

## 2015 Legislative Session Nets Positive Outcomes for DUI Laws

**VisionZeroMT**  
zero deaths | zero serious injuries



Montana continues to be a state with one of the highest fatality rate in the nation, and impaired driving contributes to approximately half of all Montana traffic fatalities every year. One mechanism for effecting change in impaired driving is policy development and the legislative process. The Montana State Legislature continues to strengthen Driving Under the Influence (DUI) laws which will aid in reducing Montana roadway fatalities and serious injuries. The 2015 Legislature passed several bills positively affecting Montana's policies regarding impaired driving. Below is an overview of some of the pertinent legislation passed this session that assists in the prevention, enforcement, prosecution, and adjudication of DUI offenders in Montana.

**HB111** revises sentencing for felony DUI offenders by adjusting the sentence from 13 months with the Department of Corrections to not less than 13 months or more than 2 years for a felony conviction. This bill provides a sentencing judge additional leverage for repeat DUI offenders, so accountability and rehabilitation is received. Felony DUI is the top felony conviction for male offenders in Montana during the past five years. Making this change is a critical step in rehabilitating habitual DUI offenders and enhancing community safety.

**HB132** authorizes the distribution of accumulated DUI reinstatement fees to counties that have a DUI task force. Prior to HB132, state law did allow redistribution of funds from counties without DUI tax forces. This bill will provide funds for local efforts that reduce impaired driving. County DUI task forces have a local approach that can be successful in identifying and addressing specific problem areas in communities related to impaired driving. Currently, Montana has 32 operating DUI task forces representing 36 counties that will benefit from these funds.

**HB 488** accomplishes several things. This bill closes current loopholes in the aggravated DUI statute and increases penalties for aggravated DUIs. It also increases penalties for first through third DUIs, including driving under the influence of marijuana. The bill requires a person refusing to provide appropriate testing to pay an administrative fee of \$300. To demonstrate the importance of this bill, there are over 9,000 DUI filings per year in Montana that this legislation could potentially affect, and it provides various professional sectors with tools for DUI mitigation.

**HB491** generally revised the 24/7 sobriety program by clarifying the core components of the sobriety program and eligibility for program participation. This legislation strengthens current statutory language related to this critical DUI mitigation program currently utilized across the state. This program has demonstrated success in deterring offenders from drinking.

**HB512** establishes an eastern Montana crime laboratory and provides funding appropriation. By having a laboratory in the eastern part of the state, this bill is expected to reduce turnaround times for evidence submitted on DUI cases, which will provide swift and certain consequences for impaired driving offenses. Currently, the most populated county in Montana, Yellowstone County, must submit samples to the crime lab in Missoula. This process slows the prosecution of DUI offenders. Having an eastern Montana crime laboratory will further enhance evidentiary processes.

As we move forward towards VisionZero, these new laws provide better means to prevent, enforce, prosecute, and adjudicate impaired driving throughout Montana.

For detailed information related to the above-mentioned legislation, contact Kevin Dusko at [kedusko@mt.gov](mailto:kedusko@mt.gov) or 444-7411.

## Surface Transportation Program Funding Status Update



Early in the morning on Saturday May 23, Congress passed a two-month Surface Transportation Program extension, which will carry the highway program through July 31, 2015. This extension is a brief reprieve for the states who were facing program shutdown at the end of May under the previous extension, and for Congress as they continue to try to identify much-needed revenue to authorize and fund a multi-year transportation bill. The extension will provide MDT prorated funding for the two-month term.

Anticipating a program extension, MDT had developed and implemented program contingency plans to prioritize our federal fund obligations and manage cash flow to minimize any potential disruption in the development and delivery of the program. MDT's goal remains to deliver all of the projects planned for this federal fiscal year, which depends largely on the actions Congress takes before the end of July.

MDT staff continues to work in support of Montana's congressional delegation's efforts in securing a stable program and protecting Montana's funding to preserve and enhance the safety and operation of our infrastructure.

# New Transportation Commissioner Appointed



*New Transportation Commissioner Daniel Belcourt*

Governor Steve Bullock appointed Daniel Belcourt to the Montana Transportation Commission.

Daniel is owner of Belcourt Law, P.C., a law firm that specializes in Indian law. Prior to opening his own law firm in 2006, he was a partner with the law firm of Smith, Doherty & Belcourt, and in-house counsel to his tribe, the Chippewa Cree Tribe of the Rocky Boy's Reservation from 1994-2002.

He has a broad array of experience in all aspects of tribal government. He has represented tribal governments before the U.S. Congress, state legislatures, federal agencies, and in litigation before federal, state, and tribal forums.

Daniel serves as an adjunct professor at the University of Montana School of Law teaching a variety of Indian law courses.

Other Transportation Commission members are Chair Rick Griffith, John Cobb, Carol Lambert and Barb Skelton.

# New Roadside Geological Markers Unveiled

Lieutenant Governor Angela McLean and MDT Director Mike Tooley unveiled a new roadside geological marker on U.S. Highway 12, two miles north of Townsend. Called "Thar's Gold in Them Thar Hills," the marker tells the story of the fabulous gold strike on Confederate Gulch in 1864. The Confederate Gulch gold strike was one of the richest in Montana and sparked a stampede to the gulch that brought thousands of people to the remote area. The marker describes the gold and focuses on the geologic processes that caused the gold to be in such abundance in the gulch.

That marker unveiling was followed by others in Three Forks and Alder Gulch, west of Virginia City. These markers provide information on *Megacerops*, a rhinoceros-like animal that lived in the Three Forks area 30 million years ago, and about the geologic actions that led to the presence of gold in Alder Gulch.

MDT's roadside geological marker program began in 2006. Since then, MDT has installed 55 geological markers across the state and plans to install new geological markers this year on MacDonald Pass, the I-15 overlook south of Cascade, at Neihart, and at the Divide rest area.

Contact Jon Axline at 444-6258, [jaxline@mt.gov](mailto:jaxline@mt.gov) for more information, or go to [www.mt.gov/travinfo/geomarkers.shtml](http://www.mt.gov/travinfo/geomarkers.shtml).



*Roadside geological marker unveiled on US Highway 12—(left to right) City Council Member Angie Janacaro, Rotarian Jen Dalrymple, Broadwater County Commissioner Laura Obert, Lt. Governor Angela McLean, and MDT Director Mike Tooley.*

# Good Roads Day June 16, 2015



*Interstate from Missoula to Lolo*

The third Tuesday in June marked Good Roads Day as designated by the Montana Legislature for the people of the state to "...contribute toward the improvement and safety of public highways". It is

also a time to think about the role transportation plays in daily life.

"We know we are doing a good job when people can get to jobs, healthcare, shopping, recreation and daily activities without giving roads and bridges a thought," said Director Mike Tooley. "And this has been possible for many years at a very small cost to motorists."

In Montana, a driver contributes around \$3.50 to \$5.00 a week to fuel taxes for maintaining and constructing Montana highways.

"One reason it has been so low – for many of us less than a latte a week - is that we have a strong federal funding partnership," continued Tooley. Federal funds pay for about 87 percent of MDT's highway construction, and Montana receives about \$2.58 for every dollar Montanans contribute to the federal Highway Trust Fund.

"MDT has also been very diligent in managing our assets, with a focus on preserving what we have first, because it costs a lot less than having to reconstruct a highway or a bridge," Tooley said.

Proactively managing Montana's highways and bridges ensures the right treatment at the right time and that Montana's scarce dollars are stretched throughout the state. Available highway funding will cover less than a third of Montana's projected \$15.8 billion in transportation infrastructure needs over the next decade. Funding has been relatively flat for years, while construction costs, inflation, an aging infrastructure and increased use make it tougher to preserve and maintain Montana's roads and bridges. Continuing uncertainty at the federal level, with no long-term solution to keeping the federal program solvent past the end of the summer, compounds the issue of maintaining the state's infrastructure.

"The department will continue to do what we can to preserve and improve highways and road infrastructure as Montanans have come to expect, but the budget won't stretch anymore." Tooley said.

Tooley stated as Montana looks to federal support for a long-term funding solution, residents should be prepared that Montana pavement and bridge conditions may deteriorate and new needs are left unmet.

"MDT asked everyone to consider how transportation enhances quality of life," Tooley added, "but to be prepared if the road gets a little rough in the future."

# Judith River Trestle Back on Track

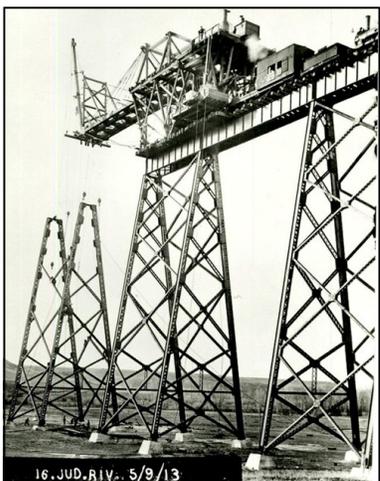
The Judith River Trestle is one of four steel trestles on the Central Montana Rail (CMR) Inc. short-line railroad in Fergus County traversing the Judith River. MDT owns the right-of-way, which it leases to CMR.

The trestle is a 2,000-foot-long, single track railroad bridge structure varying up to 140 feet in height and consisting of 64 concrete piers/footings and twin steel bridge girders with precast concrete decks. In the spring of 2011, the 100-year-old trestle suffered severe flood damage that moved the piers as much as four feet, damaged two trestle towers, displaced the trestle deck, and rendered the trestle unusable for rail traffic. CMR received funding through an Economic Development Administration grant and MDT filled in the remainder.

To repair the trestle, the design-build team elected to replace the existing concrete footings with drilled shaft foundations. The steel trestle towers and concrete decking were demolished and replaced with new members. The existing steel girders were salvaged and reused. Repair work began in December 2013 and was completed in August 2014. CMR President Carla Allen stated:

*"When the Judith River trestle was damaged by flooding four years ago, I didn't know if we would ever be able to get it repaired. Without the trestle, CMR would have to discontinue service. After 26 years of providing rail service to central Montana producers, the thought was heartbreaking. With the help, support, and cooperative effort from a multitude of very special people, the bridge was finished in 2014. CMR is still working on damages from the 2011 flood, but now the finish line is in sight."*

The line was originally constructed by the Milwaukee & St. Paul Railway. Materials were brought to the site using six, two-horse teams carrying 20,000 pounds on a 25-mile trip. Foundation work began in the winter of 1912 and was performed by steam heating the gravel and packing wheat straw around the forms. Most of the cement came from the Portland Cement Works at Trident, Montana near Three Forks. The steam shovels and steam crane were leapfrogged across the prairie. This is a process where rail and ties were laid out and the engine would move forward, then horse teams would move the track materials from rear to front and the process was repeated. This method averaged about one mile a day with a distance of 25 miles being traveled.



# MDT Receives Environmental Excellence Award



Shawn Danforth, Crow Tribal Monitor (left), and volunteers Patti Hooker (center) and Shane Doyle (right), screen artifacts at the Absarokee Agency excavations.

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) recently announced that MDT and its partners, FHWA Montana Division Office, the Crow Tribe of Montana, and Montana Project Archeology, were selected as recipients of one of the FHWA 2015 Environmental Excellence Awards (EEA).

MDT was honored for its commitment to developing innovative educational

programs and volunteer opportunities as part of reconstruction work on a segment of Montana Highway 78 between Roscoe and Absarokee. As Highway 78 runs through an important archaeological site – the lands of the Absarokee (Crow) Indian Agency – project partners took efforts to preserve and promote the history of the area. Led by MDT Archaeologist Steve Platt, MDT developed a creative educational curriculum for fourth- and fifth-grade students in partnership with the Crow Tribe and Montana Project Archeology. In addition to curriculum development, project partners organized a volunteer program for Crow students and community members to learn about archaeological techniques and participate in actual excavation work. Feedback from the volunteers indicated that the effort was an overwhelming success in providing hands-on archaeological experience and an enhanced understanding and appreciation for the history and culture of the Crow Tribe.

Since 1995, the EEA program has recognized leaders across the country who make outstanding contributions to environmental stewardship and partnerships above and beyond traditional transportation project outcomes.

This award is a great honor and showcases one of the many efforts of MDT and its partners to be good stewards of the environment.

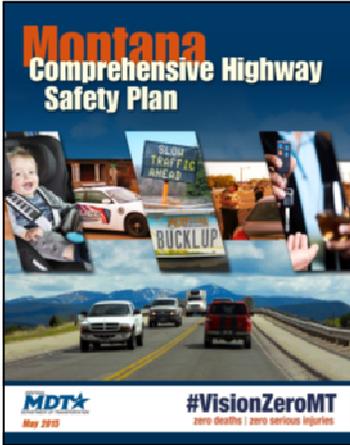
Contact Steve Platt at 444-0455 or [splatt@mt.gov](mailto:splatt@mt.gov) for more information.



Judith River Trestle original construction, 1913 (left), damage from flood, 2011 (center), and repaired trestle, 2014 (right).



## Updated Comprehensive Highway Safety Plan



The Comprehensive Highway Safety Plan (CHSP) update is complete, concluding an 18-month process. The update was a coordinated effort guided by a multidisciplinary, multiagency Advisory Committee comprised of professionals representing the 4Es of safety:

- 1) Education
- 2) Enforcement
- 3) EMS
- 4) Engineering

Montana developed the CHSP in 2006, amended it in 2010, and in 2014 began an update of the plan. Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) requires states to have an updated plan and the process for its development adheres to that outlined in legislation. Requirements include that the CHSP:

- continue to be data-driven
- be multidisciplinary
- incorporate input from a range of partners
- include measurable objectives
- address all roadway users
- identify how progress will be evaluated

Montana’s vision for safety is VisionZero, zero fatalities and zero serious injuries. Through careful data analysis the Advisory Committee, with input from safety stakeholders from across Montana, identified the top safety emphasis areas for the CHSP. Partners will focus resources strategically where opportunities for safety improvements are greatest. In the coming months, Emphasis Area teams will be developed to collaborate and implement strategies to reduce these types of crashes:

- Roadway Departures and Intersection Crashes
- Impaired Driving
- Occupant Protection Related Injuries

Montanans need to continue advancing a culture of traffic safety where death on the roadway is not tolerable. This culture includes everyone making good choices and safe travels a priority everyday.

For more information or to get involved, contact Pam Langve-Davis at [planvedavis@mt.gov](mailto:planvedavis@mt.gov) or 444-7646, or visit the CHSP site at [www.mdt.mt.gov/visionzero/plans/](http://www.mdt.mt.gov/visionzero/plans/).

## It’s Motorcycle Season – Let’s Share the Road!

Montana summer weather and longer days mean more motorcyclists on the road. The primary motorcycle-riding season extends from May to October. Montana has, on-average, 28 motorcyclist fatalities a year. To reduce these numbers and prevent injuries, motorists and motorcyclists must take an active role.

Drivers need to actively watch for smaller profile vehicles, especially during lane changes and at intersections.

These tips for drivers can help avoid crashes with motorcycles:

- Respect all other vehicles on the road.
- Keep your full attention on driving and avoid distractions.
- Allow motorcyclist full lane width – never try to share a lane.
- Perform a visual check for motorcycles by checking mirrors and blind spots at intersections and before entering or exiting a lane of traffic.
- Always signal your intention to change lanes or when merging with traffic.
- Allow more following distance behind a motorcycle, so they have enough time to maneuver or stop in an emergency.
- Never drive impaired.

For motorcycle riders:

- Wear a DOT-compliant helmet.
- Be highly visible; wear brightly colored or reflective protective gear and turn on your headlights.
- Strategically use your lane position to see and be seen.
- Stay alert – and slow down when approaching left turns or intersections in anticipation of other drivers’ actions.
- Use turn signals in advance when changing lanes or making a turn.
- Observe speed limits – over half of fatal motorcycle crashes are speed related.
- Take a motorcycle safety course.
- Never ride impaired.

MDT partners with the Montana Motorcycle Rider Safety Program, a part of MSU Northern. Training courses are available and space is open in the Basic Rider Course, a 15-hour class for novice or beginning riders; the Basic Rider Course 2, designed for experienced riders to brush up skills and experience street riding traffic experiences; and the Advanced Rider Course, advanced skill development based on sport bike riding techniques and safety awareness.

For more information, and to register for a course, visit: [www.motorcycle.musn.edu](http://www.motorcycle.musn.edu) or call 1-800-922-BIKE.

# Roadway Departure Study for Montana's Highways



Rumble strips, shown in the yellow centerline above, alert drivers they are drifting off course.

Approximately 70 percent of annual fatal crashes in Montana are the result of roadway departures. Over 95 percent of road departure fatalities and serious injuries occur in rural areas. Because this type of crash is very predominant in Montana, MDT completed a Roadway Departure Study.

Some tools and methodologies used in the study were Safety Performance Functions and Level of Service of Safety for many of Montana's rural highways and Interstates. These tools allow MDT personnel to evaluate crash data and identify areas of roadway experiencing a concentration of road departure crashes.

One study recommendation is to install centerline rumble strips on approximately 4,000 miles of Montana's highways. Rumble strips are a series of indentations in the pavement. They are intended to alert drivers who are drifting off course.

Centerline rumble strips are effective in reducing across centerline head-on, sideswipe, and off-the-road to the left type of crashes.

The first centerline rumble strip project will begin this fall on selected roadways in southwest Montana. The remaining areas will be constructed over the next three to four years.

MDT also is modifying its practice on shoulder rumble strips so they are more bicycle friendly. One example is to reduce the shoulder rumble strip to 6 inches and move the rumble strip closer to the edge stripe for narrower shoulders. In addition, MDT is improving quality control and oversight during construction and the installation of shoulder rumble strips.

For more information, contact Roy Peterson at 444-9252 or [roypeterson@mt.gov](mailto:roypeterson@mt.gov).

# Apply by June 30, 2015: Emergency Medical Services Grant

MDT opened the state fiscal year 2016 grant application process for Emergency Medical Services to enhance traffic safety in Montana. The purpose of the program is to provide grants to mostly volunteer, Medicare-level billing providers for emergency response vehicles, ambulances, equipment to provide medical care, communications equipment, and training.

Approximately \$1.2 million is granted annually by the program. Grant recipients are required to provide a 10 percent match for grant funds received.

For program eligibility and the application, see MDT's website at: [www.mdt.mt.gov/business/grants\\_ems.shtml](http://www.mdt.mt.gov/business/grants_ems.shtml). Applications must be received or postmarked by June 30, 2015.

For more information, contact Chad Newman at [chnewman@mt.gov](mailto:chnewman@mt.gov) or 444-0856.



Garfield County Ambulance acquired through EMS grant.

**Check out MDT's Performance Tracking Measures for safety, project delivery, pavement and bridge condition, public transportation, and customer satisfaction on-line at:**

[www.mdt.mt.gov/publications/reports/performance-measures.shtml](http://www.mdt.mt.gov/publications/reports/performance-measures.shtml)

**Take the pledge!** It will take every Montanan to reach VisionZero—zero deaths and serious injuries on our highways. MDT and partners are uniting in this mission to save lives on Montana roads. Join in by taking the pledge below to be a safe driver and support the VisionZero goal:

I pledge to support the Vision Zero Goal

\_\_\_\_\_

Name

\_\_\_\_\_

Location

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

**#VisionZeroMT**  
zero deaths | zero serious injuries

MONTANA  
**MDT**  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

- I will follow all Montana's traffic safety laws and speed limits.
- I will buckle up every trip, every time – and all my passengers will be buckled - including children in appropriate car seats.
- I will not drive impaired, and will always plan for a sober ride home.
- I will adopt the "Share the Road" philosophy by being aware of bicyclist, pedestrians and motorcycles.

# Apply by July 31, 2015: Transportation Alternatives Program Applications

MDT issued a call for project applications for the next two-year cycle of Transportation Alternatives (TA) projects. The application period opened on May 11, and will close on July 31, 2015.

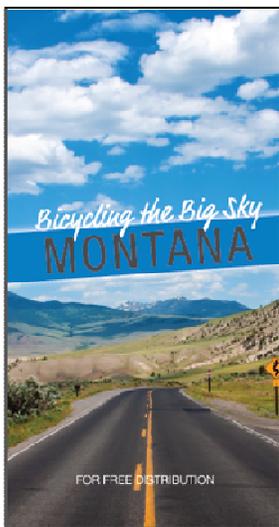
The TA program was authorized by the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Act (MAP-21). TA consolidates the eligibilities of the former Community Transportation Enhancement Program (CTEP), Safe Routes to School, and Recreational Trails programs into a competitive grant program, as required by MAP-21. The TA program provides funding for projects with focus on safety, Americans with Disabilities Act compliance, and network connectivity. Entities eligible for TA funding include city, county, and tribal governments; transit agencies; natural resource or public land agencies; schools, school districts, and local education agencies; and any other local or regional governmental agency with oversight of transportation or recreational trails.

Federal funding levels for the next two-year cycle of TA projects, and the entire federal program, is unclear while operating under the two-month extension (see *Surface Transportation Program Funding Status Update* article on page 1). However, MDT is planning for annual funding levels similar to those provided in previous years. MDT will proceed with the TA program application evaluations and will award projects based on actual available funding through the end of 2016. The application evaluations will be done in the fall of 2015, and project awards will likely be announced in early 2016. Project implementation is contingent on 2016 federal funding allocations at or near MDT projected funds.

Information about the TA program and the project application instructions are available on the MDT Transportation Alternatives website: [www.mdt.mt.gov/mdt/ta\\_application.shtml](http://www.mdt.mt.gov/mdt/ta_application.shtml).

If you do not find the information you seek on the website, contact Mike Wherley, the TA program manager, at 444-4221 or [mwherley@mt.gov](mailto:mwherley@mt.gov).

## Bicycling Map Available



The updated Bicycling the Big Sky map lists some *Share the Road* tips for bicyclists and provides a Quick Response (QR) code for smartphone access to MDT's traveler information page. It also has many additional resources beneficial to all bicyclists touring Montana.

Access on-line at:  
[www.mdt.mt.gov/travinfo/docs/bike\\_map.pdf](http://www.mdt.mt.gov/travinfo/docs/bike_map.pdf).

Contact David Jacobs at [dajacobs@mt.gov](mailto:dajacobs@mt.gov) or 444-9192 to obtain a printed copy.



Travel Info

## MDT Online Construction Map and App Available

If a picture paints a thousand words, MDT's online construction map does more than that. MDT's traveler information and mobile app provide road conditions, construction information, road closures, incidents, and other detailed information for state-maintained highways. On-line, go to [www.mdt.mt.gov/travinfo/](http://www.mdt.mt.gov/travinfo/) or download the mobile app for iPhones, iPads or Androids in Google play, the AppStore or on Amazon.



iPad QR code



Android QR code

Work zones are designed for safe travel, but motorists must also do their part. When traveling in work zones, follow posted speed limits, leave plenty of space when traveling behind other vehicles, and give full attention to driving.

Contact Brandi Hamilton at 444-0468 or [brhamilton@mt.gov](mailto:brhamilton@mt.gov) for more on traveler information.

## Equipment Program Helps Improve Air Quality

Twelve Montana communities and counties will be breathing a little easier with help from the Montana Department of Transportation. MDT is again providing assistance to local governments through the department's Montana Air & Congestion Initiative (MACI). The program is aimed at improving air quality through the use of state-of-the-art street maintenance equipment including flush trucks and street sweepers.

Communities eligible for the equipment are those in nonattainment of federal air quality standards for fine dust or are identified as "at-risk" of experiencing readings that violate the standards monitored by the Department of Environmental Quality. The local government match for the program is 13.42 percent with MDT providing the balance through federal funds. Communities will use the new equipment to collect leftover traction sand and keep streets clean of particulate matter and debris.

This year, \$5.1 million is being invested in equipment to improve air quality. MDT developed the MACI program in 1998 to distribute funds from the Federal Congestion Mitigation & Air Quality (CMAQ) Improvement Program.

For more information, contact Meghan Larsen at 444-6121 or [mlarsen@mt.gov](mailto:mlarsen@mt.gov).



New Elgin Broom Bear.

# Important to the Highway Scheme of Things: Miss Montana Highways

By Jon Axline, MDT Historian

In times past, we took certain things for granted that wouldn't be considered appropriate today. For instance, when I started working at the MDT in 1990, smoking was still allowed in the headquarters building, albeit confined to the restrooms. For a while, some events at the department were a really big deal that garnered a lot of attention, but, for unknown reasons they abruptly ended – although most of us probably know the reason why in hindsight. One of these big deals was the annual Miss Montana Highways contest held at the old Montana Highway Department from 1970 to 1973. The competition spotlighted the department's young female employees, and it reveals to us today that most women employed at the department then were clerical workers and secretaries. There certainly have been some big changes since then!

In January 1970, the Montana Highway Department's Information Officer, Kermit Anderson, announced the first Miss Montana Highways contest. The purpose of the contest was "to elect a comely young woman to represent the Montana State Highway Commission at dedications, open houses, ceremonies, and other functions." The potential winner had to be female (it was clearly specified in the rules), an employee of the department, outgoing, and attractive with a "sparkling personality" and "pleasant voice." Candidates were also required to be well-versed in the functions of the highway department. Marital status didn't matter – although most candidates were single. While department heads submitted candidates for consideration, they were encouraged to solicit the opinions of their employees about the contestants. Evidence suggests that supporters campaigned on behalf of the candidates with homemade posters.

The first year of the contest, administrators submitted applications to the judges for 13 women ranging in ages from 19 to 34. All were employed as stenographers, clerks or typists and at least two contestants were married. Ten judges (all male), including the state highway engineer, selected the winner. It was definitely a different time and the content of the application would not be acceptable today. In 1971, the selection of Miss Montana Highways coincided with a legislative session at the state capitol building across the street from the highway department at 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue and North Roberts Street. In an effort to attract legislators to an open house at the department, the state highway engineer suggested to Beverly Gibson of the Information Office, that the building be kept open late because "*we will have beautiful babes with mini-skirts!*"

After interviewing the contenders on the morning of February 3, 1970, the judges selected 19-year-old Missoula native Sue Holloran as the first Miss Montana Highways. She was employed as a clerk-typist at the Missoula district office. During her reign, Ms. Holloran presided over several Interstate openings, kicked off the annual summer litter campaign, and also served as Miss Montana Highway 287. After resigning in December 1970,

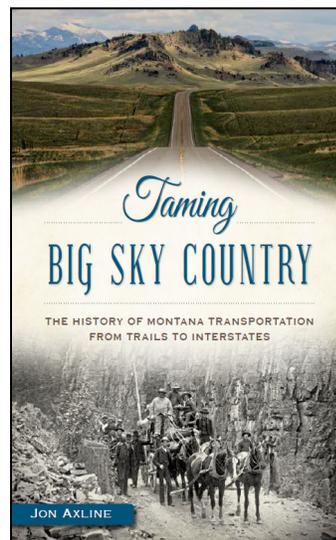


*Miss Montana Highways 1972  
Kitty Sullivan with Commission  
Chair George Vucanovich.*

to attend flight attendant school in Oregon, Holloran was replaced by Kay Higgins, a Helena native and an employee of the old Gross Vehicle Weight Division. In July 1972, the judges selected Kitty Sullivan, a typist in the Accounting Bureau, for the distinction of Miss Montana Highway. She was one of 14 contestants that year vying for the honor of representing the highway department. The last woman to be so honored was Clarette "Buttons" LaSalle, a clerk-typist in the Helena headquarters building. A rising awareness of women's issues spelled the end of the Miss Montana Highways contest in late 1973.

While a footnote in the history of the MDT, Miss Montana Highways certainly represents a different era in the department's long history. In the early Seventies, female employees served primarily in clerical roles and, except for the Advertising Department, didn't occupy managerial or professional positions. Miss Montana Highways was intended to put a prettier face on the highway department for functions where the media was often present. Today, women hold important managerial positions at MDT as deputy directors, division administrators, bureau chiefs, section supervisors, and engineers, just to name a few.

## Taming Big Sky Country, the History of Montana Transportation From Trails to Interstates has Been Published!



The book tells the history of Montana's roads and highways from 1860 when John Mullan carved a road out of the wilderness between Walla Walla, Washington and Fort Benton, Montana, to when the last segment of Interstate highway in the state was opened to traffic in 1988. Generously illustrated with photographs from the Montana Historical Society and MDT's own photograph collection, *Taming Big Sky Country* is a lively account of how transportation developed in the Treasure State.

Contact Author Jon Axline at 444-6258 or [jaxline@mt.gov](mailto:jaxline@mt.gov) for more information, or to learn how to purchase a copy of the book.

5184 copies of this public document were published at an estimated cost of \$0.46 per copy for a total of \$2,391 which includes \$586 for printing and \$1,805 for distribution.

MDT’s mission is to serve the public by providing a transportation system and services that emphasize quality, safety, cost effectiveness, economic vitality, and sensitivity to the environment.

**Rail, Transit & Planning Division  
Montana Department of Transportation**

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Helena, Montana 59620-1001

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*Newsline is a quarterly publication of the Rail, Transit, and Planning Division, Montana Department of Transportation.*

**MDT Wants Your Comments**

To receive a list of highway projects MDT plans to present to the Transportation Commission, visit [http://www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/docs/trans\\_comm/proposed\\_proj.pdf](http://www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/docs/trans_comm/proposed_proj.pdf), or give us a call at 1-800-714-7296. You can mail your comments on proposed projects to MDT at the following address or e-mail them to [mdtnewprojects@mt.gov](mailto:mdtnewprojects@mt.gov).

MDT Project Analysis Manager  
PO Box 201001  
Helena, MT 59620-1001

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**Contact Information**

The most frequently requested numbers are listed here. For an area or person not listed, call 800-714-7296 (in Montana only) or 406-444-3423. The TTY number is 406-444-7696 or 800-335-7592.

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