What did it take to survive the worst of the winter of 2009-2010?

10 million miles and 500 feet of snow
Paula Putnam, Central Office

Did you know that ODOT employees worked more than 820,000 hours to eliminate more than 500 feet of snow on 10 million lane miles of highway during the 2009-2010 winter season?

More than two-thirds of ODOT’s workforces are trained and prepared to fight ice and snow during winter weather events. That’s nearly 3,000 dedicated men and women available to be among the first to know when ice and snow are pending, the first to gear up to work for an unknown number of hours, and the first to be out on the highways making them safe and passable.

In the same turn, they are the last sometimes to be able to go home to their families and relax.

So, in all, what did it take to survive the worst of the winter of 09-10?

Between Nov. 1 and March 19, the department had approximately 1,300 snow plows available at all times during the heaviest ice and snow storms. Across 88 counties, 3,000 employees

ODOT beats ARRA deadline

ODOT and its local transportation partners received final federal authorization on more than $935 million in state and local stimulus-funded infrastructure projects – well before the national deadline.

As part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, Ohio was allocated $935.7 million through the Federal Highway Administration, with a deadline to have all of these funds authorized for specific projects by March 1, 2010. Any state that did not meet this deadline would lose uncommitted funds, which would then be redistributed to other states.

“Throughout the entire Recovery Act process, ODOT has

Ohio looks to future of jobs, economic opportunity from passenger rail
David Rose, District 10

Joining the U.S. Labor Secretary, state and local officials, and hundreds of rail supporters from across the state, Governor Ted Strickland and ODOT Director Jolene M. Molitoris announced in January that Ohio had received $400 million in federal stimulus resources to invest in passenger rail.

“With today’s historic announcement, Ohio takes a major step toward modernizing our state’s transportation

On the cover:
An ODOT plow driver tackles drifting snow caused by high winds on Warren County’s State Route 741 on Feb. 10. Photo by Sharon Smigielski, District 8.

ODOT grows greener, page 4.

Manufacturers, commerce routes linked, page 11.
helped to move or melt away 550 feet of snow using more than 656 thousand tons of salt and 5.7 million gallons of brine.

In varying regions of the state, ODOT crews were on the road 24 hours a day fighting each new round of snow and ice that hit. New waves of winter weather would begin while crews were still cleaning up from the storm before.

meet every deadline, assuring that every transportation stimulus dollar made available to this state is invested to put Ohioans back to work building our multi-modal transportation system of the future,” said ODOT Director Jolene M. Molitoris.

ODOT, along with the state’s major metropolitan planning organizations and local communities, received federal authorization on 395 transportation projects in which to invest these dollars - with a combination of roadway and bridge projects, water port expansions, bike and pedestrian enhancements, and airport and railroad development.

“When these stimulus projects are complete, more than 2,000 miles of Ohio roadways will be safer, stronger, wider and ready to move Ohio’s people and freight,” said Director Molitoris, “and 250 bridges will be safer and ready to handle the traffic needs of Ohio’s future.”

This $935.7 million is part of the more than $1.5 billion total in transportation stimulus funds awarded to Ohio under the Recovery Act.
During winter events, many news media around the state include ODOT’s winter work efforts in their lead stories for nearly every broadcast, day and night.

This winter, in order to help the media understand the difficulties involved in plowing, a number of districts were able to provide snow plow ride-alongs for various news reporters and their camera crews.

Director Molitoris was able to ride along during one of Ohio’s worse snowfalls.

“Sometimes, in order for the public to understand the difficulties that we face while fighting snow, it is best they experience it for themselves – walk a mile in our snow shoes so-to-speak” said Scott Varner, Director of Communications.

As of March 19, 2010 ODOT spent $76.9 million clearing snow and ice for the 2009-2010 snow and ice season. ☺

Don’t Crowd the Plow changeable message board in Belmont County at the Guernsey County line on I-70.

District 12 finishes up rounds of snow removal on I-77.

Ashland County Highway Technician Helen Reed finishes checking the fluid levels in her plow truck before heading out to battle the snow.

District 1
Transportation Manager
Rocky Stahl and Highway Technician
Dennis Neff clear snow on State Route 571 in Darke County.
As one of the core initiatives of ODOT’s business plan, the department is expanding efforts by implementing new strategies, policies, and practices that will further ODOT’s actions and commitment towards a sustainable, “Go with Green” transportation system. To help keep this remarkable goal on track, ODOT has created a new office solely focused on sustainability.

The Go with Green initiative taps ODOT’s greatest resource: its people. As part of this initiative, ODOT employees have made over 100 suggestions to make ODOT “greener.” By working together, ODOT’s offices, outposts, and garages across the state are finding ways to better protect our health and the environment.

“We are recognizing the lessons learned from the past to implement new practices and policies that minimize our environmental impact and increase the sustainability of everything we do” said Timothy M. Hill, Office of Environmental Services Administrator.

From protecting forests and streams to collecting and treating the water that flows from our roadways, ODOT is evolving into a good steward of the land.

The infrastructure that ODOT has proudly constructed and maintained is also coming into greener pastures. While planning a new project, minimizing or avoiding impacts to sensitive resources is a first consideration. If an impact to the environment is unavoidable, ODOT works with State and Federal experts to replace the resources that are harmed by our project.

To do this, the department may protect nearby streams, create new wetlands, or even permanently preserve wildlife habitat.

The department also focuses on research efforts that will further ODOT’s mission to be good stewards of the land. Currently, researching ways for fish and other wildlife to keep moving safely through our culverts and bridges, which trees endangered Indiana bats use to raise their young, and ways to improve the long-term success of wetlands created in the past is underway.

ODOT has reduced herbicide applications, began piloting the use of waterless urinals at rest areas and compressed natural gas-powered and flex-fuel vehicles, and installing diesel-particulate filters on some dump trucks. Yet there remains tremendous potential to do more.

A commitment behind everything we do, going green is making ODOT more environmentally conscious and a green leader in the nation.

Endangered species and tree cutting . . . is all about timing

The Indiana bat is the only Federally Endangered mammal in Ohio. This small bat weighs about one-quarter of an ounce and spends the winter hibernating in caves throughout the midwest. Once spring arrives, the bats migrate throughout northeastern North America, including Ohio. During the summer months, Indiana bats select specific trees and habitats to raise their young. Often, trees along our projects are identified by ODOT biologists to have suitable habitat for the Indiana bat.

Working with state and federal partners, ODOT adopted a schedule to avoid impacting the Indiana bat. When ODOT must cut trees, we do so in the seasons when the Indiana bat is not using them. By cutting these trees in the winter, ODOT avoids impacting this unique mammal.

Being sensitive to the needs, timing, and migration patterns of the Indiana bat can mean lost time by delaying the start of important transportation projects. However, as ODOT grows as a good steward of the land, we realize this is a small price to pay for the long-term presence of this unique species in Ohio.

Restricting Work to Restrict Our Impact

Ohio’s 44,000 miles of rivers and streams are home to more than 120 species of fish. To safely cross this network of fish-filled waterways, ODOT
National Engineering Week: good time to help guide future engineers

Justin Chesnic, District 4

What better way to celebrate National Engineering Week than to help future engineering students learn the many opportunities available in the engineering profession? District 4 hosted its annual Engineer for a Day event on February 17 at the District headquarters in Akron during 2010 National Engineering Week.

Although many schools were closed due to winter weather problems, 18 high school students from nearby counties were able to attend. The administrators spent time with the students describing what it was like to be an ODOT engineer. Next, the students were able to tour several divisions around the district to see various presentations and participate in hands-on activities.

District 4 also provided a college fair for the high-school sophomores and juniors. Representatives from the University of Akron, Cleveland State University and Youngstown State University were available to help answer any higher education questions these future engineers may have.

Project participants honored for outstanding engineering achievement

Justin Chesnic, District 4

On Feb. 18, District 4 received the Outstanding Engineering Achievement Award from the Akron District Society of Professional Engineers for their work on the $91 million SR 8/I-271 project completed in fall 2009. The department received the award in conjunction with URS Corporation and Beaver Excavating Company.

District Deputy Director Eric M. Czetli, along with District Construction Engineer Anne Powell, who served as the SR 8 project manager during the 3-year long project, received the award at the Akron Area Engineers Week banquet.

“This award is a testament to the countless hours spent on this historic construction project,” Czetli said. “This project has had such a positive impact on many motorists in Northeast Ohio and is just another example of the level of service the Department of Transportation provides to its customers throughout the state.”

The SR 8/I-271 major new construction project was designed to improve traffic flow along SR 8 by eliminating the signalized intersection at Twinsburg Road and creating a direct connection between SR 8 and I-271.

Although originally planned as a 3-year long project to construct, work was completed approximately one year ahead of schedule in October 2009.
New Marion connector links manufacturers, major commerce route

Joel Hunt, Central Office

Marion’s Northwest Industrial Connector will improve safety and mobility in the downtown by relocating truck traffic onto the new north side route. The 2.5-mile local road will connect Marion’s manufacturing center on the west side of town – anchored by Whirlpool Corporation – with U.S. Route 23 on the east, the major route for moving commerce.

Gov. Ted Strickland officially broke ground on the project along with ODOT District 6 Deputy Director Thomas Wester, Marion Mayor Scott Schertzer, Marion County Engineer Brad Irons, Marion County Commissioner Josh Daniels, and Herman Stine from the Ohio Department of Development (ODOD).

Gov. Strickland said, “This new roadway will provide better and safer access to Whirlpool, improve connectivity to the $130 million ethanol plant that recently located to Marion County and provide new access to the Intermodal Railroad Transportation facility at the former Marion Depot located on the east side.”

The $17.7 million investment was partially funded with $5.1 in stimulus funds and is a joint effort of the ODOT, ODOD, Ohio Rail Development Commission, Ohio Public Works Commission, Marion County and the city of Marion.

During phase two of the project, an overpass will be constructed at the CSX railroad tracks that currently supply the ethanol plant.

Ohio looks to future of jobs, economic opportunity from passenger rail

infrastructure,” said Governor Strickland. “The 3C Corridor will create economic development opportunities and serve as a model of environmental sustainability. Most importantly, it will put thousands of Ohioans to work over the next few years.”

With the goal of launching service by 2012, Ohio’s passenger rail efforts will connect Cleveland, Columbus, Dayton and Cincinnati with daily train service for the first time in nearly 40 years.

Ohio’s investment will result in at least 255 immediate construction jobs over a two year period, based on the preliminary estimates of construction and improvements needed to prepare the corridor for effective and safe service.

Well-studied U.S. Department of Commerce formulas also predict that this investment will create approximately 8,000 indirect and spin-off jobs in Ohio.

Train stations in places like Dayton, Riverside, and Springfield are already attracting the interest of economic development firms.

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ODOT celebrates Black History Month
Peg Sherrer, Central Office

ODOT celebrated Black History Month in the Central Office Auditorium on Tuesday, February 23, 2010. Led by Master of Ceremonies Michael Gordon, new director of ODOT’s Division of Equal Opportunity, the audience listened to remarks from ODOT Director Jolene M. Molitoris, who reminded attendees of the many African-American contributors to transportation.

Other honored guests were Executive Director of the Ohio Civil Rights Commission, G. Michael Payton – who said that Black History is “all of our history,” pointing out the contributions of many different ethnic groups who supported civil rights for African Americans – and Jeanine P. Donaldson, director of the Elyria YWCA and winner of the YWCA USA’s 2008 Sojourner Truth Award, who spoke about the empowerment of women and the struggle to eliminate discrimination.

Young drivers, safe drivers
Ron Poole, Central Office

Aiming to raise the awareness of teen motorists about driver safety, ODOT and the Ohio Department of Public Safety joined with Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD) in the statewide “Lights for Life” effort. The state departments encouraged all motorists to drive with their vehicle headlights illuminated as a pledge to be a safe driver and to remind others of the importance of roadway safety.

Approximately 300 students also participated in the first Youth Traffic Safety Summit hosted by the Ohio chapter of SADD, meeting with state legislators to discuss support and education of safe driving practices among younger drivers.

A safety analysis performed by ODOT gives good reasons for both concern and hope for young drivers: a department study shows that young drivers between the ages of 16 and 25 were behind the wheel in 124,210 crashes, resulting in 388 fatalities in 2008.

ODOT’s analysis showed that the leading factors behind crashes involving young drivers were following too close, failure to yield, and excessive speed. Most of these collisions occurred right after school, with the majority of accidents reported between the hours of 4 p.m. and 6 p.m.

There is evidence that safety messages and increased awareness are helping to make Ohio’s roads safer. Crashes for young drivers were down in 2009 (113,125) compared to 2008.

According to one young participant in the event, it comes down to the outlook of the motorist:
“It’s critical that teens get involved by taking our responsibility as drivers seriously and speaking up when our friends are making poor choices behind the wheel,” said Richard Birt, a student in Ohio and a national SADD student of the year.

‘Going Green’ old school
Roch retires with 32 years service

While finding innovative ways of “going green” is today’s trend, some have been doing it the old-fashioned way: by making things last.

Tom Roch, traffic control specialist for the Office of Production, retired on January 29, 2010 with 32 years of service to Ohio’s citizens.

On his last day, Roch drove to work in the very same car he reported to work in his first day: A 1977 Pontiac Grand Prix that he has maintained in beautiful condition for all those years.
Heroes among us

Kate Stickle, District 5

During back-to-back snow storms this season, two of District 5’s Highway Techs took the department’s “Target: Zero” safety initiative to the extreme. When Kathy Trimble, Perry County, and Dana Watson, Coshocton County, pulled out of their respective garages, little did they know their work schedules would include saving lives.

On Feb. 11, Kathy Trimble, a 13-year employee, was plowing on State Route 668 in Perry County. She saw a vehicle in front of her swerve left of center. Kathy slowed as she approached and saw that the vehicle had swerved to avoid hitting a woman lying in the roadway. Kathy stopped, used her truck to shield the woman from traffic, and approached the woman on foot. The woman was conscious and appeared to be unhurt, but told Kathy she was attempting to retrieve her mail when her legs gave out.

Two drivers of another vehicle traveling in the opposite direction also stopped to help. The three good Samaritans gathered the woman and her mail and carried her home. Only after the children of the victim were contacted, and the occupants of the car agreed to remain with the woman until family help arrived did Kathy return to her truck and continue battling the storm. It was later learned that the woman had broken her hip. After hospitalization, she is in recovery at home.

Meanwhile, Dana Watson, a 24-year veteran, was plowing in a rural area on State Route 541 in Coshocton County. She saw an older woman in a red coat in a ditch next to a mailbox. It was clear to Dana the woman was unable to get to her feet. Although it was not safe for Dana to stop immediately, she turned around to see if the woman was still down. She was. As Dana approached the woman, and asked the woman why she was outside, the woman explained that she wanted to put her valentines in the mailbox and once she had, she was unable to get out of the snow. It was clear she needed Dana’s help to get back to her feet. Dana helped the woman get to her home. Once it was determined that the woman was not injured, Dana continued her route.

Mark Ziaja, District 12

On Thursday, February 11, Victor Edwards, Transportation Manager at the Warrensville Yard of ODOT District 12 was finishing a patrol of his territory when he noticed a young woman in an agitated state, exiting a vehicle that was parked along a ramp. It was apparent the girl was very distraught. Victor called the police and stopped by to offer help. The 15-year old described her suicidal wishes. Victor decided to stay with her. He sat with the girl until he could convince her to go to the hospital with the police. She eventually went with the police to a local hospital. Victor said during this experience, he kept thinking of his own children and grandchildren. His only thoughts were to help this young person. Victor’s concern for a stranger and his willingness to help her makes all of us at ODOT happy that he is on our team.

On the road to recovery

An injured Great Horned Owl is on the road to recovery with help from an Ohio Department of Transportation highway crew.

Lisa Ferlaino, Tim Tyus, Chuck Ashmore and Mark Tilley – all from the Montgomery County garage – discovered the owl Feb. 23 while patching potholes on Interstate 70. The owl was sitting at the edge of the pavement and when trying to help it move, Chuck noticed it was hobbling with an injured foot.

Gathering the owl and placing it inside a safety vest, the crew took it for treatment to Glen Helen Raptor Center in Yellow Springs. Once healed, it can be returned to the same area it was found.
A vital link into downtown Cleveland for more than 50 years, the Interstate 90 Innerbelt Bridge is getting needed attention, and ODOT is prioritizing citizen opinion as part of the innovative process that will decide the final shape of the new westbound bridge.

In October 2008, ODOT engineers restricted traffic on the Interstate 90 structure, which links the city to interstates 71, 77, 90, 490, and State Route 176. Inspections revealed that a number of steel members were aging faster than expected, with stress tests confirming that two of the steel connectors had deteriorated to the point that they could not support a fully loaded span.

“Do we completely replace the structure?” posed District 12 Transportation Planning and Programs Administrator Dale Schiavoni. “That was a possibility when the problem was discovered. But we could also step up rehabilitation. Ultimately, we had to consider the impacts on everyone who uses the bridge.”

As part of the Innerbelt Bridge Safety Plan, ODOT decided to take a two-pronged approach to the problem: invest $10 million to restore full use of the structure (including heavy truck traffic) together with plans to construct two new bridges over the Cuyahoga River Valley. The first new bridge, the $450 million westbound bridge, is funded in part utilizing federal transportation stimulus funds made available through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

“Since 1996, ODOT has successfully used a low-bid design-build process to deliver 80 projects worth over $400 million, however, it was immediately apparent that the scope and scale of this project would require a different approach,” said Craig Hebebrand, project director for the bridge.

Therefore to expedite the delivery of this important transportation infrastructure improvement, ODOT choose to utilize a value-based design-build process. ODOT successfully obtained legislative authority to use a value-based design-build process and also to increase the biennium limit on design-build contracting from $250 million to $1 billion.

Getting this important link to downtown Cleveland to its full capacity is important, but the department also wanted the residents to have a say in the look of the structure as well. Since June, ODOT and the Innerbelt Urban Design and Aesthetics Subcommittee have been working to provide prescriptive comments to be included in the design-build contract.

With monthly meetings and focus groups, the subcommittee considered and recommended a series of design principles for the structure, including consistent and coherent design, minimal piers, aesthetic lighting treatment, and curved or “haunched” girders. They also prescribed specific enhancements to be constructed in the Tremont and Gateway neighborhoods surrounding the structure, including scenic overlooks, improved lighting and green-space, multi-modal connections and additional parking. The finalized recommendations from the aesthetic sub-committee were approved by the Cleveland Planning Commission in November.

In March, the department plans to choose three design/build teams to prepare technical and price proposals for the new westbound bridge.

“The contract will be awarded in September 2010, and the winning design-build team will be required to present the community with an opportunity to select the final aesthetic details through a series of public meetings,” said Hebebrand.

Construction will begin in 2011, and the span is expected to be complete by June 2014.
New conferencing options improve efficiency

Joel Hunt, Central Office

Seeking ways to improve the reliability and quality of ODOT’s video and telephone audio conferencing, the Division of Information Technology (DoIT) recently switched from a costly system to services provided freely by eTech – a state of Ohio agency – and the State of Ohio Computer Center.

eTech has been used extensively for distance education, electronic field trips, meetings and conferences, interviews, depositions, and statewide training. The service is available, but not limited to, Ohio’s K-12 school districts, colleges and universities, educational service providers, public television stations and state agencies, departments, boards and commissions.

Prior to the switch, ODOT’s aging in-house video conferencing system did not have a good way to video conference with external parties. The new system puts ODOT on the same video conferencing systems that all other state agencies use in Ohio. It also improves the way employees schedule video conferences.

Laura Vilensky, DoIT project manager, said, “Before, users could only contact one of their IT department to schedule a video or audio teleconference. If that person wasn’t available, there was no backup person to help. Now, users just need to call their help desk at least 24 hours in advance of their conference and anyone can help them schedule it.”

Aditya Singhal, DoIT administrator, said ODOT also has a new-and-improved telephone audio conference system, which has proved to be very reliable and meets the majority of ODOT’s day-to-day audio conferencing needs. “ODOT did not have a reliable, uniform internal [telephone and audio] system. Each division or district used different solutions as needed. Some used AT&T bridges, some used other external providers. Users also used the ODOT video conference bridge for audio conferencing, which again presented reliability and quality issues.”

Vilensky said the new telephone audio system is a twist on the old one. “Instead of having a new phone number for each call, there is a list of phone numbers, which are available on the ‘Conferencing’ website. You can use your local number over and over and just use the ID number required for each new telephone audio conference.”

New to ODOT is Live Meeting, a virtual meeting space where you can meet desktop to desktop, computer to computer, so you can share desktops across machines. The software allows you to collaborate in real-time, even over long distances.

Live Meeting attendees can deliver presentations, kick off projects, brainstorm ideas, and edit files from their computer without having to travel.

Users should be sure to sign up for Live Meeting prior to setting up their first meeting as there is software that must be installed on the machine before using the system.

For more information about conferencing and Live Meeting, search “Conferencing” on the ODOT intranet and click on Audio/Video Conferencing and Presentations.

Grade separation strengthens community ties

Theresa Pollick, District 2

Thanks to the historic investments in Ohio’s transportation system made possible by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, ODOT continues to not only support its highway system, but also develop projects involving various modes of transportation.

One such project, the Jones Road Grade Separation Project, builds upon the department’s partnership with the small, rural community of Fostoria, Ohio. This project is one of three major rail grade separation projects ODOT will advance, utilizing stimulus funds saved from the state’s current stimulus-funded transportation projects.

In December 2007, the Jones Road project was among several grade separation projects across the state that could not be funded through the department’s Railroad Grade Separation Program – a 10-year, $200 million program created in 2000 to eliminate dangerous and congested at-grade rail crossings throughout the state.

On average, the awarded contracts on ODOT-sponsored stimulus projects have been at least 10 percent lower than original cost estimates, resulting in a stimulus savings for ODOT. At the direction of Gov. Ted Strickland, ODOT is targeting the department’s saved stimulus funds to advance additional state-sponsored, high-priority transportation projects that can be under construction quickly.

“Through the leadership of the Governor and Director Molitoris, this crucial project was selected for, and received, stimulus funding. And, thanks to the partnership we have with the City of Fostoria, ODOT was able to make this project move forward, which will in turn, improve congestion and open the corridor for future economic development for this area,” said District 2 Deputy Director David R. Dysard.

With these saved stimulus funds, ODOT will target $3.9 million toward the $11 million total cost of constructing a bridge to carry Jones Road over the existing CSX Railroad. The majority of industrial activity in Fostoria is located near Jones Road and the CSX line.

Fostoria is a community with three major rail lines crossing at different angles and different locations. This creates a problem where railroad traffic blocks vehicular traffic in various locations. Trains often stop, slow or yield to other trains crossing the lines. Additionally, a new ethanol facility has increased grain truck traffic in the area.

This project will eliminate the at-grade intersection and allow rail and roadway traffic to flow consistently and safely.
A 25-ton salt shaker
Rhonda Pees, District 1

It’s lovingly referred to as the “salt shaker,” throwing salt a mile up into the storage shed, rapidly shaking as the salt is dumped from the truck into its hopper.

The more technical term for the device is a salt stacker which was developed from the need to save costs when salt became expensive last year. Paying for the salt contractor to place the salt in the storage barns at a rate of approximately $2 per ton seemed like an obvious place to save. And in some instances, stacking the salt wasn’t even included in the contract which then forced county personnel to stack the salt themselves.

The department’s commitment to reducing costs and using the most up-to-date technologies and best practices to increase our efficiency and ensure continued safety is all a part of ODOT’s Smart Salt Strategies.

The development of the salt stacker was truly a team effort by Ryan Ordway and Tim Maag of the Putnam County garage; and Clarence Neeper, Keith Bantner, Tod Bailey and Jeff Watt of the district garage. The device was featured at last year’s Team-Up ODOT. In the days since the machine was introduced at Team-Up ODOT, Mike Elliott of District 9 and Chester McNabb of District 10 have come to District 1 to see the machine and the possibility of fabricating one themselves.

Maag approached Ordway and Luke Johansen, highway management administrator, about developing a machine at the district which could perform the task of stacking.

“Keith and I started hashing it out,” said Ordway. The end result was fabricated from “a bunch of used parts sitting around the garage, a torch and a welder,” he said.

The main component of the stacker is an old berm widener box with some parts manufactured off site. “The next one will be all in-house built,” said Ordway.

They began working on the project last January. “We worked on it in between storms,” said Ordway. The machine resembles a box with wheels. Its power source is provided by attaching it to a mowing tractor.

A truck full of salt backs up to the machine and begins dumping its load. The stacker immediately begins to shoot a rooster tail of salt into the very top and back of the salt dome.

The stacker was tested three times before it was put into use. “Right now it’s working flawlessly,” said Ordway as the stacker ran in the background at the Fourth Street outpost in Allen County one afternoon. “We’re hitting 130 tons per hour easily. The contractor stacks at a rate of 120 tons per hour,” he said.

Ordway said they calculated the machine was moving 20-25 tons of salt in about eight minutes. The district stacker can throw salt a distance of 60 feet while machines available commercially generally toss the salt only 20 feet. “This is the only one that’s portable,” said Ordway.

The unit has a kill switch which shuts down the tractor if needed and a shield over the drum as its main safety features.

Maag said Putnam County was spending approximately $3,000 per year in stacking costs. If the machine could be used district-wide a savings of between $20,000 to $30,000 could be realized.

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developers.

ODOT and the Ohio Rail Development Commission have also identified at least 225 Ohio businesses who already supply or contract with the railroad industry – with more than 26,000 employees – and who are gearing up for more investment.

Ohio’s passenger trains will operate at the same conventional speeds as most of the nation’s growing passenger rail corridors – with speeds up to 79 mph. Contrary to misleading reports based on early planning information, the average speed will be well within the average speed of the service in other Midwestern states.

When you factor in the ability for rail passengers to use their travel time more productively than when driving a car, the lower costs compared to automobile and airplane travel, the benefits to the environment, reductions in congestion on our highways, safety, and other benefits, the anticipated speed of this start-up service will meet the needs and expectations of Ohio travelers.

Meanwhile, new reports from Amtrak so that more than 128,000 riders boarded passenger trains in Ohio last year – up 10 percent from the year before.

“Amtrak long-distance trains are running strong,” said President and CEO Joseph Boardman. “We are making changes, improving our service, and passengers are responding favorably,” he said, noting that total ridership on Amtrak’s 15 long-distance trains reached nearly 4.2 million in fiscal year 2009.

Amtrak reported 128,174 total riders at Ohio train stations in 2009, a 10 percent increase from ridership rates in 2008. The busiest Ohio stations in 2009 were in Toledo with 54,488 riders and Cleveland with 39,371 riders.
ODOT grows greener

proudly maintains thousands of culverts and bridges across the state. Over time these structures deteriorate from weather and use and need to be repaired or replaced. Repairing culverts and bridges can require that we work in the stream the bridge crosses to remove pieces of the old bridge, or to place piers and other components for a new bridge.

Like most animals, fish have seasonal activity patterns of growth, movement, and to raise their young. Working with the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, ODOT adopted times during the year when we will not work in the water. This timed approach limits our impact to fish that may be migrating or spawning (laying eggs) in the areas we are working. This approach is tiered to the type of stream we are working in and the type of fish that are expected to be there. As weather, material delays, and other changes impact a project’s schedule, further timing restraints can postpone these repairs. But to ODOT, rivers full of fish, clean water, and a healthy ecosystem are worth the wait. 😊

This page: An ODOT-constructed wetland along State Route 93 in Perry County. This wetland reached the highest quality Ohio EPA category for wetlands in just two years based on its diverse vegetation.

Photo by Adrienne Smith, Central Office