

Transcript

Ohio Department of Transportation ★ Employee Newsletter

March 2006

2006 CONSTRUCTION SEASON KICKS OFF

Joel Hunt, Central Office

ON MARCH 7, ODOT KICKED off another record-breaking construction program worth about \$1.4 billion. The 2006 program is up from \$1.3 billion in 2005 and has been steadily growing since 2003.

For the third year in a row, the department's focus will be to move forward with Gov. Bob Taft's Jobs and Progress Plan.

"Since Governor Taft's announcement of the Jobs and Progress Plan, ODOT has been carefully planning its construction program to deliver this major investment," said ODOT Director Gordon Proctor. "While some of the projects have already begun, we are just now beginning to see the full plan unfold across the state."

An estimated \$590 million of this year's program will go toward Jobs and Progress projects.

This year's construction program also includes close to \$100 million in resurfacing and roadway maintenance work. Forty-five projects will improve the interstates and five mega projects – projects costing more than \$100 million – will advance the governor's Jobs and Progress Plan.

Projects such as



the Maumee River Crossing (Veterans' Glass City Skyway Bridge) in Toledo and the Northeast Expressway Transformation (NEXT), reconstruction of the State Route 161 interchanges at Interstate 270 and Sunbury Road in northeast Columbus and the U.S. Route 30 construction will continue work. Others, like the first of the U.S. Route 24 Fort to Port projects in Defiance County and the Interstate 275 widening in Hamilton County, will kick off this season.

Work will continue this year to widen portions of Interstate 71 to three lanes in

Meander Reservoir Project a Reality for District

Jennifer Richmond,
District 4

THERE IS NOTHING SIMPLE ABOUT IT.

The proposal to replace the twin bridges on Interstate 80 over the Meander Reservoir in Mahoning County has a history – a long and sometimes rocky history.

The project was originally programmed in 1988, but District 4 struggled with the plan for the ensuing 17 years. Finally, in April 2006, the district will break ground for the \$86.7 million project – the largest single project breaking ground across the state this construction season.

(see **MEANDER** on page 5)

each direction in Medina and Richland counties. Once completed, only two portions of I-71 will remain two lanes in each direction on the interstate between Columbus and Cleveland. This work is a continuation of the I-71 Reconstruction and Widening Plan, which began in 1998.

The largest, most expensive project set to begin this year is the Interstate 80 Meander Reservoir project in Mahoning County. The interstate will be reconstructed and widened to six lanes from the Ohio Turnpike to State Route 46 at a cost of \$86.7 million. This project includes the replacement and realignment of the two existing bridges over the Meander Creek Reservoir. Two lanes of traffic

(see **CONSTRUCTION** on page 4)



Ohio Recognized for

Anti-Litter Efforts

Scott Lucas, ODOT's statewide Adopt-A-Highway coordinator, distributed 19 skids of trash bags to Keep America Beautiful affiliates around the state. The bags were donated to Keep America Beautiful by the Glad Products Company, which is a division of the Clorox Company.

photo by Mike Blime, Central Office

Joel Hunt, Central Office

ODOT RECEIVED AN AWARD FROM Keep America Beautiful (KAB) this winter for assisting the group's Ohio affiliates with the 2005 Great American Cleanup. This was the department's second award from Keep America Beautiful.

ODOT distributed more than 19 skids of trash bags to Keep America Beautiful affiliates around the state by utilizing the department's inter-office mail system. The bags were donated to Keep America Beautiful by the Glad Products Company, which is a division of the Clorox Company.

"ODOT's partnership with Keep America Beautiful benefits both ODOT and KAB because we are working toward a common goal," said Scott Lucas, ODOT's statewide Adopt-A-Highway coordinator.

Each year, ODOT's Adopt-A-Highway volunteers pick up more than 18,000 bags of litter, which is 400,000 pounds or 200 tons of trash along Ohio's roadways. ODOT litter crews alone picked up 484,000 bags of trash at a cost of \$4.2 million in 2005. Time and money spent

on litter pick up would be better spent maintaining the roads. ODOT relies on its Adopt-A-Highway volunteers and groups like Keep America Beautiful to help defray the amount of time and resources it has to put into litter pickup.

"The Great American Cleanup embodies America's can-do spirit with millions of volunteers taking the environment into their own hands," said G. Raymond Empson, president of Keep America Beautiful. "Americans are rallying together to clean up graffiti, eliminate litter and preserve our waterways to create a cleaner, safer and more beautiful environment for generations to come."

Keep America Beautiful is a national nonprofit public education and community improvement organization whose network of more than 500 city, county and state affiliates motivates millions of volunteers annually to clean up and beautify their communities. The annual cleanup event starts March 1 and runs through May 31 each year. ☺



ODOT Hosts OPE Site Visits

Ron Poole, Central Office

ODOT'S DISTRICT OFFICES STAYED busy in February and March hosting the 2006 Ohio Partnership for Excellence (OPE) site visits. As a whole, ODOT took another step on the path of continuous improvement when Central Office hosted its second site visit from a team of OPE examiners from February 27 to March 3. The examiners came to review the application submitted to the OPE in October 2005.

While each district is rated on their own individual applications, Central Office's application focused on the entire organization and how Central Office supports the rest of the department.

"While Central Office's overall rating will apply to the whole organization, the site visit did focus more directly on Central Office," said Steve Wall, deputy director of ODOT's Office of Quality and Organizational Development. "We saw a great benefit for the entire department when we received a Tier II rating in 2005 so this year we applied for a Tier III or Tier IV."

The five-person examination team

Breakdown of ODOT's District and Central Office Ohio Partnership for Excellence Awards

Year	Tier Level(s) Achieved			
	I	II	III	IV
2000	1			
2001	1			
2002	1	1		
2003	1	1		
2004	3	3	1	
2005	2	2		2



Workshops Focus on **STREAMLINING MAJOR PROJECTS**

consisted of professionals from both the public and private sectors, all highly-trained in the award criteria for organizational excellence. The examiners reviewed in detail ODOT's application, then physically walked around Central Office and conducted both formal and informal interviews with ODOT personnel. They also spent hours reviewing documents and processes Central Office uses to support the districts to better understand how ODOT works. The team will prepare a formal report of strengths and areas for improvement, and assign a point score to Central Office. The score will determine if Central Office receives recognition in one of the top two tiers.

"Taking part in the OPE process has allowed Central Office to share in the continuous improvement process with the district offices," said Wall. "This year, districts 1, 2, 4 and 5 all received site examinations as part of their own OPE applications. The OPE process has encouraged a lot of team work between Central Office and the districts – we have all worked together – sharing information and ideas to make each other better."

The department continues to benefit from the feedback provided by the OPE process. In the coming months ODOT will be working on improvements based on the results from the Employee Satisfaction Survey (ESS). Administered last year, the ESS had a response rate of just over 92 percent across the state.

The results of the OPE evaluations are expected to be ready in April. ODOT will make its formal announcement during the annual Team Up ODOT event on May 10. ☺

Ryan Larzelere, Central Office

A SERIES OF WORKSHOPS AROUND THE state will help the department look at ways to decrease project times and costs on three major, long-term projects this year.

The workshops, called the Accelerated Construction Technology Transfer (ACTT) program, are hosted by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and utilize national experts in a range of skill sets to work with state highway staff over three days. The goal is to identify innovative approaches to reducing time, cost and congestion for a project, all while improving safety, quality and roadway performance. Over the past two years, nearly half of all U.S. states have taken part in an accelerated highway construction workshop.

"We were pleased to have the opportunity to work with the Federal Highway Administration to take a critical look at some of the bigger projects the department is working on," said ODOT Director Gordon Proctor. "The workshops will not only help

us move these projects forward as efficiently as possible, but will also give us experience to draw on for mega projects down the road."

The first of ODOT's three workshops took place February 21-23 for the Cleveland Innerbelt Project. Workshops will also be held in August for the Interstate 70/71 Split project in Franklin County and in September for the I-71/75 project in Hamilton County.

"It was helpful to have a fresh set of eyes to look at our plans," said Tim McDonald, deputy director for ODOT's Office of Production Management. "The national expertise that was present during the workshop was invaluable."

The program was started by the Transportation Research Board, American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials and the FHWA. ☺



photos by Michelle Proctor, D-12

Dan Dougherty, District 12 Real Estate Administrator, discusses potential right-of-way acquisitions and historic landmark issues along the Cleveland Innerbelt Project corridor with the Accelerated Construction Technology Transfer (ACTT) workshop audience in February.

CONSTRUCTION *(from page 1)*

will be maintained in each direction at all times on I-80 throughout the duration of this project.

Multi-year projects wrapping up this year include:

- I-71 reconstruction and widening in Richland County;
- Construction of a new interchange on Interstate 77 at Shuffel Road in Stark County;
- Widening of I-77 from four to six lanes in the city of Green;
- Major reconstruction of a four-mile section of Interstate 90 in Ashtabula County;
- Reconstruction of U.S. Route 224 in the city of Akron;
- Construction of a new interchange on I-71 north of Polaris Parkway in Columbus;
- Interstate 70 reconstruction and widening in Madison County;
- Bridge replacement on the State Route 129 (High/Main street) bridge in the city of Hamilton;
- Rail grade separation on State Route 747 in Hamilton County; and
- Bridge replacement of the U.S. Grant Bridge (U.S. Route 23) in Portsmouth.

Phase one of the two-phase State Route 161 project will begin widening



photo by Todd Sloan, D-6

Work on the new Interstate 71 Polaris/Gemini interchange in District 6 progressed this winter. Among other things, crews completed the sub-base for the new ramp from Gemini Place to I-71 northbound in December 2005. Work on the project will resume in April.

the route from two to four lanes on a new alignment from the eastern edge of Franklin County to Watkins Road in Licking County. Phase one is estimated at \$49 million. The entire project is worth \$137 million. Phase two will begin construction in the spring of 2007.

This mega project is vital to the communities along the route as well as commuters. The SR 161 corridor has become one of the most congested in central Ohio with an accident rate that is 70 percent higher than similar roadways around the state. With the New Albany to Granville project and the completion of the NEXt project, there will only be one segment of the route left to be upgraded.

The most up-to-date information about the 2006 construction season can be found at www.ohio.gov.



District 5 Construction Area Engineer Numan Babieh gives details on a Licking County project as Pavements Engineer Tim Dannemiller and Licking County Manager Jim Valentine stand by for assistance at the District 5 Construction Kickoff.

photo by Cindy Brown, D-5

2006 Jobs and Progress

Project	County
ODOT District 1	
U.S. Route 30	Hancock and Wyandot
U.S. Route 24	Defiance
ODOT District 2	
Interstate 280 Veterans' Glass City Skyway Bridge	Lucas
ODOT District 3	
State Route 18	Medina
Interstate 71	Richland
Interstate 71	Wayne
Interstate 71	Richland
Interstate 71	Medina
Interstate 71	Medina
ODOT District 4	
Interstate 77	Summit
Interstate 77	Stark
Interstate 77	Stark
Interstate 77	Stark
Interstate 80	Mahoning
Interstate 77	Summit
State Route 8	Summit
ODOT Districts 5 & 6	
State Route 161-Phase 1	Franklin and Licking
ODOT District 6	
Interstate 71	Franklin
State Route 161 (NEXt)	Franklin
Interstate 270	Franklin
ODOT Districts 6 & 7	
Interstate 70	Clark and Madison
ODOT District 7	
Interstate 70	Montgomery
Interstate 70	Montgomery
ODOT District 8	
State Route 73-Phase 1 (Wilmington Bypass)	Clinton
U.S. Route 22	Hamilton and Warren
Interstate 275	Hamilton
ODOT District 9	
State Route 207	Ross
ODOT District 12	
Interstate 90	Lake
U.S. Route 20	Lake
State Route 84	Lake

Plan Project Highlights

Cost (Millions)	Dates
\$98.8	Begin: May 2005; Complete: Oct. 2007
\$35	Begin: Apr. 2006; Complete: Oct. 2008
\$219.9	Begin: Mar. 2002; Complete: Jun. 2007
\$16.8	Begin: Jul. 2005; Complete: Jun. 2008
\$34.4	Begin: Feb. 2004; Complete: Aug. 2006
\$42.4	Begin: Apr. 2005; Complete: Oct. 2006
\$43	Begin: Feb. 2004; Complete: Aug. 2006
\$44.2	Begin: Sept. 2005; Complete: Sept. 2007
\$57.5	Begin: Sept. 2006; Complete: Jun. 2010
\$16.6	Begin: Jan. 2005; Complete: Oct. 2006
\$25.5	Begin: Aug. 2003; Complete: Apr. 2006
\$31.5	Begin: Jan. 2006; Complete: Aug. 2008
\$38.5	Begin: Jun. 2004; Complete: Aug. 2007
\$86.7	Begin: Apr. 2006; Complete: Oct. 2009
\$59.5	Begin: Jan. 2006; Complete: Aug. 2008
\$84.4	Begin: Spring 2007; Complete: Oct. 2009
\$49	Begin: Jun. 2006; Complete: Oct. 2007
<i>Phase two begins Apr. 2007. Total project worth \$137.</i>	
\$22.7	Begin: Aug. 2004; Complete: Aug. 2006
\$130	Begin: Jun. 2004; Complete: Oct. 2007
\$19.8	Begin: May 2006; Complete: Sept. 2007
\$55	Begin: Jul. 2004; Complete: Sept. 2006
\$48.3	Begin: Dec. 2004; Complete: May 2010
\$62.3	Begin: Nov. 2005; Complete: May 2008
\$15.9	Begin: Nov. 2006; Complete: Nov. 2007
\$45.1	Begin: Feb. 2006; Complete: Jul. 2009
\$109.8	Begin: Nov. 2006; Complete: Oct. 2009
\$25.7	Begin: Nov. 2004; Complete: Dec. 2006
\$33.9	Begin: Apr. 2006; Complete: May 2008
\$12.5	Begin: Apr. 2006; Complete: Aug. 2007
\$10.2	Begin: Mar. 2006; Complete: Nov. 2007

photo by Tina Perkins, D-2



District 2 Deputy Director Todd Audet goes over the highlights of the 2006 construction season with reporters and community members at the field office for the Veterans' Glass City Skyway Bridge project.

buckeyetraffic.org. A fact sheet and highlights of this season's Jobs and Progress Projects can be found online at: <http://www.dot.state.oh.us/news/2006/03-07-06FactSheet.htm>. The department began distributing its 2006 Road Construction Brochure this month at local ODOT district offices and Central Office. The brochure is a useful tool to help motorists plan ahead for local and statewide highway travel. 📍

MEANDER (from page 1)

The initial proposal called for a causeway design with a spill containment system to protect the drinking water in the reservoir below. Commitments were made. Cost estimates began to climb and then soared. Due to a lack of funding, settlement issues and the inability to justify the impacts of a causeway environmentally, the project stalled.

In 2001, the department began taking another serious look at the project as part of its major new construction program because now the bridges were not just in need of replacement; the route was in need of widening as well. In 2002, after a year of studies related to the causeway design, the department re-evaluated the project and the pieces finally fell into place.

The District's Major New, Construction, Planning and Environmental staff all had a hand in moving the project along. But much of the credit belongs to District 4's Production department.

"They take pride in these projects and in what they do," said Jim Swartz, District 4 Production Administrator.

It goes without saying that a key component of the project is to protect and preserve the reservoir, which serves more than 300,000 residents of Niles and Youngstown on a daily basis. To ensure that local needs and previous commitments were met, the district worked extensively with local emergency response officials and community leaders.

"Coordination with local entities is always an important factor in planning and designing projects," said Jon Hunt, Consultant Manager. "With the Meander project, coordination was a key factor that allowed the project to move forward."

"This was an example of a win-win situation," Swartz said. "We learned a lot more about spill containment and emergency response issues."

On the other hand, Swartz added, the local emergency forces and the Mahoning Valley Sanitation District learned a lot about ODOT's processes and requirements.

Eventually the plan to build a causeway was scrapped due to cost and settlement issues.

As a result, ODOT determined that building twin bridges with a spill containment system would be more cost effective, saving \$30 million, while still providing protection for the reservoir. 📍



Mohammed Darwish, District 4 deputy director, discusses the Interstate 80 Meander Reservoir project, which the district will break ground for in April, with a reporter at District 4's Construction Kickoff.

photo by Jennifer Richmond, D-4

Mild Winter Results in Cost Savings

Joel Hunt, Central Office

ABOVE AVERAGE TEMPERATURES IN January resulted in a cost savings for the department so far this winter. Money left over from snow and ice season is typically used by districts to buy equipment like mowers and backhoes to assist with their county work plans.

ODOT spent \$5.8 million statewide in January 2006 on labor, equipment and materials related to snow and ice control, and used 73,993 tons of salt. "That's way down from \$20 million and 288,660 tons of salt in January 2005," said Keith Swearingen, administrator of the Office of Maintenance Administration.

Colder temperatures in February re-

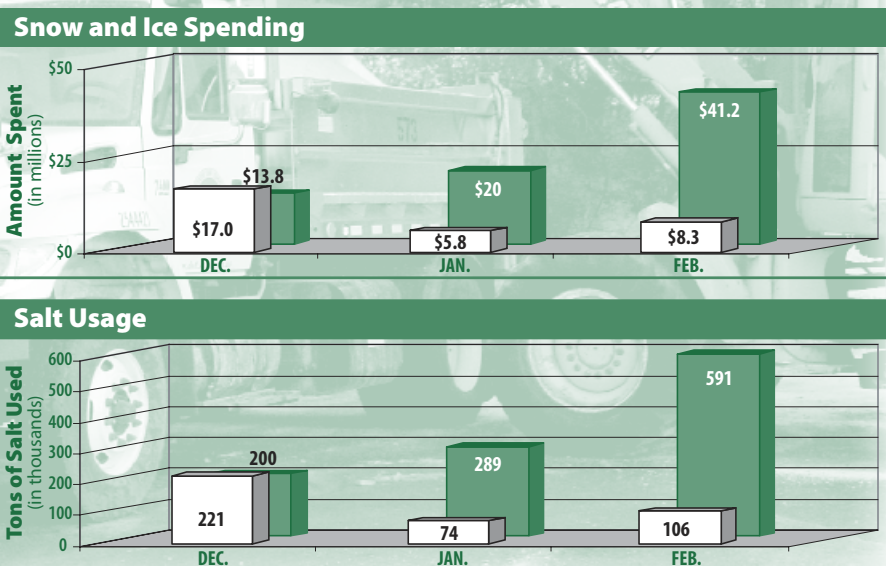
sulted in the consumption of more resources than in January; however, they were far less than in February 2005. In February 2005 the department spent \$41.2 million and used 591,190 tons of salt. In February 2006 the department spent \$8.3 million and used 105,998 tons of salt.

As of March 21, 2006, the department has spent \$37.2 million on snow and ice

and used 486,392 tons of salt statewide. On average, ODOT spends \$56 million on snow and ice control and uses 650,000 tons of salt per year. Last winter, the department spent \$53.9 million statewide clearing state-maintained highways and used 775,000 tons of salt. The overall cost savings for this entire season will depend on weather conditions in March and April. ☺

Comparison of Snow and Ice Spending and Salt Usage

□ This Season ■ Last Season



ODOT Library Update

Ron Poole, Central Office

Research and Development Archives

IN A SPECIAL PROJECT FOR ODOT, THE State Library of Ohio is using a digital archive to store transportation research and development reports. The archived publications are "housed" at the Online Computer Library Center (OCLC) but are available to the public through ODOT's and the State Library's online catalog. OCLC is also making its bibliographic records available through the Internet Google search engine,



so ODOT materials will be more widely available to researchers all over the world.

"We sought this project to help preserve these materials in the coming years," said ODOT Librarian Janet Bix. "The loss of institutional knowledge by government agencies is becoming a national concern. We want to help maintain the wisdom we as a department have accumulated so that it can benefit others in the future."

OCLC is a national bibliographic utility company which provides digital collection and preservation services. The State Library

began submitting ODOT's material in late 2005.

TLCAT has Second Year Anniversary

THE TRANSPORTATION LIBRARIES Catalogue (TLCat), an online resource of transportation training and information materials, observes its second anniversary this month. Funded by the National Transportation Library, TLCat began with 15 charter members, including the ODOT Library. The system now has 25 participating members, including the Federal Highway Administration's Technical Reference Center and the University of Minnesota's Cen-

(see **LIBRARY** on page 7)

Continuing Professional Development Credit Tracker Now Available

Ron Poole, Central Office

MANY PROFESSIONALS ARE REQUIRED by law to maintain their certifications by pursuing additional education each year. Starting with calendar year 2007, Professional Engineers and Surveyors in Ohio will be required to obtain Continuing Professional Development (CPD) credits in order to renew their licenses.

ODOT not only offers its engineers a way to meet this requirement through teaching or attending in-house training, but the department is also providing a way to help its professionals track where they are with their goals. The Office of Training: Employee Development and Enrichment has expanded its Training Records System (TRS) to provide an on-going record of training credits for each professional within ODOT.

“We started the tracking system this January to take advantage of the carry forward option allowed

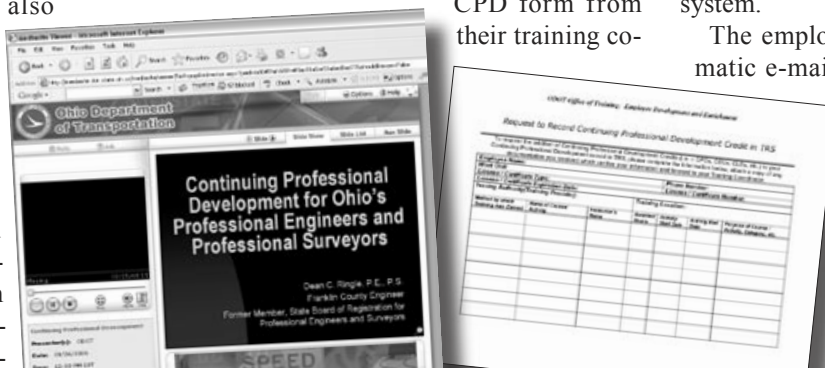
by the new law,” said Victoria Beale, Training Academy Program Director. “Although the new requirements officially begin next year, those affected can start earning up to fifteen extra credits to be applied to the next calendar year. Any credits earned in 2006 can be applied to the renewal process when it officially starts in 2007. We timed the creation of the CPD tracking section to take advantage of this option.”

Those using the system can begin recording their credits by obtaining a CPD form from their training co-

ordinator or from the Office of Training: Employee Development and Enrichment Web site. The employee needs to provide information such as license type and the instructional provider, as well as the course name, hours of instruction and dates taken. The employee should also provide a copy of any documentation received upon completion of the course – such as a certificate – and attach it to the CPD form. The papers should then go to the training coordinator who enters the information into the CPD tracking system.

The employee will receive an automatic e-mail acknowledging the new record has been placed in the system. The system also allows those with credit records to check their reports and print out summaries of their records for their personal files.

While the CPD tracking section was developed with the primary goal of meeting the tracking needs for Professional Engineers and Surveyors, other licensed



More information on Ohio's Continuing Professional Development (CPD) requirements for Professional Engineers and Surveyors is available via Webcast on the ODOT intranet. Computerized tracking of CPD credits is now available through ODOT's Training Record System.

LIBRARY (from page 6)

ter for Transportation Studies Library. TLCat also provides access to TransCat Plus, the Canadian transportation union catalogue.

Any ODOT employee with intranet access can use TLCat for research. The system offers a variety of ways for transportation professionals to gather research on specialized transportation topics. TLCat can show where items are and who has them. A growing number of full-text publications are becoming available for download and/or print. Searches can even be conducted in different languages. TLCat also makes work done by ODOT

personnel available to other agencies.

TLCat is continually expanding its roster. Two new members – the Civil Aero-medical Institute Library and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration Technical Information Services Collection – have signed on to join the system this year.

A link is available on the ODOT Library's intranet Web site at <http://intranet.dot.state.oh.us/>. After entering the database, select “Databases.” Next select the icon for “TLCat,” then the TLCat search option. Anyone with questions or comments can contact Janet Bix, ODOT Librarian at (614) 752-4818 or by e-mail at Janet.Bix@dot.state.oh.us.



professionals within the agency can also utilize the system to track earned continuing education credits. Professionals who are not required by position description to record their credits in TRS are still highly encouraged to utilize the system.

Any questions regarding the new CPD tracking section in TRS should be directed to Victoria Beale, Training Academy Program Director, in the Office of Training: Employee Development and Enrichment at (614) 466-3129 or at Victoria.Beale@dot.state.oh.us. More information about the continuing education requirement for Professional Engineers and Surveyors is available through ODOT's intranet, under the What's New section or through the Ohio State Board of Registration for Professional Engineers and Surveyors at www.ohiopeps.org.

feature photo



photo by Rhonda Pees, D-1

Beams being set for the new U.S. Route 30 over U.S. Route 68 near Williamstown, Hancock County in March 2006. The rough grade of the new U.S. 30 highway alignment is visible in the background stretching to the west.

FYI: Team Up ODOT Registration

The department's 8th annual Team Up ODOT event will be held May 10 at the Rhodes Center on the Ohio Fairgrounds from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. The theme is "Partnership = Success; The Journey Continues." This event is an opportunity to showcase the accomplishments of ODOT's improvement teams which support the Department's mission, values and goals.

The Office of Quality and Organizational Development is currently registering all process improvement teams for the event. Other groups

who wish to provide information relevant to ODOT may also register. Teams' processes or projects do not have to be completed, but should be far enough along to demonstrate

some results. Anyone interested in registering can do so online at <http://intranet.dot.state.oh.us/QOD/>. Paper copies of the registration form can be

obtained by contacting Willa O'Neill at (614) 466-9967 or Carol Schubert at (614) 752-5722. Registrations for Team Up ODOT must be submitted no later than April 14. ☺



Transcript

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