

# The INSIDE

# LANE

A newsletter for employees of the Arizona Department of Transportation

DECEMBER 2020

VOLUME 4, ISSUE 12

**Butterflies take flight  
in SR 189 construction**

**PAGE  
3**



◀ **Leadership Matters  
Giving thanks  
PAGE 2**



◀ **IRU assists 10,000-plus  
traffic incidents in  
first year  
PAGE 4**



◀ **Teamwork key to  
successful guardrail and  
fence repairs  
PAGE 5**

**ADOT**

## LEADERSHIP

## MATTERS

**D**URING THE HOLIDAY season, many of us take time to celebrate Thanksgiving Day in one way or another. Many of us have family traditions or events that we participate in, but like many things in 2020, this holiday will be different. We will likely make changes to our 2020 Thanksgiving activities.

It is hard to be thankful when so many of us have lost people who are important to us. It is hard to be thankful when we are separated from family and friends. It is hard to be thankful when we continue to face anxiety and struggle with the new realities COVID-19 has forced upon us.

However, there are things we should be thankful for in our lives.

We should be thankful that we can share memories of those who are no longer with us. We should be thankful that we have each other to count on during this time. We should be thankful that we live in a country where we have the freedoms that we enjoy. We should be thankful for the people we care for and who care for us.

I am thankful for the privilege of serving you and Arizona as the leader of this agency. But remember that we are all called upon to be leaders. Each and every one of us are called on to lead by demonstrating our ADOT Values of Accountability, Integrity and Respect. I see these values being demonstrated every day by people who are following safe practices to keep us safe from COVID-19. I am thankful that you are a part of the ADOT Team ensuring that everyone is Safely Home.

Please remember to be thankful for the ADOT team members who will be working on Thanksgiving. Many ADOT employees are on the job after hours, during weekends and on holidays. All of us should give a shout out to members of the ADOT Team who are postponing their holiday to serve the public and keep our transportation system operating safely.

With Gratitude and Respect,



**John Halikowski**  
ADOT Director

# The INSIDE LANE

## ADOT DIRECTOR

JOHN S. HALIKOWSKI

## DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR POLICY

KEVIN BIESTY

## COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR

TIMOTHY TAIT

## COMMUNICATIONS DEPUTY DIRECTOR

JON BRODSKY

## NEWSLETTER STAFF

KATHY BOYLE, ASSISTANT

COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR

LORI BAKER, SENIOR COMMUNICATIONS

SPECIALIST

ANGELA DE WELLES, SENIOR

COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST

KIM LARSON, SENIOR COMMUNICATIONS

SPECIALIST

MICHELLE FINK, ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

RANDY SASAKI, GRAPHICS PROJECT

MANAGER

JOHN WALRADT, GRAPHIC DESIGNER

ELENA DIAZ, GRAPHIC DESIGNER

FRANK RODRIGUEZ, GRAPHIC DESIGNER

## EDITORIAL BOARD

EDDIE EDISON, HR

VINCENT LABELLA, OCI

SONYA HERRERA, ASD

GREGORY BYRES, MPD

LT. JAMES WARRINER, ECD/OIG

JAMES WINDSOR, TSMO

JENNIFER BOWSER RICHARDS, MVD

LARRY CLARK, MVD

STEVE BOSCHEN, IDO

THE INSIDE LANE IS PUBLISHED MONTHLY FOR THE EMPLOYEES OF THE ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION BY ADOT COMMUNICATIONS.

ADDRESS ALL COMMENTS AND

SUGGESTIONS TO [InsideLane@azdot.gov](mailto:InsideLane@azdot.gov).

A WEB VERSION OF THIS NEWSLETTER CAN BE FOUND ON ADOTNET OR AT [AZDOT.GOV/INSIDELANE](http://AZDOT.GOV/INSIDELANE).

© 2020 Arizona Department of Transportation

## Share your best cover shot

Do you snap shots that show off the scenic side of transportation in Arizona? Share them with us and we might put your photograph on the next cover of The Inside Lane.

It can be a great picture of an MVD office, a beautiful highway shot or even an artsy photo of construction materials. Whatever the subject, the photo should highlight some aspect of the work happening here at ADOT.

Submit your original, digital photographs to [InsideLane@azdot.gov](mailto:InsideLane@azdot.gov) in JPEG format (no larger than 10MB). Along with the photo, please provide a brief description and your name/title.



This photo of State Route 189 improvements taking shape with butterfly-adorned columns was taken by Video Services Supervisor **John Dougherty**. See more coverage on Page 3.

# MONARCH BUTTERFLIES TAKE FLIGHT IN SR 189 FREEWAY CONSTRUCTION

**AS STATE ROUTE 189** construction progresses from the international border of Mexico to Grand Avenue in Nogales, monarch butterflies are emerging throughout the new highway structures.

Abstract butterflies are cascading down the concrete piers being installed for the new bridge and flyover ramps connecting SR 189 and Interstate 19.

“This design shows how these butterflies cluster together on tree trunks,” said Landscape Architectural Designer **Joseph R. Salazar**, who is the project aesthetic manager.

Three-dimensional metal butterflies will be attached as accent icons on the concrete retaining walls. Abstract butterfly designs also will be incorporated in landform graphics.

Why were butterflies chosen as the project’s aesthetic theme?

ADOT roadside development team members studied the cultural, historical and biological contexts in the Nogales Port of Entry area. They learned that SR 189 is also known as Mariposa (Spanish for butterfly) Road. In addition, the North American monarch butterflies are significant in this region — migrating through Arizona between Mexico and Canada in the fall and spring.

“I decided to incorporate the monarch butterfly because it represents movement and transportation, which ties in with the busy Nogales Port of Entry that has a lot of trade going back and forth,” Salazar said.



*Rick L. Hansen, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service*

*Monarch butterfly on aster.*

The monarch butterflies’ bold colors and shapes echo the vibrant colors, cultural and natural beauty of the area.

[Monarch butterflies](#) are under consideration by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for inclusion on the Endangered Species List. The SR 189 landscaping will benefit monarch butterflies because milkweed shrubs — the primary food source for monarch caterpillars — will be part of the vegetation.

Roadside Resources Specialist **Kris Gade** is part of a group that developed a [nationwide candidate conservation agreement for monarch butterflies](#) to conserve and enhance monarch butterfly habitat, including providing vegetation they need to survive, such as milkweed.

“ADOT supported development of the agreement and is working on identifying monarch butterfly habitat areas in rights of way around the state,” she added.

View more photos of the butterfly design in the SR 189 highway on [Flickr](#). Read more about the highway improvements and see a video with a [butterfly’s view of Mariposa Road](#). ■

~ Lori Baker, Senior Communications Specialist

## SR 189 improvements will bolster international commerce

Crews are building flyover ramps connecting State Route 189 (Mariposa Road) with Interstate 19 to improve traffic flow for commercial trucks carrying produce and other international commerce.

Thousands of trucks no longer will have to stop multiple times between I-19 and the Mariposa Port of Entry, which is one of the busiest cargo ports along the U.S.-Mexico border. With the flyover ramps, there will be less truck traffic near [Nogales High School, which will make it safer for students](#).

The ramps are part of \$134 million in planned improvements, including:

- Widening about three miles of SR 189 from just north of the Mariposa Port of Entry to the intersection with Grand Avenue
- Constructing a new roundabout at SR 189 and Target Range Road
- Improving drainage
- Installing new traffic signals

Construction began in April and is expected to take 18 months to complete. Learn more about SR 189 improvements and their value to Arizona’s economy at [azdot.gov/sr189](#). View an ADOT video about the construction on [YouTube](#).



*John Dougherty, ADOT Communications*



# KAIZEN KORNER

## KAIZEN 2021 CHALLENGE

The Office of Continuous Improvement announces the Kaizen 2021 Challenge goal of 7,200 kaizens. Every employee is being asked to complete one kaizen on their own. A kaizen can be big or small, eliminates waste in our processes and is documented through standard work. Team or collaborative kaizens are also encouraged. Last year, only 61% of employees individually documented a completed kaizen.

## KAIZEN COUNT

The number of kaizens submitted by ADOT employees so far this fiscal year is

# 1,424

For a complete breakdown by division, visit the [Office of Continuous Improvement page on ADOTNet](#).

## Incident Response Unit assists 10,000-plus traffic incidents in first year

**R**ESPONDING TO more than 10,000 incidents in its first year, ADOT's Incident Response Unit clearly is a turn in the right direction for traffic mitigation.

The IRU was formed in 2019 with dedicated staff on the roadways in proximity to respond quickly to any traffic incident in the Phoenix metropolitan area. Traffic volume in the Valley is around 1.7 million vehicles per month and based on the data, the team responds to an average of 866 calls each month.

How do they cover so much ground, with the potential for multiple incidents happening at any given time? The 14-member unit consists of two shifts that allow them to cover more ground, longer.

"With this new unit, we're on the road 16 hours every weekday," said **Abraham Asermely**, IRU supervisor. He went on to explain a typical day. "The early shift starts with morning rush hour, concentrated in central Phoenix. They will then start fan out to other areas, responding to incidents but also working on maintenance issues."

The Department of Public Safety is an essential partner in incident management. An officer is always on shift in ADOT's Traffic Operations Center and DPS captains meet with IRU staff quarterly.

"Since the inception of the IRU unit, we have relied heavily on them and oftentimes they are the closest asset we have to mitigate traffic hazards such as debris and blocking disabled vehicles," said DPS Captain Jacob Pruet. "We work hand in hand to provide the utmost safety to the motoring public within Maricopa County ... keeping the freeways clear by providing a fast response to any incident on the highway."

One unusual thing about the IRU's first year was the pandemic. As the number of cars on the road decreased, the number of calls decreased accordingly.



**James Novoselac**, Traffic Systems Management and Operations

Supervisor **Ray Kavaliunas** said that the DMS-equipped trucks will eventually make up half of their vehicles. Each vehicle has the capability to quickly display one of 96 pre-programmed messages.

Kim Larson, ADOT Communications

"While we definitely saw more incidents before COVID-19 hit, we've seen a marked increase for the time each incident takes to clear, so the workload has remained steady," IRU Program Manager **Mark Brown** explained.

The operational shift in itself was the impetus for continuous improvement as the team found ways to increase efficiencies and customer service delivery, and developed standard work.

What does the IRU team want drivers to be aware of? Know the laws, so you're prepared if you're involved in an accident or you encounter vehicles on the shoulder. Learn more about the [Move Over AZ law](#) and [Quick Clearance](#). View a video and hear from [Director John Halikowski on the IRU in the ADOT Blog](#).

~ Kim Larson, Senior Communications Specialist



## STATE FARM'S SPONSORSHIP ASSISTS IRU

State Farm sponsors the IRU as part of its nationwide #AssistPatrol program, providing a website for motorists to give feedback on the IRU's customer service. Every person assisted is handed a card with an invitation to let the IRU know how it's doing. Read [comments from those surveys](#) and more in this [recent news release](#).



Twelve miles of guardrail were repaired or replaced along SR 87 and SR 188.

Brett Rupp, Payson Maintenance

## Teamwork key to successful guardrail and fence repairs after Bush Fire



Crews repair guardrail.

Chad Auker, Northcentral District

**W**HEN THE [Bush Fire](#) damaged about 12 miles of guardrail and 59 miles of right-of-way fencing along state routes 87 and 188, ADOT crews and partners worked tirelessly to make repairs so traffic could move safely again.

The Bush Fire in the Tonto National Forest — the fifth-largest wildfire in Arizona’s history — consumed more than 193,000 acres from June 13 to July 6.

The wildfire prompted an 11-day closure of SR 87 to southbound traffic at the SR 188 junction south of Payson and northbound traffic on the Bush Highway near Fountain Hills. The highways reopened on June 23 with a one-lane restriction to allow guardrail repair. The SR 87 guardrail was repaired from July 20 to Oct. 9. Work continues on the SR 87 right-of-way fencing as well as SR 188’s guardrail and right-of-way fencing.

Embodying the One ADOT spirit, ADOT staff across divisions and groups have been working together to repair fire damage to the SR 87 and SR 188 highways.

Under the leadership of Infrastructure Delivery and Operations Division Director **Steve Boschen**, employees from IDO’s Northcentral, Southeast and Central districts assessed the damage, set up portable message boards, worked road closures, removed debris and inspected repairs completed by contractors.

Traffic Operations Center and Communications team members informed motorists about detours, and provided progress reports about SR 87 and SR 188 repairs. For example, a Facebook post about the highway reopening reached nearly 108,000 people. Updates also were provided through news media advisories, dynamic message signs, [ADOT Alerts](#) and the [AZ511 system](#).

During the fire, the Payson Maintenance Unit manned roadblocks on the north end of SR 87. The Central District supervised SR 87’s southern closure. The Southeast District’s Globe, Roosevelt and Superior maintenance units provided support for SR 188’s closure.

After the fire, Payson and Mesa maintenance units installed traffic control devices for a 13-mile long lane closure. Drainage along the

SR 87 corridor was reestablished to alleviate flooding concerns from post-wildfire runoff.

The Northcentral and Southeast districts worked with the Transportation Systems Management and Operation Division’s System Management Group. **Jennifer Hefley** and **Joyann George** from Procurement assisted with the scope of work and expedited selection of contractors. **Jordan Kurlin** of ADOT’s Roadway Section conducted calculations needed for the guardrail repair. ADOT’s external partners include the Arizona Department of Public Safety, Bush Fire Incident Management Team, Gila County Sheriff’s Office, Federal Highway Administration and U.S. Forest Service.

ADOT was allocated \$6 million in emergency federal funding for repair costs, said Systems Management Group Assistant State Engineer **Jerry James**.

“The contractors quickly mobilized and worked diligently to complete the repairs. The partnership with the contractors was greatly appreciated to get the highway open as quickly as possible,” said Northcentral District Engineer **Audra Merrick**.

Inspections for repair work on SR 87 were performed by **Casey Bramlet**, **Bobby Millard**, **Ken Plane** and **Justen Williams**, Payson Unit; and **Brandon Bedoe** and **Jerry Turner**, Mesa Unit.

Southeast District Engineer **Bill Harmon** said: “All stakeholders involved understood the importance of getting both lanes of SR87 open ASAP. Contractors worked together to allow materials and labor to be used on SR87 to expedite the repairs due to the hazard and traffic delays.”

Southeast District’s West Area Maintenance Superintendent **George Collaco**, Roosevelt Maintenance Unit Supervisor **Manny Bejarano** and Roosevelt Administrative Assistant **Lindy Carbajal**, along with Northcentral District’s Payson Maintenance Supervisor **Brett Rupp** and Leadman **Cody Plante** also had key roles in the Bush Fire repairs.

Read more about guardrail replacement on the [ADOT Blog](#) and check out a [press release](#) about the repairs on SR 87 and SR 188. ■

~ Lori Baker, Senior Communications Specialist

*“The partnership with the contractors was greatly appreciated to get the highway open as quickly as possible”*

**Audra Merrick**  
Northcentral District Engineer



### Top 10 things to ask your manager about the 2020 Leaders Connection Conference

**ADOT'S SEVENTH ANNUAL** Leaders Connection Conference is being held virtually Nov. 18 and 19. The event is focused on the theme "leading with respect," and includes interactive sessions, educational breakouts and informative speakers.

Deputy Chief Operating Officer **Kismet Weiss** explained that the goal for this year's conference is to help managers and supervisors understand a different perspective on what respect means.

"We want to open their minds to the subtleties of fear vs. respect and connect for them that our core values, kaizen principles and the Arizona Management System are all related, and are an integral part of the culture ADOT wants, expects, and even demands from its leaders," Weiss said. "When leaders adopt the thinking, behaviors and practices that these three things espouse, amazing things will happen."

When the conference is over, it doesn't mean that the managers are done — not by a long shot! Anyone who had the privilege of attending now has a responsibility to share what they learned with their teams. So, if your manager hasn't filled you in yet, this list of questions should help get the conversation started. ■

~ Angela DeWelles, Senior Communications Specialist

**1** What was your key takeaway from Director John Halikowski's opening remarks?

**2** Tell us what you learned from Renée Smith's keynote address and your thoughts on fear vs. respect.

**3** Explain what "leading with respect" means to you.

**4** Can you tell us more about the agency's strategic plan and how our team is connected to the plan's strategic annual actions?

**5** After attending the conference, is there anything you'll try to do differently as a leader?

**6** What were the Google innovations you learned about?

**7** Do you have any new insights on kaizen thinking based on the conference breakout sessions?

**8** How was the virtual aspect of the conference — were you able to feel connected to the other managers and supervisors?

**9** Can you explain what "The ADOT Way" means?

**10** How are our A.I.R (Accountability, Integrity and Respect) values, kaizen principles and AMS elements related?

WINNER

WINNER

# eyethink

**WE HAD A** great response to last month's Eye Think contest! Many of you solved the puzzle and submitted your answers, but there can only be one winner. Congratulations to **Greta Nelson**, Northeast District Maintenance administrative assistant,



whose name was selected from a random draw of entries. She received a special gift bag from Assistant Communications Director for Internal Communications **Kathy Boyle**, including a 2021 Arizona Highways wall calendar, Arizona Highways magazine, The Inside Lane stress ball, an ADOT cup and more. ■

Here are some of the COVID-19 preventive measures that are NOT being followed in the Eye Think's panel two.

1. No social distancing
2. Holding face covering in hand/ on wrist
3. Wearing face covering on chin
4. Face covering not disposed properly in garbage can



Kathy Boyle, ADOT Communications