANSAS

Reactions to the Eclipse varied from person to person, but everyone we spoke to had a positive experience. "Videos don't do it justice, the partial eclipse doesn't do it justice – you need the full view," John Fries, who traveled to Arkansas from Philadelphia, said. Janik traveled with his wife, Whitney Gregory, and young daughter, Nova. Even though he was here to get photography of the eclipse for his work, he also wanted to enjoy the experience because "It's just elation. It's like three minutes of bliss. There's really nothing like it." However, Janik said that the best part was viewing the eclipse with his daughter. "I try to make sure to enjoy a moment with my daughter. We've got all this equipment, and you get so focused on the process of getting ready and taking photos," Janik said. "I'll remember that moment with Nova, that's spectacular. I hope she gets to see many more."

Robert Austin, from Mansfield, Texas traveled the morning of the eclipse with his brother, Tim to view the eclipse together. "For me, I've seen Niagara Falls, I've seen the Grand Canyon – it ranks right up there with that. One of those unforgettable experiences."



**SOLAR ECLIPSE PRESS CONFERENCE**



**BROADWAY BRIDGE  
LITTLE ROCK**



# ADOPT-A-HIGHWAY

Since 1987, more than 2,500 organizations have adopted stretches of Arkansas highways across the state. The Adopt-A-Highway program has increased public awareness of what it takes to maintain the highway right-of-way while providing an opportunity for volunteers to become personally involved in keeping Arkansas beautiful. Volunteers help maintain more than 100,000 acres of right-of-way across nearly 16,500 miles of highways. February, March, and April were the months that saw the most trash cleaned up: 1,049, 1,328, and 875 bags respectively.

## TOP 3 DISTRICTS:

**VOLUNTEERS**  
 District 3: 1,161  
 District 6: 881  
 District 3: 647

**BAGS COLLECTED**  
 District 6: 1,404  
 District 3: 893  
 District 9: 299

**CLEANUP HOURS**  
 District 8: 780  
 District 6: 496  
 District 3: 299

## GROUPS BY DISTRICT:

District 1: 14  
 District 2: 28  
 District 3: 65  
 District 4: 75  
 District 5: 43  
 District 6: 74  
 District 7: 38  
 District 8: 141  
 District 9: 132  
 District 10: 58  
**668 TOTAL GROUPS**

## PROGRAM TOTALS:

**VOLUNTEERS**  
 4,733  
**CLEANUP HOURS**  
 2,346

**BAGS OF TRASH**  
 5,630

**BAGS OF ALUMINUM**  
 33  
**BAGS OF PLASTIC**  
 37

# 2024 TOP CONTRACTS

## WHAT ARE CONSTRUCTION CONTRACTS?

Construction contracts are agreements between ARDOT and contractors for transportation-related construction projects. In 2024, ARDOT let to contract **238** projects for a total of **\$1,325,626,578**.

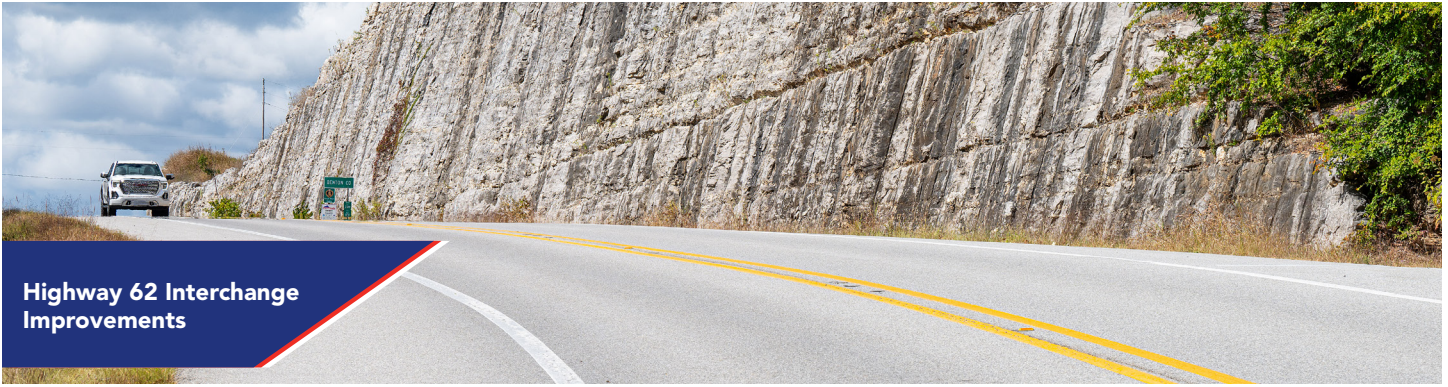
## WHAT IS IRP?

IRP stands for Interstate Rehabilitation Program. Under this program, the Arkansas Highway Commission was authorized to issue Grant Anticipation Revenue Vehicles (GARVEE) bonds for Interstate Rehabilitation. Thanks to this program, 54 interstate projects were completed, covering over 350 miles and totaling over \$1.3 billion. The final project of the program was Highway 71B interchange improvements in Bentonville/Rogers and was completed in November 2022.

## WHAT IS CAP?

CAP stands for Connecting Arkansas Program. This program was funded by a voter-approved, 10-year, half-cent sales tax. Thanks to this program, to date there have been 31 projects let, covering 200 miles and totaling over \$1.8 billion. The final project of the program is the Highway 67 widening in Jacksonville and is expected to be completed in late 2026.





## TOP CONTRACTS AWARDED IN 2024 BY DOLLAR AMOUNT:

PROJECT	JOB NUMBER	COUNTY	AMOUNT
Future Interstate 49 from Highway 22 to Gun Club Road	040901	Crawford and Sebastian	\$282,499,739
Northwest Arkansas National Airport Access Road	090069	Benton	\$127,674,716
Interstate 49/Highway 62 Interchange Improvements	040846	Washington	\$99,982,313
Future Interstate 57 Corning Bypass	101172	Clay	\$55,892,021
Highway 49 North from Paragould	100633	Greene	\$23,927,182
Highways 33 and 63 at La Grue Bayou, Wolf Island Slash, and Honey Creek	061615	Prairie	\$23,484,085
Interstate 540 from Highway 22 to Interstate 40, Select Sections	040826	Crawford and Sebastian	\$21,955,313
Highway 135 at Ditch 6, Tyronza River, Ditch 47, and Ditch 12	101124	Poinsett	\$18,938,659
Highway 82 at Cornie Bayou, Harper Creek, and Lapile Creek	070471	Columbia and Union	\$18,613,706
Highways 9 and 64, Select Sections	A80031	Conway and Perry	\$17,680,027

## TOTAL AMOUNT BY YEAR:

YEAR	PROJECTS	AMOUNT
2017*†	249	\$512,101,932
2018*†	268	\$878,178,919
2019†	201	\$664,716,322
2020*†	271	\$883,184,382
2021†	195	\$487,220,765
2022†	231	\$1,154,751,671
2023	267	\$1,464,015,469
2024	238	\$1,325,626,578

\*Includes IRP projects authorized by a half-cent sales tax increase in 2012.

† Includes CAP projects authorized by a half-cent sales tax increase in 2012.

# PROGRAMS IN PROGRESS

## RENEW ARKANSAS HIGHWAYS PROGRAM

Beginning on July 1, 2023, ARDOT started receiving revenue from the permanent half-cent sales tax for Arkansas' roads and bridges. This stable source of revenue was approved by voters in 2020 and has been added to existing State and Federal funding sources to help improve and maintain the State Highway System. The additional funding will help ARDOT make significant progress toward bringing the system into a state of good repair and will contribute to major capital and congestion relief projects designed to promote economic development.

## TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM

The Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) is a competitive grant program that provides funding for a variety of transportation projects such as pedestrian and bicycle facilities; community improvements such as historic preservation and habitat connectivity; recreational trails; overlooks; safe routes to school projects; and vulnerable road user safety assessments. In 2024, 54 projects were awarded for \$16.7 million.

## CONNECTING ARKANSAS PROGRAM

In 2012, through a voter-approved constitutional amendment, the people of Arkansas passed a 10-year, half-cent sales tax to improve highway and infrastructure projects throughout the state. The resulting Connecting Arkansas Program (CAP) is one of the largest highway construction programs ever undertaken by ARDOT. Thirty-one projects in 19 corridors have improved or will improve Arkansas' transportation system by expanding selected two-lane roadways to four-lane highways and adding new lanes to selected interstate highways.

At the end of 2024, the final two of the 31 projects were under construction: in Saline County, a project widening 5.4 miles of Interstate 30, reconstructing three interchanges, and replacing five bridge structures; and in Pulaski County, a project widening Highway 67 to six lanes from Main Street to Vandenburg Boulevard, making interchange improvements, and replacing three structures. The contracts for these two projects total \$332.5 million.

## RECREATIONAL TRAILS PROGRAM

The Recreational Trails Program (RTP) is a competitive grant program that provides funding to develop and maintain recreational trails and trail-related facilities for both non-motorized and motorized recreational trail uses. RTP funds benefit recreation, including hiking, bicycling, equestrian use, off-road motorcycling, all-terrain vehicle riding, four-wheel driving, or use of other off-road motorized vehicles. In 2024, 11 projects were awarded for \$2.46 million.

# CONSTRUCTION HIGHLIGHTS



HIGHWAY 118



FUTURE INTERSTATE 69

## DISTRICT ONE

**COUNTIES:** CRITTENDEN, CROSS, LEE, MONROE, PHILLIPS, ST. FRANCIS, WOODRUFF

### ST. FRANCIS RIVER RECOVERY

This \$700,000 project by Mobley Contractors, Inc. recovered a collapsed bridge over the St. Francis River on Highway 42 near Coldwater in December 2024. The bridge had been closed and crews were in the process of repairing pilings when the structure collapsed. The collapsed bridge needed to be recovered first before a replacement could be built. The recovery project was completed in a quarter of the estimated time. The bridge replacement is expected to be let to contract in mid-2025.

### HIGHWAY 118

APAC-Tennessee, Inc. completed a \$4.7 million pavement preservation project on Highway 118 in Crittenden County in June 2024. The project resurfaced 4.2 miles between Highway 64 and Highway 70 through Marion and West Memphis.

### MCNULTY LAKE, HOG TUSK CREEK, AND SPRING CREEK BRIDGES

In March 2024, Mobley Contractors, Inc. completed a \$6.5 million project to replace three bridges over McNulty Lake, Hog Tusk Creek, and Spring Creek on Highway 78 in Lee County.

## DISTRICT TWO

**COUNTIES:** ARKANSAS, ASHLEY, CHICOT, DESHA, DREW, GRANT, JEFFERSON, LINCOLN

### HIGHWAY 83 SPUR TO HIGHWAY 278 CONNECTOR

This \$30 million project by Mobley Contractors, Inc. will construct a north-south connector between Highway 83 Spur and Highway 278 near Monticello. The project was let to contract in January 2023 and has an estimated completion date of mid-2025. This project will follow Scogin Drive north from Highway 83 Spur, then extend on new location until it connects with Highway 278. It includes the construction of two roundabouts and a railroad overpass. This project was made possible through a partnership with the City of Monticello and Drew County. The City contributed \$2.5 million and Drew County provided \$505,000. In addition to the financial contributions, portions of Highways 83 and 83 Spur will be removed from the State Highway System and transferred to the City of Monticello and Drew County upon completion of the project.

### HIGHWAY 278 TO HIGHWAY 293 SPUR CONNECTOR (FUTURE INTERSTATE 69)

This \$61 million project will construct 8.3 miles of two-lane roadway on new location as well as two bridge structures between Highways 278 and 293 Spur. The new highway will be designated as Highway 569 and will be part of the Future Interstate 69 corridor. Let to contract in August of 2022 to WL Bass Construction, Inc., this project is scheduled to be completed in late 2027.



HIGHWAY 355



INTERSTATE 49 / WEDINGTON DRIVE INTERCHANGE

## DISTRICT THREE

**COUNTIES:** HEMPSTEAD, HOWARD, LAFAYETTE, LITTLE RIVER, MILLER, NEVADA, PIKE, SEVIER

### HIGHWAY 355

This \$16.5 million project by Redstone Construction Group, Inc. overlaid 17.5 miles of Highway 355 between McNab and Mineral Springs in Hempstead and Howard Counties respectively. The project also included shoulder widening, gutter replacements, and guardrail replacements. It was completed in December 2024.

### HIGHWAYS 108 AND 296

This \$10.3 million project by RK Hall Construction consisted of milling, leveling, overlaying, and adding guardrails and rumble strips on 11.5 miles of Highways 108 and 296 in Miller County. It was finished in March 2024.

### HIGHWAY 71

This \$6.5 million project by RK Hall Construction milled, leveled, and overlaid 10.6 miles of Highway 71 in Sevier County in April 2024. Safety improvements consisting of new guardrails and rumble strips also were included.

## DISTRICT FOUR

**COUNTIES:** CRAWFORD, FRANKLIN, POLK, SCOTT, SEBASTIAN, WASHINGTON

### INTERSTATE 49/WEDINGTON DRIVE INTERCHANGE

Reconstruction of the Interstate 49/Wedington Drive interchange was completed by Manhattan Road and Bridge Company in September 2024. This \$40 million project added capacity with the reconstruction of the overpass from a five- to eight-lane structure with a multiuse side path. The project also added a two-lane loop ramp, eliminating left turns for northbound traffic accessing Interstate 49.

### SPRINGDALE WESTERN BYPASS

Work began on the western leg of the Springdale Bypass in Benton and Washington Counties in January 2024. The job was awarded to Emery Sapp and Sons for \$181 million and consists of 6.9 miles of new location roadway and sixteen bridge structures. The Bypass will link Highway 412 with Highway 112/612. The estimated completion date is fall 2026.



HIGHWAY 167 EMERGENCY ROUTE



30 CROSSING

## DISTRICT FIVE

**COUNTIES:** CLEBURNE, FULTON, INDEPENDENCE, IZARD, JACKSON, SHARP, STONE, WHITE

### HIGHWAY 9

This \$4.1 million pavement preservation project on Highway 9 from Brandenburg to Highway 69 was completed by Atlas Asphalt in June 2024. This project included minor widening, guardrail upgrades, and resurfacing along 11 miles of Highway 9.

### HIGHWAY 167 EMERGENCY ROUTE

White River Materials was awarded a \$1.6 million contract to construct additional lanes to be used in emergency situations on Highway 167 at Ramsey Mountain, between the cities of Batesville and Southside. Prior to adding these emergency lanes, the traveling public would have to take a 40-mile detour in the event of a road closure. This corridor carries the highest volume of daily traffic in that area, so the emergency lanes were a critical addition. This project was made possible through a partnership with the city of Batesville, city of Southside, and Independence County. Both cities provided Right of Way; Independence County provided Right of Way, materials, and labor for the project.

## DISTRICT SIX

**COUNTIES:** GARLAND, HOT SPRING, LONOKE, PRAIRIE, PULASKI, SALINE

### 30 CROSSING

This \$540 million project widened Interstate 30 from Interstate 630 in downtown Little Rock, across the Arkansas River, to Interstate 40 in North Little Rock. The project was completed by Kiewit-Massman Construction (a joint venture between Kiewit Corporation and Massman Construction Co.) in November 2024, roughly six months ahead of schedule. This was the first design-build project in the state of Arkansas, combining design and construction into one contract, delivering a more efficient, transparent, and cost-effective result. When construction began, this stretch of Interstate 30 carried around 120,000 vehicles per day; it is forecasted to carry upwards of 143,000 vehicles per day in 2045.

### HIGHWAY 5

Kiewit Infrastructure South Company was awarded a \$20 million project in early 2024 to widen 1.2 miles of Highway 5 from Interstate 30 to Alcoa Road and add bike lanes. The job was completed in January 2025.

### HIGHWAY 67

Weaver-Bailey Contractors was awarded a \$116 million contract in early 2024 to replace two bridge structures and widen and improve 3.7 miles of Highway 67 from Highway 5 to Highway 89 in Lonoke County. The estimated completion date is mid-2027.



HIGHWAY 82



HIGHWAY 113 RELOCATION

## DISTRICT SEVEN

**COUNTIES:** BRADLEY, CALHOUN, CLARK, CLEVELAND, COLUMBIA, DALLAS, OUACHITA, UNION

### ARKADELPHIA BYPASS

The Arkadelphia Bypass project in Clark County was awarded in August 2022 to McGeorge Contracting Company, Inc. for \$56 million. The project, which will connect Highway 67 to Highway 51, has an estimated completion date of late 2026. This project was made possible through a partnership with the City of Arkadelphia, Clark County, Ouachita Baptist University, and Henderson State University. The Universities provided Right of Way for the project; the County provided 20% of the total project costs up to a maximum of \$8 million; and the City took on the responsibility of hiring an engineering firm to prepare construction plans for the temporary traffic signal at the intersection of Highway 51 and Professional Park Drive and to provide funding to relocate City utilities. The City also agreed to take ownership of the portion of Highway 51 (Pine Street) between Interstate 30 and Highway 67 upon completion of the project.

### HIGHWAY 7

In September 2023, McGeorge Contracting Company, Inc. was awarded a \$22 million contract to construct 5.5 miles of passing lanes on Highway 7 in Clark and Hot Spring Counties. This project has an estimated completion date of mid-2025.

### HIGHWAY 82

In February 2024, Mahaffey Construction Company was awarded a \$19 million project to construct three bridges along Highway 82 in Union and Columbia Counties. The project has an estimated completion date of mid-2027.

## DISTRICT EIGHT

**COUNTIES:** CONWAY, FAULKNER, JOHNSON, MONTGOMERY, PERRY, POPE, VAN BUREN, LOGAN, YELL

### CONWAY ROUNDABOUT

Rogers Group, Inc. is constructing a roundabout at the intersection of Highway 64 and Hogan Lane in Conway. The \$3.7 million project began in mid-2024 and is estimated to be completed in the fall of 2025.

### HIGHWAY 113 RELOCATION

This \$9.7 million highway relocation project was awarded to McGeorge Contracting Company, Inc. in May 2024. The job involves moving a portion of Highway 113 near Morrilton onto new location. This project was sponsored by a network of partnerships between Conway County, the City of Morrilton, Faulkner County, Johnson County, Pope County, Saline County, White County, Green Bay Packaging, and the Arkansas Economic Development Commission (AEDC). It is estimated to be completed by summer 2025. Twenty-five percent of the project funds were provided through Act 1 of the 90th General Assembly that established the Arkansas Highway Improvement Plan of 2016, which provides funding to help address highway construction needs of the State. The city of Morrilton and each county listed agreed to accept ownership of and responsibility for portions of highway in their respective jurisdictions upon completion of this project.

### HIGHWAYS 9 AND 64

This \$17.7 million pavement preservation project was awarded to Blackstone Construction, LLC. The project included paving approximately 34 miles of Highway 9 in Conway and Perry Counties as well as a little over two miles of Highway 64 in the City of Morrilton. The project was completed in November 2024.



NORTHWEST NATIONAL AIRPORT ACCESS



DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DRIVE EXTENSION

## DISTRICT NINE

**COUNTIES:** BAXTER, BENTON, BOONE, CARROLL, MADISON, MARION, NEWTON, SEARCY

### NORTHWEST NATIONAL AIRPORT ACCESS

This \$127.7 million job by Crossland Construction Company, Inc. is constructing four miles of new location, four-lane, divided highway and 11 new bridges – providing access the Northwest Arkansas National Airport in Benton County. The estimated completion date is mid-2027. This project was made possible through the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century that provided \$16 million in Federal aid for the construction of an access road from Highway 71 and/or Highway 412 to the Northwest Arkansas Regional Airport.

### CROOKED CREEK BRIDGE REPLACEMENT

In early 2024, construction began on the replacement of the Highway 65B (S. Main Street) bridge over Crooked Creek in Harrison. This \$9.8 million job was awarded to West Plains Bridge and Grading, LLC. The estimated completion date is mid-2026.

## DISTRICT TEN

**COUNTIES:** CLAY, CRAIGHEAD, GREENE, LAWRENCE, MISSISSIPPI, POINSETT, RANDOLPH

### HIGHWAY 18 SPUR (DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DRIVE EXTENSION)

This \$61.1 million job in Craighead County was awarded to White River Materials in November 2022. The project will widen and extend 4.5 miles of Highway 18 Spur (Martin Luther King Boulevard). The project starts at I-555 and the extension will tie to Highway 49.

### CORNING BYPASS

This \$55.9 million job to construct the Corning Bypass (Future Interstate 57) was awarded to Koss Construction Company in September 2024. This project will construct four miles of new location, divided interstate west of Corning. The estimated completion date is August 2027.

### HIGHWAY 135

This \$18.9 million job to replace four bridges on Highway 135 in Poinsett County was awarded to Robertson Contractors in March 2024. The estimated completion date is late 2025.

# 2024 EVENTS

## SPECIAL EVENTS



### WORK ZONE AWARENESS WEEK

#### *Little Rock*

Work Zone Awareness Week is a national safety campaign observed each spring, traditionally at the start of construction season, to encourage safe driving through work zones across the country. During the 2024 event, ARDOT unveiled plans for a Fallen Workers' Memorial, a special project the Department is embarking on with the help of the Arkansas Good Roads Foundation and other industry partners. Additionally, ARDOT displayed new safety equipment including greenlight vehicles, Lane Blade devices, and Gator Getters.



### INTERSTATE 57 DESIGNATION

#### *Beebe*

This event commemorated the official designation of 110 miles of U.S. Highway 67 as Interstate 57 between North Little Rock and Walnut Ridge. The entirety of the 240-mile Future Interstate 57 Corridor from North Little Rock to Sikeston, Missouri, was deemed a "High Priority Corridor." This paved the way for the route to become an Interstate. Since then, work on the corridor has continued and funding has been allocated for portions of the future link between Walnut Ridge and the Missouri State Line.

## RIBBON CUTTINGS



### TUCKERMAN RESURFACING AND CURVE REALIGNMENT

#### *Tuckerman*

Made possible by a partnering agreement between Jackson County, the City of Tuckerman, and ARDOT, these improvements included upgrading 21 miles of Highway 37 to carry heavier loads and realigning the highway through the curve on the east edge of town.



### 30 CROSSING

#### *Little Rock*

Interstate 30 through downtown Little Rock and North Little Rock is the backbone of the central Arkansas regional freeway network. It is one of the most traveled highways in Arkansas – supporting approximately 120,000 vehicles each day. This projected widened Interstate 30 from Interstate 630 in Little Rock, across the Arkansas River, to Interstate 40 in North Little Rock. This was the first design-build project in Arkansas, combining design and construction into one contract delivering a more efficient, transparent, and cost-effective result.

## GROUNDBREAKINGS



### GREENWOOD BYPASS

#### *Greenwood*

This project will improve Highway 10 through the town of Greenwood. It will reconstruct two bridges, construct three new bridges, rehabilitate existing pavement, add sidewalks, a shared use path, and install a traffic signal at Highway 96. It will also create a connection between the Bypass and Main Street, enhancing traffic flow through town.

## GROUNDBREAKINGS CONTINUED



### **SPRINGDALE BYPASS AND XNA ACCESS ROAD** *Springdale*

Phase Two of the Springdale Bypass - the seven-mile section from Highway 412 to Highway 112, in Benton and Washington Counties - will complete the connection of Interstate 49 in Springdale to Highway 412 in Tontitown. These two new sections of highway will improve traffic flow, providing safe, modernized roadways.



### **HIGHWAY 113 RELOCATION** *Morrilton*

This project was made possible because of a partnering agreement that included Governor Sanders, the Arkansas Economic Development Commission, the Arkansas Highway Commission, Green Bay Packaging, the City of Morrilton, and Faulkner, Conway, Johnson, Pope, Saline, and White Counties. To date, with respect to the number of partners participating, this is the largest partnering agreement in ARDOT history, with nine different entities involved.



### **CORNING BYPASS** *Corning*

When complete, the Corning Bypass will be part of the north-south Future Interstate 57 corridor, connecting Interstates 30 and 40 in central Arkansas with other primary east-west routes across the nation such as Interstates 70, 80, and 90 - better connecting Arkansas with the rest of the country.

# RECOGNITIONS AND AWARDS

The U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) awarded ARDOT four competitive grants in 2024.

## **TWO BRIDGE INVESTMENT PROGRAM (BIP) GRANTS**

The first BIP grant, a partnership with the Tennessee Department of Transportation, for \$393,750,000 was awarded to replace the existing Interstate 55 Mississippi River Bridge, originally built in 1949. ARDOT also received a \$43,920,000 BIP grant jointly with the Mississippi Department of Transportation to rehabilitate the Highway 49 Mississippi River Bridge, also known as the Helena Bridge. The BIP grant program is a competitive program administered through the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) that focuses on bridges in poor condition or at risk of falling into poor condition. To date, the program has invested \$8.1 billion into 100 bridge projects in 44 states.

## **A \$1 MILLION ACCELERATED INNOVATION DEPLOYMENT (AID) DEMONSTRATION GRANT FOR A DEBRIS REMOVAL SYSTEMS PILOT PROJECT**

This funding is being used to purchase 31 Lane Blade debris removal devices. The new devices, along with 13 previously purchased with state funds, will provide a way for maintenance crews to remove debris from the roadway without leaving their vehicles, improving the safety of ARDOT employees and the traveling public. The AID Demonstration program provides funding to accelerate the implementation and adoption of innovation in highway transportation. FHWA launched this program in 2014 and, since then, has awarded more than \$103 million for 136 innovative projects. FHWA awarded \$7.6 million in AID Demonstration grants in 2024.

## **A \$25 MILLION REBUILDING AMERICAN INFRASTRUCTURE WITH SUSTAINABILITY AND EQUITY (RAISE) GRANT**

This grant is to be used toward a 14-mile extension of Interstate 49 near Fort Smith and a new bridge over the Arkansas River. The RAISE (now referred to as Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development or BUILD) grant program, awarded \$1.8 billion in funding to 148 projects across the country in 2024. These grants support a range of infrastructure projects that improve safety, quality of life, mobility, community connectivity, and economic opportunity. Two additional RAISE awards were received in Arkansas in 2024. The City of Searcy received a Planning grant of just over \$4 million to design 15.5 miles of greenway paths linking Kensett to downtown Searcy. The City of Siloam Springs received just over \$11.5 million for the construction of Complete Streets improvements along their Main Street.

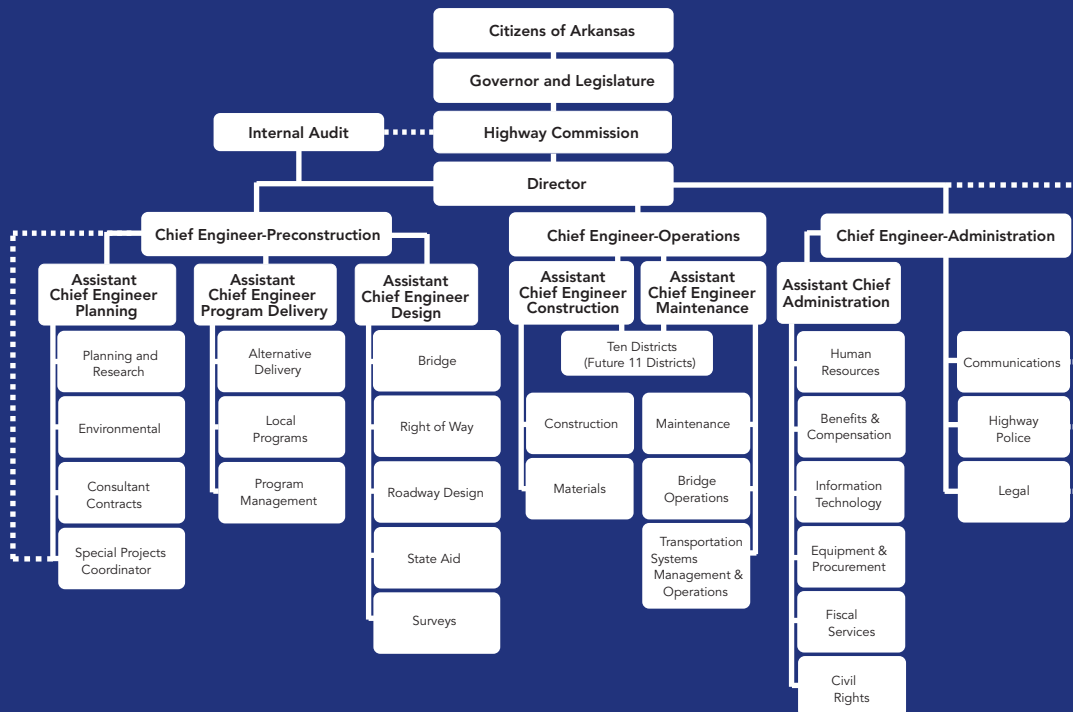
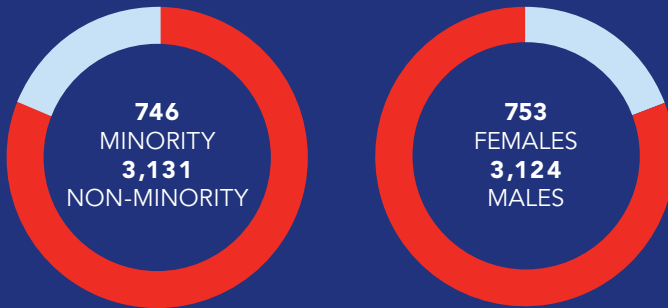
# ORGANIZATION AND WORKFORCE

Beginning with the Mack-Blackwell Amendment of 1953, the goal of the Arkansas State Highway Commission and ARDOT has been to provide Arkansans with the best transportation system possible.

Under that amendment, each of the five Arkansas Highway Commissioners serves a 10-year, staggered term with a new commissioner appointed by the Governor every two years. The Commission holds all powers necessary to administer Arkansas laws and regulations related to ARDOT operations. The Commission also appoints ARDOT's Director to develop a professional staff and to manage the day-to-day operations needed to oversee maintenance of Arkansas' Highway Network.



## 2024 TOTAL WORKFORCE: 3,877



# PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

The Public Involvement (PI) Section of ARDOT'S Environmental Division facilitates intradepartmental and interdepartmental meetings, public involvement meetings and hearings, and virtual public involvement meetings and hearings as required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The PI Section also addresses and documents the impacts of highway projects as they relate to the social environment, Environmental Justice, and Title VI concerns.

ARDOT'S PI staff addresses citizens' inquiries and ensures ARDOT's compliance with all federal and state regulations and guidelines. Public Involvement meetings are advertised using news releases, local newspaper ads, changeable message signs, public service announcements, website postings, social media, and flyers.

NUMBER OF IN-PERSON PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT MEETINGS

52

ATTENDEES OF IN-PERSON PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT MEETINGS

1,877

NUMBER OF VIRTUAL PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT MEETINGS

7

WEBSITE VISITS

32,622



2024 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT MEETING  
DISCUSSING HIGHWAY 5 WIDENING

# DIGITAL MEDIA

## IDriveArkansas



**2,883,700**  
Audience



**25%**  
Percentage of first-time visits



**12,903,119**  
Number of pages viewed



**10,213,119**  
Number of sessions



**11.5**  
Average session length in minutes

## Facebook



**48,879**  
Followers



**11,293**  
Post clicks



**1,054,317**  
Reach



**338**  
Number of posts



**90,332**  
Number of page likes

## Instagram



**842**  
Followers



**6,253**  
Reach



**74**  
Number of posts



**1,519**  
Number of likes

## X

### @myARDOT



**58,221**  
Followers



**1,286**  
New followers



**2,755,343**  
Impressions



**443**  
Number of posts



**9,090**  
Number of posts and reposts

### @IDriveArkansas



**8,318**  
Followers



**1,428**  
New followers



**12,284,620**  
Impressions

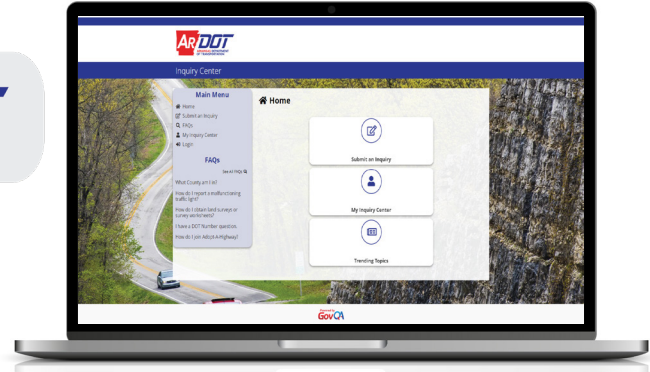


**30,444**  
Number of posts



**6,193**  
Number of posts and reposts

# 2024 **ASK ARDOT** STATISTICS



Ask ARDOT celebrated one year of service in October 2024. This online customer service platform provides a streamlined way for the public to submit questions and comments to ARDOT about topics pertaining to Arkansas' Highways and Interstates. In 2024, the platform received **9,646 inquiries** with an average of 804 received each month.

## INQUIRY STATS



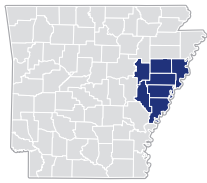
## SURVEY RESPONSES FROM ASK ARDOT USERS

"In my 50 years, this was the fastest response and completed result by any State DOT where I've lived and I've lived in five states. Well done. Congratulations and thank you!"

"Thank you for the quick response on the potholes. The pothole report feature on your app makes reporting easy to do. Tell those road workers to stay safe out there!"

"Talk about quick! I sent an email after-hours and by lunch the following day they were working on it. Thank you. For the first time in a long time, I felt like my tax dollars were at work."

# DISTRICT INFORMATION



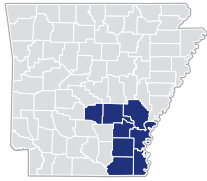
## DISTRICT ONE

**Counties:** *Crittenden, Cross, Lee, Monroe, Phillips, St. Francis, and Woodruff*

Engineer: Cannon Callicott • Email: [stephen.callicott@ardot.gov](mailto:stephen.callicott@ardot.gov)

2701 Highway 64 • P.O. Box 278, Wynne, AR 72396-0278

Telephone: (870) 238-8144



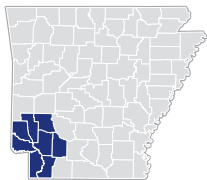
## DISTRICT TWO

**Counties:** *Arkansas, Ashley, Chicot, Desha, Drew, Grant, Jefferson, and Lincoln*

Engineer: Andrew Hoggard • Email: [andrew.hoggard@ardot.gov](mailto:andrew.hoggard@ardot.gov)

4900 Highway 65 South • P.O. Box 6836, Pine Bluff, AR 71611-6836

Telephone: (870) 534-1612



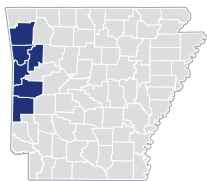
## DISTRICT THREE

**Counties:** *Hempstead, Howard, Lafayette, Little River, Miller, Nevada, Pike, and Sevier*

Engineer: William Cheatham • Email: [william.cheatham@ardot.gov](mailto:william.cheatham@ardot.gov)

2911 Highway 29 North • P.O. Box 490, Hope, AR 71802-0490

Telephone: (870) 777-3457



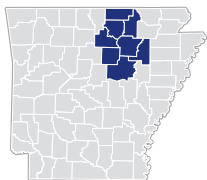
## DISTRICT FOUR

**Counties:** *Crawford, Franklin, Polk, Scott, Sebastian, and Washington*

Engineer: Jason Hughey • Email: [jason.hughey@ardot.gov](mailto:jason.hughey@ardot.gov)

808 Frontier Road, Barling • P.O. Box 11170, Fort Smith, AR 72917-1170

Telephone: (479) 484-5306



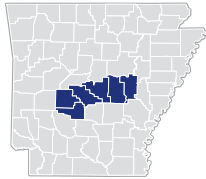
## DISTRICT FIVE

**Counties:** *Cleburne, Fulton, Independence, Izard, Jackson, Sharp, Stone, and White*

Engineer: Alex Roofe • Email: [alex.roofe@ardot.gov](mailto:alex.roofe@ardot.gov)

1673 Batesville Boulevard • P.O. Box 2376, Batesville, AR 72503-2376

Telephone: (870) 251-2374



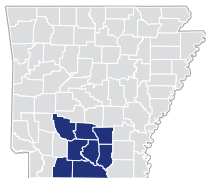
### **DISTRICT SIX**

**Counties: Garland, Hot Spring, Lonoke, Prairie, Pulaski, and Saline**

Engineer: Hunter Lake • Email: hunter.lake@ardot.gov

8900 Mabelvale Pike • P.O. Box 190296, Little Rock, AR 72219-0296

Telephone: (501) 569-2266



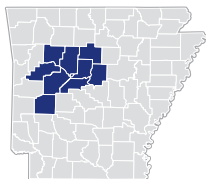
### **DISTRICT SEVEN**

**Counties: Bradley, Calhoun, Clark, Cleveland, Columbia, Dallas, Ouachita, and Union**

Engineer: David Archer • Email: david.archer@ardot.gov

2245 California Avenue • P.O. Box 897, Camden, AR 71711-0897

Telephone: (870) 836-6401



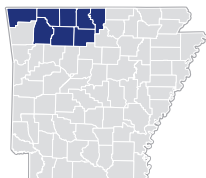
### **DISTRICT EIGHT**

**Counties: Conway, Faulkner, Johnson, Montgomery, Perry, Pope, Van Buren, Logan, and Yell**

Engineer: David Ross • Email: david.ross@ardot.gov

372 Aspen Lane • P.O. Box 70, Russellville, AR 72811-0070

Telephone: (479) 968-2286



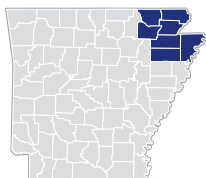
### **DISTRICT NINE**

**Counties: Baxter, Benton, Boone, Carroll, Madison, Marion, Newton, and Searcy**

Engineer: Stacy Burge • Email: stacy.burge@ardot.gov

4590 Highway 65 • P.O. Box 610, Harrison, AR 72602-0610

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### **DISTRICT TEN**

**Counties: Clay, Craighead, Greene, Lawrence, Mississippi, Poinsett, and Randolph**

Engineer: Shane Wood • Email: michaelshane.wood@ardot.gov

2510 Highway 412 West • P.O. Box 98, Paragould, AR 72451-0098

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