

Bridge and culvert

Bridge and culvert work resulted in the replacement or repair of over a dozen structures. One major accomplishment was the OR 207 Hinkle Bridge located south of Hermiston, near I-84 Exit 182. This three-year bridge replacement project began in 2013, and was completed this year.

Another significant undertaking was the replacement of the Ladd Creek culvert that runs under I-84 near Exit 271, east of La Grande. The project was a top priority for ODOT, the Department of Fish and Wildlife and other agencies as the construction of the freeway in the late 1960's stopped native salmon and other fish species from reaching spawning grounds along upper Ladd Creek and other tributaries feeding into Ladd Canyon. The project installed over 500 feet of culvert, restored a short section of the creek that was moved decades ago and removed a 25-foot vertical shaft that was part of the old culvert system. The work opened up 14 miles of fish habitat that had been restricted for decades.

Other culvert and bridge projects included replacing a small bridge along OR 339 near Milton-Freewater; installing new culverts under OR 237 near Cove; replacing two old culverts under U.S. 30 east of La Grande near McAlister Lane and replacing two undersized culverts along U.S. 395 south of John Day. Structures needing repairs included the freeway undercrossing tunnel at Deadman Pass rest area, four freeway bridges along I-84 near North Powder and several U.S. 95 bridges between Succor Creek and Rome in Malheur County.

Operations and safety improvements

Operations and safety improvements to upgrade traffic signals, signs, intersections and safety-related features for motorists, pedestrians and bicyclists were constructed in several locations throughout the region. These included signal and intersection enhancements along U.S. 20 in Burns, and at the U.S. 395 and Southgate Place intersection in Pendleton. The Southgate project included approximately 1,000 feet of new six-foot wide concrete walkways along the west side of U.S. 395.

Another intersection in Pendleton at Frazer Avenue and SW 13th Street received A.D.A. upgrades and new rapid flash beacons at the designated school crossing. Over a dozen traffic signals in Hermiston and La Grande also received upgrades this year to improved function and reliability. In John Day a project to upgrade sidewalks and enhance the look



Construction of the Hinkle Bridge south of Hermiston.

of downtown along Main Street/U.S. 26 and Canyon Blvd/U.S. 395 was completed in time for the summer season. Motorists saw life-saving rumble strip upgrades along sections of U.S. 20, U.S. 26, U.S. 395, U.S. 95, OR 207 and other routes to help keep them in their travel lanes. Bicyclists also saw improvements along U.S. 26 west of Mt. Vernon where the highway shoulders were widened to provide four feet of space outside the fog line rumble strip.

New infrastructure

New infrastructure to the transportation system was added near Umatilla, where U.S. 730 connects to Powerline Road. The close proximity of this intersection to the Umatilla River Bridge resulted in backed-up traffic on the river crossing and congestion along the busy highway. Powerline Road was extended away from the bridge and a new, safer connection was installed. Another new road segment in the guise of a third lane for trucks was added to I-84's westbound lanes near Spring Creek Grade, about 15 miles west of La Grande. The steep incline is a bottleneck for traffic when snow and ice result in slow moving commercial vehicles as they head over the Blue Mountains.

All but a few of these projects are now complete and travelers are reminded to use TripCheck.com for current highway conditions and possible traffic impacts.

"I'm proud of the work performed by



Frazer Ave., Pendleton pedestrian upgrades include rapid flash crosswalk beacons.

ODOT staff, our contractors and their crews," Sipp said. "We also have good relationships with our many city, county and stakeholder

partners. More projects are scheduled next year that will help move all users safely along our vast transportation network.

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