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Central

Low-Water Crossings Receive 'Green' Improvements

by Holly Dentner

Three low-water crossings in Camden County will soon be safer, less likely to flood and potentially beneficial to a federally threatened fish species.

The improvements are a result of MoDOT's efforts to mitigate the environmental impacts of recent Camden County construction projects. One low-water crossing, over Griswald's Slab on County Road N-145, is already rebuilt and open to traffic. Green's Slab on County Road N-166R is nearly complete and scheduled to open in early 2009, weather permitting. The third crossing, at Howard's Ford on County

Road NN-166, is still under construction and scheduled to reopen in 2009. All three routes cross the Little Niangua River.

The low-water crossings are being modified to allow for increased water flow and to improve fish migration, partic-



Work continues on the Howard's Ford crossing, which is scheduled to reopen in early 2009.

Melissa Scheperle

ularly for a federally threatened species called the Niangua Darter.

"Low-water crossings on Missouri county roads can limit aquatic organism movement because they create barriers for fish moving downstream," said Melissa Scheperle, enior environmental specialist. "Modifying these structures enables fish populations to reconnect, increasing opportunity for genetic diversity and boosting population growth."

The new crossings will reduce maintenance needs and expenses. All three are

also designed to decrease the frequency and duration of flooding.

"These low-water crossings are on county roads, but the economic and environmental benefit makes them ideal for MoDOT to help meet our federal requirements for our construction projects in Camden County," said Nicole Hood, project manager. "Our standard mitigation efforts usually include planting trees or stabilizing nearby stream banks, so this project really stands out as a way to improve the transportation system and provide a great benefit to the area's natural habitat and wildlife."

Construction includes removing and replacing 60 feet of each of the existing low-water crossings where the water flow is the greatest. Griswald's Slab has been raised one foot and Green's Slab will be raised two feet. Howard's Ford will remain at the same elevation. The new crossings will be 17 feet wide, which is three feet wider than the existing crossings.



Melissa Scheperle

Water flowed over Green Slab before construction. Work is almost finished on the new crossing.

Motor Oil Keeps Boonville Warm This Winter

by Holly Dentner

We all want efficient and inexpensive ways to heat our homes, especially as energy costs continue to rise. MoDOT wants to operate in the same way, looking for creative ways to be environmentally responsible and cost effective.

The latest attempt at the Central District has employees at the Boonville maintenance building stockpiling used motor oil. A newly installed furnace uses the oil to heat the building, which not only saves money on heating costs, but helps MoDOT stay "green" by recycling one of our existing resources.

"Last year we paid about \$2 per gallon for propane gas, which equaled \$6,000 just to heat the building," said Kerry Thompson, Maintenance superintendent. "By using motor oil we already have, this new furnace should pay for itself in a matter of a year or two."

Even though the department can sell its used motor oil, that price can fluctu-

ate. Re-using the motor oil for our own purposes, especially when it replaces something as expensive as propane gas, still makes for a cost effective solution.

"These oil-burning furnaces do need a little more maintenance," said Thompson. "The biggest change is collecting the oil and filtering it through a screen before it goes into the tank."

The cost savings and environmental benefit make the prospect of additional furnaces around the district a real possibility.

"The maintenance building in Warsaw has been using a furnace that can burn motor oil for quite a while," said Coleen Welter, General Services manager. "For certain buildings this can be an ideal solution and we'll continue evaluating what other buildings might benefit from it."



Melissa Scheperle

The new crossing at Griswald's Slab is one foot higher and three feet wider than the original.

New Faces in Customer Service

Those new voices you'll hear when you dial 888-ASK-MODOT are the Central District's newest additions to the customer service team.

Charlett Scott and Amanda Gabris started on Jan. 5, and their primary duties will include answering district and central office phones, greeting walk-in customers, handling e-mailed requests and helping with public events.

Charlett came to MoDOT after working as a patient representative at the Green Meadows Pediatric Clinic in Columbia. She also worked at University Hospital as a radiology clerk and has a bachelor's degree in criminal justice.

Amanda came to MoDOT after moving to Jefferson City from O'Fallon. She previously worked at Anheuser-Busch, giving VIP tours of the brewery. Amanda also interned at Disney World in Florida while working on her bachelor's degree in psychology.



Kristin Gerber

Central District's Customer Service Team includes Alicia Redes, Jennifer Ranabargar (top row), Amanda Gabris and Charlett Scott (bottom row).

Charlett and Amanda have joined customer service representatives Jennifer Ranabargar and Alicia Redes. In 2008, the District 5 customer service center received more than 46,000 phone calls.

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