

# 2000 annual report



Arkansas  
State Highway  
Commission



An Arkansas State Highway  
and Transportation  
Department  
Report of the Activities  
and Progress for Improving  
Highways and Transportation  
in Arkansas

# transportation

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## events

### **WILDFLOWERS BLOOM ALONG OUR HIGHWAYS**

AHTD's crews assist Mother Nature in providing swaths of flowers and tall grasses through careful timing and limited mowing of right of way. While it is possible to spend as much as \$5,000 an acre to disk and apply herbicides, AHTD's wildflower project costs are \$350 to \$500 per acre per year. In most areas AHTD alters mowing schedules and lets nature take its course without additional taxpayer cost.

During 2000, organizations contributed to a project to plant native wildflowers at all highway interchanges in Little Rock. Master Gardener programs in several cities and counties have created wildflower areas in other parts of Arkansas.



# transportation

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## events



The National Asphalt Pavement Association awarded AHTD two *Quality in Construction Awards*. One award was for the rehabilitation of Interstate 30 in Hempstead County between Hope and Emmett. The \$7.07 million project exceeded the surface quality requirements and minimized traffic delays. The second award was for the construction of Highway 65 on new location from the Missouri state line to Burlington in Boone County at a cost of \$6.8 million. The Federal Highway Administration cited above normal pavement ride quality and surface consistency in its Final Acceptance Report.

The Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department also won the first place award for Beautification and Community Improvement from Keep Arkansas Beautiful. The award recognized AHTD's Maintenance and Wildflowers Program for promoting, preserving and enhancing wildflowers on highway right-of-way.

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# arkansas state highway commission

(Seated L-R) **J.W. "Buddy" Benafield**,  
Member, Hickory Plains  
[Commission Service:  
6-29-93 to Present];  
**Herby Branscum, Jr.**,  
Chairman, Perryville  
[Commission Service:  
1-23-91 to 1-14-01];  
**John "M" Lipton**,  
Vice Chairman, Warren,  
[Commission Service:  
1-14-93 to Present];  
(Standing L-R)  
**Jonathan Barnett**,  
Member, Siloam Springs  
[Commission Service:  
1-15-99 to Present];  
**Mary P. "Prissy"  
Hickerson**, Member,  
Texarkana [Commission  
Service: 1-21-97 to  
Present].



Five Arkansas citizens serve as members of the Arkansas State Highway Commission. They are appointed by the Governor and confirmed by members of the Arkansas State Senate as specified in Constitutional Amendment 42 of 1952. The five commissioners are vested with administrative control of the Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department (AHTD) and for improvements and operations of the 16,367 miles of the State Highway System.

The five commissioners had busy schedules in 2000 as they focused on improving travel on Arkansas' State Highways. Through their efforts and with support of members of the Arkansas General Assembly and Arkansas' citizens, the much-needed Interstate Rehabilitation Program (IRP) is underway.

During the Commission's November 14, 2000, meeting, members unanimously selected John "M" Lipton to serve as Chairman of the Arkansas State Highway Commission; J. W. "Buddy" Benafield was selected Vice Chairman.

# transportation events

## AHTD'S MOTORIST ASSISTANCE PATROL (MAP) BEGINS

MAP was established to provide assistance to motorists who experience problems while traveling through the Interstate Rehabilitation Program construction zones.

The program operates on portions of the Interstate System in the Little Rock and West Memphis areas. MAP trucks cruise these Interstates between 6:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, and from 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays.

**The priority for members of this assistance patrol is to remove disabled vehicles from travel lanes as quickly as possible.**



The two-person patrols can help motorists call for assistance, replenish fuels, change tires, jump-start vehicles, arrange for tows, render first aid and extinguish fires.

# highway police



The Arkansas Highway Police participated in "International Road Check 2000" coordinated by the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance (CVSA) June 6-8, 2000. The 12<sup>th</sup> annual event brings increased inspection activity and helps CVSA and its members focus attention on truck, bus and driver safety programs aimed at reducing the number of commercial vehicle crashes. CVSA member agencies perform about two million commercial vehicle roadside inspections a year.

Two Arkansas Highway Police (AHP) Officers were credited with the seizure of one of the largest shipments of cocaine in Arkansas history when they detained a tractor-trailer rig at an I-30 weigh station just west of Hope in September 2000. The 2,512 pounds of cocaine, valued at \$120 million, were packed in cardboard fruit boxes among a load of honeydew melons.

# department officials



(L-R) **Bob Walters**, Chief Engineer; **Dan Flowers**, Director; **Jane Wilson**, Chief of Administration and Public Affairs



(L-R) **Dale Loe**, Assistant Chief Engineer, Design; **Ralph Hall**, Assistant Chief Engineer, Operations; **Steve Teague**, Assistant Chief Engineer, Planning



(L-R) **Larry Dickerson**, Chief Fiscal Officer  
**Robert Wilson**, Chief Legal Counsel

## mission statement

**“To provide a safe, efficient, aesthetically pleasing and environmentally sound intermodal transportation system for the user.”**

**[Adopted June 4, 1996, by the Arkansas State Highway Commission]**



## transportation improvements



### **CLARENDON WHITE RIVER BRIDGE**

In May 2000, final location and design approval for the Clarendon White River Bridge was received from the Federal Highway Administration. Because of the extensive bridging required to prevent damage to natural habitat and wildlife, the project is estimated to cost over \$50 million. Additional studies required by U.S. Fish and Wildlife are underway.

### **GREENVILLE BRIDGE**

Congress earmarked \$100 million for construction of the Greenville Bridge (Highway 82) over the Mississippi River. The new structure will be a four-lane cable stayed bridge south of the existing structure.

The total estimated cost of the bridge and approaches is approximately \$200 million. Mississippi serves as the lead state on this joint project which will be under construction in 2001.

## major planning studies

The major highway corridors study will consider using existing revenues, toll financing, bonding [including Grant Anticipation Revenue Vehicle (GARVEE) Bonds], state-local government partnerships, local revenue units, public-private partnerships, privatization, use of non-traditional revenue sources, leveraging provisions of federal law, state infrastructure banks, and other potential sources of revenue that could help improve these corridors. The study will also consider other identified existing statewide highway needs.



## innovative financing

March 7, 2000, was the first sale of bonds by the Department since 1951.



### INTERSTATE REHABILITATION PROGRAM (IRP)

Act 1027 of 1999 authorized the Commission to issue up to \$575 million in Grant Anticipation Revenue Vehicle (GARVEE) Bonds. The competitive bid sale of the first \$175 million in bonds was held March 7, 2000. Additional bond sales will take place as needed to allow construction to proceed on an aggressive schedule. The Commission has committed to let all work to contract in three years and to complete all work in five years.

The Commission awarded contracts on 16 IRP projects in 2000 that totaled 101 miles and approximately \$200 million. These projects are listed and illustrated on the following pages.

# improving travel conditions

## IRP PROJECTS LET TO CONTRACT IN 2000

<u>Route</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Job Name</u>	<u>Length</u>	<u>Award Amount</u>
30	Hempstead & Nevada	Hwy. 299 - Hwy. 371	7.16	\$8,166,935
30	Nevada	Hwy. 371 - Boughton Road	7.33	\$6,930,205
30	Nevada & Clark	Boughton Rd. - Gurdon Rest Area	4.99	\$12,293,174
30	Clark	Hwy. 53 - Gum Springs	6.41	\$17,967,926
30	Hot Spring	Social Hill - West (Resurfacing)	6.88	\$15,871,255
30	Hot Spring	Near Social Hill		\$624,359
40	Crawford	Oklahoma State Line - Arkansas Missouri Railroad Overpass	6.98	\$14,899,573
40	Franklin	Crawford County Line - East	5.72	\$12,678,846
40	Franklin	Hwy. 219 - West	7.08	\$16,530,058
40	Johnson	Hwy. 164 - Hwy. 64 West	6.99	\$13,987,767
40	Pope & Conway	Atkins - Blackwell	6.50	\$11,624,310
40	Conway	Plumerville - East	6.00	\$9,790,468
40	Lonoke	Hwy. 31 - Carlisle	6.66	\$14,570,284
40	St. Francis	Goodwin - East	11.49	\$25,821,093
40	Crittenden	Hwy. 131 - Mississippi River	3.14	\$13,759,084
55	Crittenden	I-40 - Jericho	7.74	\$5,174,950



# major planning studies

## MAJOR HIGHWAY CORRIDORS

The Arkansas State Highway Commission hired the consultant team of Wilbur Smith Associates, HNTB, Salomon Smith Barney and Garver Engineers to investigate innovative financing techniques for the following major highway corridors:

- ◆ Highway 49 (I-40 to Mississippi Line - including a new bridge over the Mississippi River)
- ◆ Highway 63 (I-55 to Payneway)
- ◆ Highway 65 (Damascus to Missouri Line)
- ◆ Highway 65/82 (Pine Bluff to Mississippi Line - including a new bridge over the Mississippi River)
- ◆ Highway 167 (I-530 to El Dorado)
- ◆ Highway 67 (Newport to Missouri Line)
- ◆ Highway 71 (Proposed I-49 from Missouri Line to Louisiana Line)
- ◆ Highway 79 (Memphis to Pine Bluff - including a new bridge over the Mississippi River)
- ◆ Highway 412 (Oklahoma Line to Missouri Line)
- ◆ Proposed I-69 (Mississippi River to Louisiana Line - including a new bridge over the Mississippi River)
- ◆ I-530 Extension (Pine Bluff to Highway 278)
- ◆ North Belt Freeway (U.S. 67 to I-40)
- ◆ Hot Springs Bypass (Highway 270 East to Highways 5 & 7)

# corridor planning

## ◆ HIGHWAY 71

During 2000, the U.S. Congress earmarked \$94 million for constructing the portion of U.S. 71 south of Texarkana.

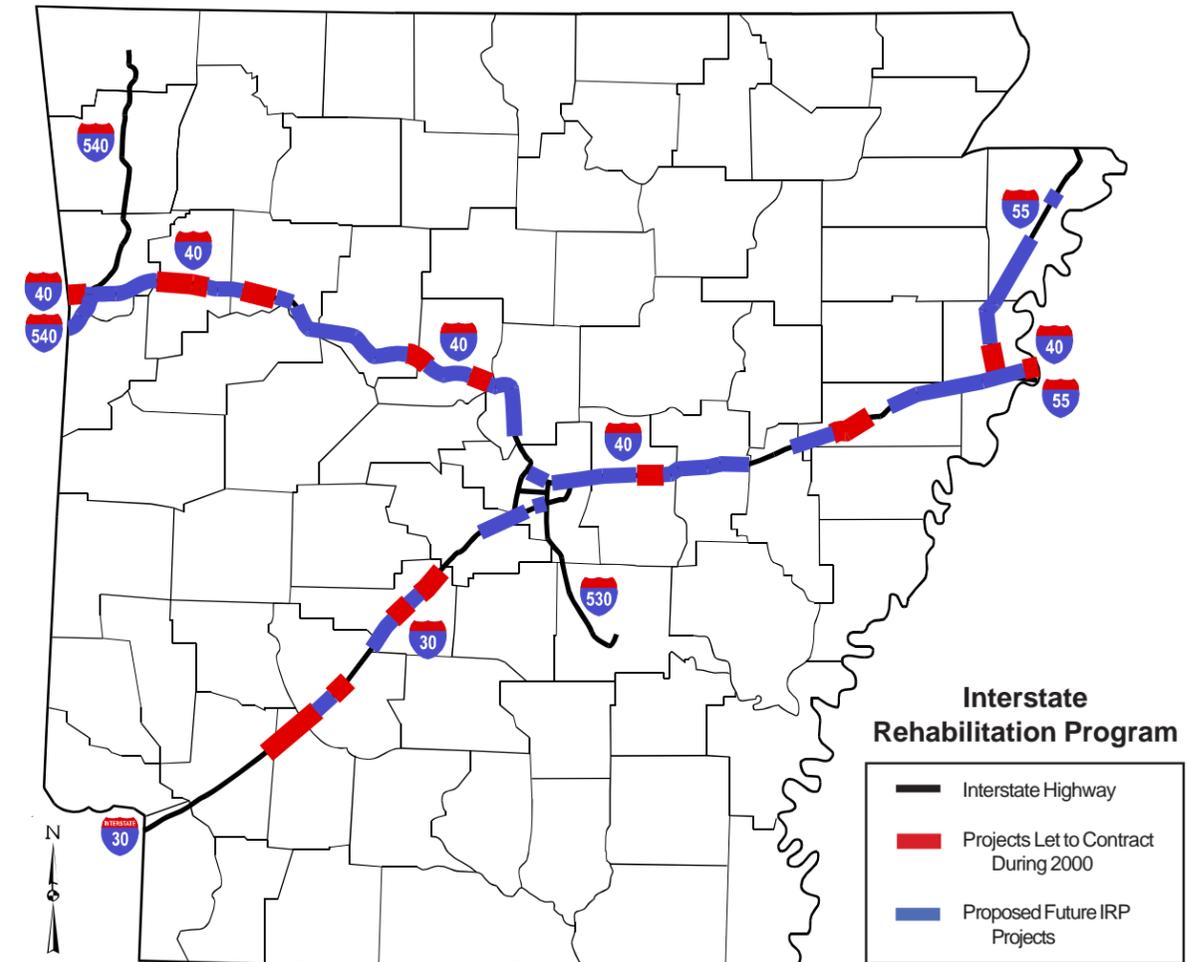
AHTD's Director requested that Highway 245 around Texarkana from I-30 to U.S. 71 be designated as future I-130. The AASHTO Route Numbering Committee approved this designation, pending completion to Interstate standards, in December 2000.

The Record of Decision for the Bella Vista Bypass was approved by the Federal Highway Administration on April 19, 2000. This approval completed the environmental phase of the project. Development of plans is now underway. Right-of-way acquisition, utility adjustments and construction can proceed as funds become available.

## ◆ HIGHWAY 412

With Arkansas' commitment to help finance the project, work on a \$12 million bridge spanning the St. Francis River between Arkansas and Missouri will begin in 2001. Missouri is the lead state for the project, but financing the new four-lane bridge on U.S. 412 between Greene County, Arkansas, and Dunklin County, Missouri, is being shared by both states. Arkansas received federal discretionary funds of approximately \$500,000 in 2000 to continue study and design work for the bridge.

# improving travel conditions



# construction projects

During Calendar Year 2000, the Arkansas State Highway Commission let to contract 150 projects. These projects totaled 574 miles and approximately \$515 million. This was the largest dollar amount let to contract in any one year in the history of the Commission. The following table lists several of the major non-IRP projects let during the year.

## MAJOR PROJECTS LET TO CONTRACT IN 2000

Route	County	Job Name	Length	Award Amount
1	St. Francis	Forrest City Bypass	New Location	\$22,902,829
5	Stone	Cove Prong Creek - Hwy. 14	Minor Widening	\$5,446,724
7	Pope	I-40 - Dover	Major Widening	\$12,951,722
10	Yell	East City Limits Danville - East	Minor Widening	\$5,821,344
18	Mississippi	Hwy. 312 - Blytheville	Major Widening	\$8,335,795
23	Madison	War Eagle Creek	Structures & Approaches	\$3,446,066
40	Crittenden	I-40 Miss. River Br. Seismic Retrofit	Bridge Rehabilitation	\$8,045,604
45	Washington	White River, Richland & Brush Creeks	Structures & Approaches	\$4,528,899
67	Lawrence	Hwy. 63 - Hwy. 34	Base & Surface	\$8,082,805
70	Garland	Hwy. 270 East - Hwy. 70 East	Grading & Structures	\$9,809,795
71	Miller	Fouke - North	Grading & Structures	\$17,473,343
79	Jefferson	Cleveland County Line - North	Overlay	\$549,857
79	Ouachita	Bearden Bypass - Additional Lanes	Major Widening	\$6,412,427
167	Independence	Pleasant Plans - County Road 6	Major Widening	\$13,875,525
215	Franklin	Indian Creek - Johnson County Line	Reconstruction	\$2,542,181
245	Miller	State Line Interchange - Hwy. 71	New Location	\$9,657,210
278	Bradley	Warren - Hwy. 172	Major Widening	\$17,649,644
278	Drew	Wilmar - Monticello	Major Widening	\$6,940,063
412	Madison	Onion Creek & Kings River	Structures & Approaches	\$3,225,798
440	Pulaski	Hwy. 67 Interchange	Grading & Structures	\$22,783,599

# corridor planning

## HIGH PRIORITY CORRIDORS UPDATE

The 2000 status of Arkansas' portion of each route follows:

### ◆ HIGHWAY 63

AHTD's Director requested that U.S. 63 between I-55 and Jonesboro be designated as future I-555. In December 2000, the AASHTO Route Numbering Committee approved this designation pending completion of the work necessary to improve this route to Interstate standards.

### ◆ INTERSTATE 69

Officials agreed that the May 3, 2000, signing of the Record of Decision for the Great River Bridge, linking Desha County in Arkansas with Bolivar County in Mississippi, was memorable. The Director was authorized to retain the services of a consultant to design the bridge on January 11, 2000. Subsequently, the Department entered into a contract with HNTB Corporation for design services on the Great River Bridge.

**Interstate 130 and Interstate 555 designated as Future Interstates in Arkansas.**