



## A Year to Be Proud Of

Within the pages of this annual report, you will learn about a variety of MoDOT's accomplishments for state fiscal year 2003. Some of our achievements you've already seen for yourself, such as making Missouri roads as safe as possible during a record-breaking winter or opening major new routes in the north and south ends of the state. These are the high-profile efforts that make the papers and get the attention.

But many of our achievements go unseen and unsung. As appreciated as they may be, they're simply not as exciting as snowstorms and road openings. Take for instance the Missouri Honor Award we received from the University of Missouri-Columbia. It may not be headline material, but considering only nine organizations have received it since 1951, it's certainly something to tell people about. You can read more about this and other awards MoDOT received on page 26.

The department also completed a reinspection of all its major river bridges last spring. After bridges in St. Louis and Kansas City suffered structural damage from a variety of causes, I asked our field crews to inspect 36 of Missouri's major river bridges and work with bordering states to inspect another 13. Although some minor preventive repair work was needed, the structures passed the inspections without any closings. The inspections were an example of heading off an issue before it becomes a problem.

Then there's the \$4 million we saved taxpayers by rejecting high bids and rebidding projects. At a time when state dollars are tight, that accomplishment lets Missourians know we're doing our best to use their money wisely. Missouri currently ranks 44th in the nation in revenue per mile. That's not good placement by any standards, but when you consider the fact that we've got the seventh largest highway system in the nation to maintain, the problem becomes profound. Any financial good news in that climate is worth bragging about.

All in all, a look at 2003 shows a transportation department doing the best it can with the resources it has available. Fortunately, MoDOT is blessed with one abundant resource: hard working, dedicated employees. Despite funding shortfalls, employee attrition and criticism from the media, our people have come out on top. In the end, it is their effort that has made 2003 a year to be proud of, and I thank them for it.

Henry Hungerbeeler  
Director