

COUNTY ROADS ARE REGARDED AS BEING NEAR TOP IN STATE

One Hundred and Sixty Miles of Highways Have Been Improved Since Program Was Instituted Nine Years Ago; \$440,000 Bond Issue to Face Voters at May Election

That Union county has one of the most comprehensive road programs of any county in the state is shown in the fact that 160 miles of road have been improved in the county since the program was instituted about nine years ago, and at a cost much less in many cases than that of other counties.

The road activities in Union county are handled in a capable manner, the work being entirely under the supervision of the county engineer, S. B. Morgan, or the county road master as he is known, who is appointed by the county court.

The county has three types of road besides the state highways—the market roads, which are constructed by the county assisted by the state, county bond roads, for which special bonds are voted by the people of the county, and the county cooperation roads which are built on the 50-50 basis, the county cooperating with the community interested in the improvement of a certain section or road. Each year as funds are available a new section of road is placed on the market road map and when this year's work is completed there will be 78 miles of surfaced market road in Union county, and 17 and one-half miles of market road graded to standard, but not surfaced.

Much Work Ahead

There will be work on three market roads in the county this season, and also considerable work on county unit dirt roads. The graveling of the Lower Cove-Allece market road will be completed, the Clover Creek market road will be fenced and graded and the grading of the Cemetery-Creek Flat road will be finished. The work on the Clover Creek road will be the first on this road. All deeds for right of ways have now been secured and plans are to go ahead with the work immediately.

In addition to this there will be other road work in various sections of the county. The grading will be finished on the one-mile section joining Bondosa with the Baker county line and surface placed among the first work. County unit dirt roads all over the county will be improved, those needing work most badly being improved first. This work will include grading and scraping, which is included in regular maintenance, grading in several sections where drainage is bad and some gravel surfacing.

All investigation and maintenance of market roads is under the complete supervision of the county engineer. The county court,

which consists of County Judge U. G. Couch, and Commissioners W. W. Stevens and W. R. Ledbetter, meets once each month and at that time any action on road construction is taken. The matter is then turned over to the county engineer, who personally handles all details of the construction and supervises the work. A definite road program is outlined at the beginning of each year and is carried out as closely as possible during that period.

County bond roads are also constructed and maintained under the supervision of the county engineer, as are the co-operative roads, the residents of the section in which the road is being constructed often helping with the work on the co-operation roads.

Follow State Standards

All market roads in the county are constructed in accordance with the state market road standard. The maximum grade is 5 per cent and the maximum curve is 55 degrees. The standard width of the road bed grade is from 18 to 24 feet, with width depending largely on the section of the county in which the road is constructed and the amount of traffic over the road. Bridges on all improved roads are also up to the state standard.

Practically all of the permanent road improvements in the county are in accordance with the state standard. Work on the co-operation roads, however, depends largely upon the amount of money available, the county matching the amount furnished by the residents of the community. These roads are usually drained and graded up to the standard and after this work is done if money is available the road is gravelled.

The county employs a road maintenance crew at all times for the upkeep of improved county roads. The county engineer has charge of this work and also has full jurisdiction in the employing and discharging of men as he sees fit.

Union county co-operates with the state in all of its road work and in this way is able to obtain the services of the state which results in more standardized roads and better work. County bridges are inspected by state bridge engineers, and the county and state co-operate in road plans and construction.

In addition to overseeing the maintenance work of the roads the county engineer has charge of the county unit dirt roads, which look after all bridges, culverts and culverts on county roads with

A NEW CHEVROLET MODEL



This popular Chevrolet sport cabriolet pictured above is one of the newest and most popular models that the Blue Mountain garage here offers to the public.

the exception of the unimproved dirt roads.

Maintenance Problem

The maintenance of the unimproved dirt roads in the county is handled in an entirely different manner. For this purpose the county is divided into three districts, each one of about assessed value. A district is assigned to the county judge and to each of the two commissioners. In accordance with the section of the county each represents. Each member of the court appoints, or names, a man living in his section who is versed on road building and a certain amount of money, based on the assessed valuation, is allotted to each district to handle the road maintenance work.

The official from the county court, together with the county engineer and the representative of each section, or the road boss as he is called, goes over the roads in the district and the work to be done is outlined at that time. The representative is then given charge of the work, which is carried out to the best advantage possible the road boss being personally interested in the upkeep of the road as it is located in the community in which he lives. This man is paid regular labor wages, in accordance to the number of hours he works on the road.

The money for this maintenance work is taken from the general road fund and includes not only the maintenance of the road itself, but also of the bridges and culverts.

Maintains Shop

The county maintains a machine shop for the overhauling and repairing of road equipment, and during the winter time when it is impossible for the crews to work on the roads they are employed in the shop, and in this way an efficiently organized crew is kept at all times.

The county owns much of its machinery and equipment which is purchased with funds from general road fund upon recommendation of the county engineer and the approval of the county court. This machinery is kept for construction and maintenance purposes. When it is used on the market roads a rental is charged against the market road fund and

returned to the general road fund.

A majority of the road construction work in Union county is done by the county forces and is not contracted. Two grading contracts were let last year and the remainder of the work was handled by the county crews. This year the county expects to handle all of the work, this plan having been found more successful than letting by contract. The county crews are well organized and it is believed that the construction work can be handled just as efficiently and as cheaply by these men and at the same time save the contractors profit, county officials say.

Union county has had difficulty with two or three contractors in the past, in practically all cases, however, the bonding companies have gone through with the work. Members of the county court say. In one case the bonding company took a bridge over and completed it, and on another job the bonding company paid all unpaid bills left by the contractors, county officials report.

To Spend \$88,000

A total of \$88,000 will be spent on roads in Union county this year. Twenty-four thousand dollars of this amount makes up the general road fund, which will be divided into three parts \$8,000 going to the county judge and \$8,000 to each of the two commissioners for work on the county unit dirt roads. This amount will cover the cost in each district of dragging the roads and improving and putting in culverts and bridges, including a new bridge which will be built across Catherine creek near Union to replace the one which caved in there this spring.

A total of \$74,000 will be spent on the market roads in the county. This amount includes the state's portion and the money from Mulmohar county, which is \$28,000.

At the beginning of the Union county road program in 1919, \$148,000 in county bonds was voted, all of which has been spent on state and county roads with the exception of \$298,000 which was authorized but never sold. A total of \$450,000 has been spent on market roads in the county since 1920, when the market road program was initiated, a part of which came from the state fund, and about \$500,000 has been spent by the county in the past ten years for general road maintenance, and for the maintenance and building of bridges and culverts.

Special Issue Coming

A special road bond issue amounting to \$440,000 will be placed on the ballot at the primary election May 18. The issue calls for the improvement of 12 roads in the county, and would advance the present market road program about five years, according to Mr. Morgan, the county engineer. The passing of the bond issue would mean the improvement of many of the major roads in the county and would release the market road money for feeder roads, which would result in the completion of Union county's good road program several years before it would be completed otherwise.

The bond issue is an outgrowth of the bond issue which was voted upon last year and defeated by a small majority. The program has been gone over carefully and re-arranged to include seven roads which were not included last year, and one road, the Toll Gate road from Elgin to the forest boundary line, has been omitted.

Roads to Benefit

The roads which will be benefited if the issue passed and the amount allotted to each road follows: High Valley road, \$20,000; Cove avenue road, \$10,000; North Powder River road, \$7,000; Union-Medical Springs road, \$100,000; Wolf Creek road, \$25,000; Hilliard-Starkey road, \$100,000; Summer-ville-Elgin road, \$100,000; Elgin-Palmer Junction road, \$20,000; Pleasant Grove-Summerville road, \$30,000; North Powder-Clover Creek road, \$20,000; and the Hillman road, \$5,000.

Union county now has 110 miles of state and county bond roads, including 85.4 miles of state highway—7.8 miles of which is paved, 62.4 miles of macadam and 14.7 miles of surfaced highway—nearly 60 miles of improved market road and about 35 miles of surfaced county roads in addition to the market roads. There is about 2500 miles of unimproved and partially improved roads in the county.

Judge U. G. Couch and Commissioners W. W. Stevens and W. R. Ledbetter make up the personnel of the county court at present.

Not long ago Deacon Miller bought a horse and buggy and took his wife out one Sunday for a drive. They came to our neighboring town of Elmer and saw a sign which read, "Speed limit, fifteen miles per hour."

"Here, ma," said the deacon excitedly, "you take the lines and drive, and I'll use the whip. Maybe we can make it."—Life.

Cop (to Sweet Young Thing turning right against one-way traffic stream): Hey, you can't do that.

S. Y. T. Why?

Cop: Well, a right turn is wrong—the left turn is right. If you wanna turn right turn left and then—ah, go ahead.

BUNTING CO. IS GROWING RAPIDLY

Demand for Caterpillar Tractors Good—Firm Increasing Its Facilities

One of the fastest growing firms among the automotive and machinery houses in Eastern Oregon is the Bunting Tractor company of this city, distributors for "Caterpillar" tractors. This firm was organized in 1925 to sell the "Caterpillar" tractor, manufactured by the Caterpillar Tractor company, which represented a merger of the Best and Holt tractor companies, pioneer builders of track-type tractors.

From the start the Bunting Tractor company's business was very successful. In 1926 far more "Caterpillar" tractors were mar-

keiled in its territory, which embraces Eastern Oregon and southern Idaho, than had been marketed in any previous year. The year 1927 showed a substantial increase over the previous year, and the company reports that more sales have been made to date this year than during the entire year of 1926. In March alone deliveries to customers total more than \$70,000 in value.

Good Year Ahead

The company anticipates a continuously increasing volume of business, based on a careful analysis of the need for more power units for out-door work, and the increasing desire of farmers, loggers, contractors, road builders and others to fill this need with the "Caterpillar" tractor.

"The present condition of things" according to the Bunting company, "is forcing economies of operation in many lines. Farmers find that crops must be raised at a low cost if profit is to be realized under the existing prices of farm products. Logs must be produced cheaper if

the lumber manufacturing concerns are to make a profit or even exist in some instances under the present scheme of things in the lumber industry. More and better roads must be built if one community is to vie with another at this time of competition for the favors of tourist trade and the rural buying power, and the tax payers' money must go farther in building these roads lest the burden become too great.

"Caterpillar" tractors are doing their part in solving all these problems," according to Bunting Tractor company. One of their customers who uses a "Caterpillar" tractor on his farm, states that the tractor saved \$1.22 per acre in labor alone in his operation last year. A prominent lumber company using "Caterpillar" tractors in this area, reports a saving of more than \$2 per thousand in logging costs last year, attributed entirely to the use of "Caterpillar" tractors in the woods. Road building costs have been lower and the standard of construction improved

through the use of "Caterpillar" tractors in almost every locality, according to the Bunting Tractor company.

Progressive Policy

The success of the "Caterpillar" tractor is attributed to the progressive policy of the manufacturer by the local dealer. All models are being improved constantly and at the same time prices are being reduced. Four substantial price reductions have been put into effect on "Caterpillar" tractors since the organization of the Caterpillar Tractor company, and the cost per horse power is lower than was thought possible a few years ago.

Bunting Tractor company is constantly increasing the facilities to handle its growing business. Offices are maintained in Boise and Pocatello, Idaho, to handle the southern Idaho territory and the service department of the organization is being enlarged to take care of the large number of owners in the territory.

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