

Hi everyone! Sorry for the gap in reports. I usually write these on weekends and for a variety of reasons professional and personal, my weekends haven't been conducive to giving this the time it demands and deserves. Hopefully this will get us back on track. So much has happened since the February report – when I distributed that we were coming out of massive blizzards at the end of February, and right after that we went from snowstorms to flooding in a matter of days (more on that shortly).

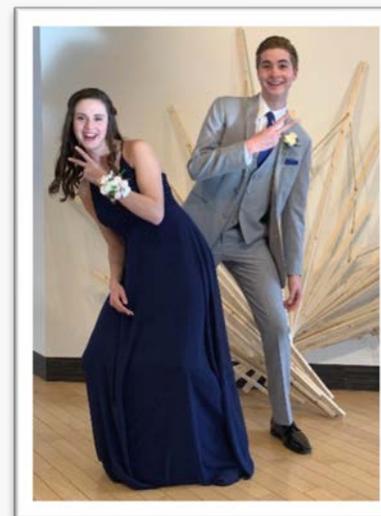
On the personal side my family seems like they are growing up at warp speed (sorry, I know that's a Star Trek reference in a Star Wars "May the 4th" be-with-you-month, but that's the word that jumped in my mind). Recent evidence:

- Dan has wrapped up his time in Logan, Utah, and just moved to Washington State, where he and his girlfriend are working at Mount Rainier National Park for the summer. Dan's working on securing a ceramics apprenticeship in Montana for the next year and (much to my delight) has been soliciting my advice on resume and cover letter content.
- Mary just graduated from Iowa State and is getting ready to move to Madison, Wisconsin, where she's planning on working in health care while she establishes residency and prepare for a post graduate program. She just promised me she would stay a Cardinals fan and won't cheer for the Brewers (typed with an enormous sigh of relief).
- Matt was home for one day before he left for the Grand Canyon to work for the summer. He's already texted a list of things he forgot that we need to mail to him.
- And, last, but not least, Erin had her (and our) last prom and graduated from Valley High School this weekend (our last of those as well). We have been affectionately calling her "Grad-zilla" for her incessant party planning, but she did have a great party and really enjoyed her big weekend.

For my own part, I finally had an adventure that didn't involve sweating (unless you count the nervous kind) – I finished my first semester in the Drake University Community Chorus and we had our year end performance at Drake's Sheslow Auditorium May 5th. As I told someone earlier, it was odd to have that 14-year-old sense of nervousness as we took the stage, but it went great and it was a lot of fun making music and being part of a group. I'm going back next fall, hopefully a little more experienced and prepared – 36 years of not being in a chorus left me a little rusty!



Mary and her fiancé Adam after her graduation ceremony.



Erin strikes a pre-prom pose with her buddy Jacob.

Response to spring floods is inspiring

We talked in March about the incredible effort so many people throughout the Iowa DOT gave responding to winter storms and blizzards, and over the past two months we've seen that same effort and spirit of service exemplified (if not amplified) in our response to the floods that began sweeping through Iowa in mid-March. Much of the flooding started on unregulated inland tributaries that were swollen with melting snow and choked with ice, but within days it hit with a fury on the Missouri River south of Omaha. Unlike the floods of 2011, which were driven primarily by releases from Gavin's Point Dam in South Dakota, this was driven by massive flows from unregulated tributaries entering the river south of Omaha, with the Platte River coming out of Nebraska the primary contributor. At one point the flows coming out of the Platte were 350,000 cfs (cubic feet per second), which dwarf the typical flow on the Missouri of about 27,000 cfs. The end result was multiple and significant breaches throughout the levee system south of Omaha and catastrophic (and tragic) inundation of homes, farms, businesses and communities.



This picture shows the damage to US 34 west of I-29, as well as the dangers of driving around the barricades.

This is one of those times where so many people contributed so much that it will be foolhardy to single people out, but it is important to recognize just how many people throughout the DOT have worked so hard and so well to help the state recover and restore mobility. We managed more than 50 road closures at a given time; manned the state emergency operations center; ran missions to deliver pumps and sand; provided hydraulic engineering advice and expertise; stood up a statewide flood information website in 24 hours; quickly assessed damages, designed projects and solutions, and let and awarded contracts; and have helped (and are helping) communities with the hard task of removing debris and cleaning up. And perhaps most impressively, we quickly returned mobility to a system that sustained significant damage and remained inundated with water for a long period of time. We included on the following page a map showing the damage in the I-29 corridor, and we're grateful to report that with the opening of U.S. 34 we restored mobility to every part of the system compromised by Friday, May 24th, well ahead of our expected schedule.

This was not work as usual. It has taken an extraordinary investment of time, intellect, and expertise, a spirit of urgency and innovation, and personal sacrifice – working late, working early, working through nights and weekend, working through personal obligations and family events. We truly can't thank all of you that have contributed enough – it's both humbling and inspiring to be associated with such fine and dedicated work.

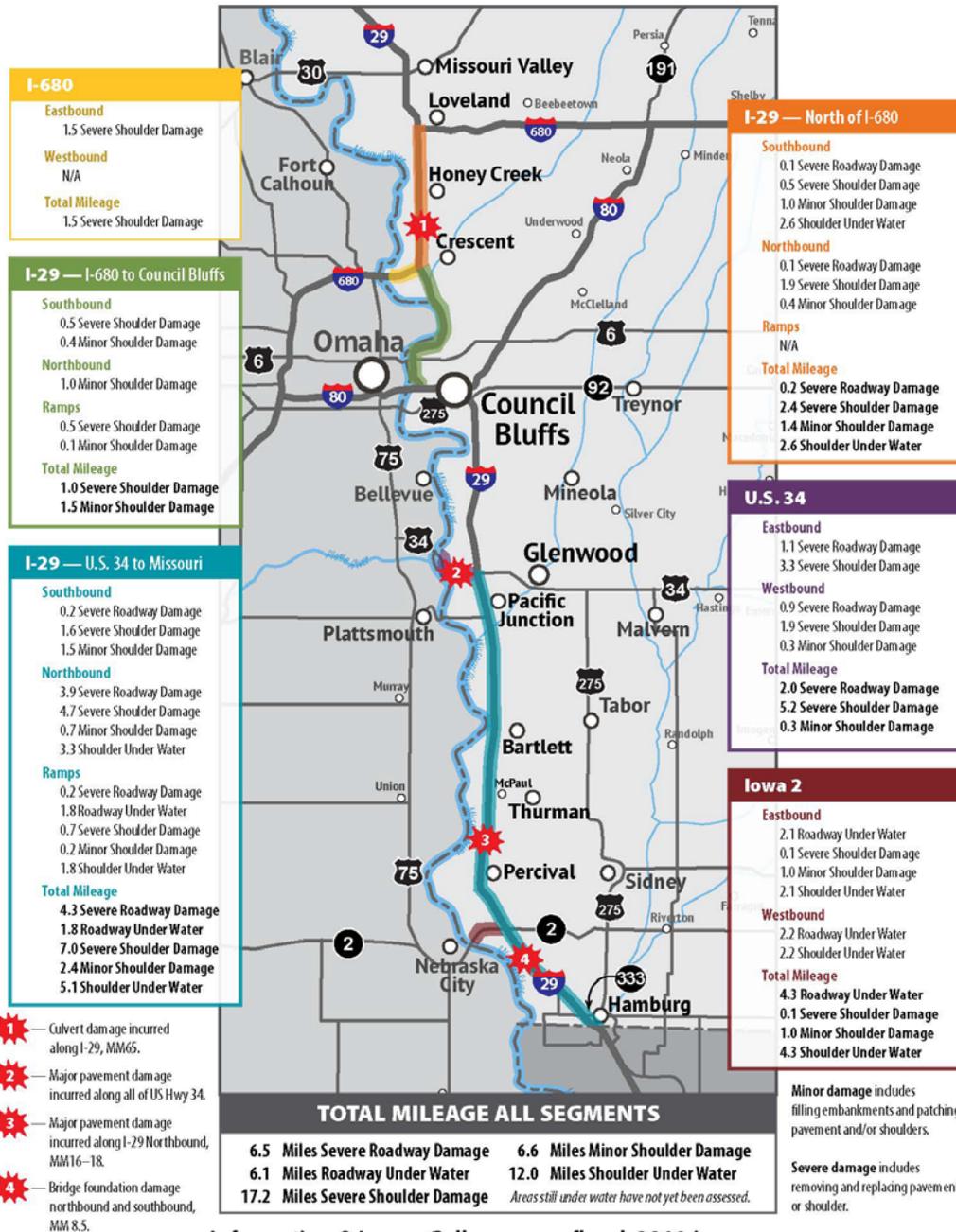
We know we are not done with this. There is much work that remains to be done, and until the levees are repaired we will be susceptible to increased flows and flooding throughout the summer and perhaps longer (something that became real this week when we had to start closing segments in this corridor due to high water from recent rainfall). But it's appropriate to recognize the significance of what we

accomplished to this point, and the confidence that inspires in our ability to meet the demands of the next several months. Thank you to everyone that has contributed to this critical work (with a special nod to our **District 4 Engineering staff**, who have shouldered a very heavy load in this effort).

Summary of Initial Damage Assessment

(Miles in each direction)

May 13, 2019



Information & Image Gallery: www.floods2019.iowa.gov

Linda Juckette joins the Transportation Commission



*Linda Juckette, new
Transportation Commission
member*

Last report we talked about former Commissioner **Kraig Paulsen** leaving the Transportation Commission to become Director of the Iowa Department of Revenue. This report I'm introducing you further to **Linda Juckette**, who filled Kraig's vacancy beginning this past March.

Linda, a Republican, is currently the President & CEO of Capstone Management, and President of Prairie Valley Farms.

Born and raised in Waukee Iowa, Linda graduated from Waukee High School. After she married her husband Tom Juckette, Linda led Prairie Valley Farms, running a successful thoroughbred breeding operation while also conducting farm grain, clear hulum (used for tofu production in Japan), and organic hay operations.

Tom was part owner in Juckette Management Services, building and managing long term care facilities in Florida, Nebraska, Missouri and Iowa since 1967. Linda's passion for care of the elderly led her to open Capstone Management in 2014, managing long-term skilled facilities across Iowa.

Linda has been active in the Iowa Health Care Association, serving on the legislative committee advocating for senior care in Iowa and Washington D.C. She has also been active in the Des Moines Community Playhouse and leading worship through music ministry at Hope Lutheran Church in West Des Moines for over 20 years.

Linda and her late husband Tom have one son together. Cole and his wife Nikki live in Lincoln, Nebraska, Linda is also celebrating graduation – her son Cole graduated this month from the University of Nebraska with a Master's degree in Anthropology! Please join us in welcoming and congratulating Linda!

Budget bill approved

The legislature closed its session in late April, and happily our budget bill was approved and signed by Governor Reynolds on May 1st. You can see the full bill (Senate File 600) [here](#), but at a high level it's the full budget for FY2020 (July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020) that we outlined in the November 2018 Directors' Report – the only change is a supplemental increase in our FY2019 budget that carries over into FY2020 that adds \$8.7M to our salt budget so we can replenish our salt stores before the next winter season. As a reminder, the budget approved includes the following for FY2020:

- **A slight increase to our total FTEs (full-time equivalents, a full time equivalent generally equates to a single staff position) to add eight new staff positions for a new driver's license & identification service center in Dallas County.** (We're already in the process of conducting a search for new leased space for the service center and after build-out expect to open it in early January 2020.) That means we can expect stable staffing levels through the next fiscal year.

- **A capital appropriation of just over \$26.9M to consolidate five District 3 facilities into a single facility** – the current District 3 main office, the Leeds and Hamilton garages, and the Leeds Resident Construction Engineer's office. Again, we expect to start design in the fall of 2019 and be ready to occupy the new facility by the fall of 2022 or the spring of 2023. The proposed new location is on existing property we own just east of US 20/US 75 interchange and north of US 20.

In November we also discussed a capital appropriation for **utility improvements for the Ames NW wing in FY2021**. You won't see that in the budget just approved, but that's only because we present proposed budgets on a two-year basis, but only the first year (FY2020) is approved by the legislature. We are still on track for that project and expect it will be included in the budget presented for approval next year. As a reminder, that project is estimated at \$11.287M and will replace the 58-year-old HVAC system currently serving the NW wing of our main building in Ames, re-skin the exterior to improve energy efficiency, and leverage renovations needed for the new HVAC system to move conference and office space that's currently in the separate North Annex buildings across the street on Lincoln Way into the northwest wing. Again, we expect to start this work in the fall of 2020 and to complete the project by the fall of 2022 or spring of 2023.

Parent Supervised Driving Program launches in Iowa



*Melissa Spiegel,
Motor Vehicle
Division Director*

In March, **Driver & Identification Services** launched an exciting new program to enhance teen driver safety. **The Parent's Supervised Driving Program** aims to make learning to drive a more effective, successful experience for teens and their parents or guardians. Our state and county driver's license teams issue over 36,000 instruction permits to Iowa teens every year. Through this program, when a teen is issued their permit, they will be given a printed guide, and access to

digital content and a mobile app. Ultimately, the program offers guided lessons for the most important driving skills and encourages parents to be involved throughout the entire process.



Cover of the printed guide given to each new teen driver's parent or guardian.

Through our partnership with the Safe Roads Alliance, the creator of the guide, we offer this multi-platform educational resource completely free of charge to Iowa teens and parents and without cost to us or the state. One of the most exciting components of the program is the mobile app, called **RoadReady**. The app contains all the content found in the guide, and additionally features an interactive driving log to keep track of supervised driving hours. The app can track multiple teen drivers and instructors, uses GPS to log mileage, and can note weather conditions and road types for each driving excursion. The RoadReady app is publicly available to download in the Google Play Store and the Apple App store.



Road Ready app media.

Research shows that the more time a teen spends driving with a parent or other guardian, the safer they will be when they start driving on their own. In fact, when parents are actively engaged in the supervised driving process, teens are 50% less likely to crash, 71% less likely to drive intoxicated, 30% less likely to drive distracted and twice as likely to wear seat belts. The program gives parents and guardians a strategy for guiding and expanding early driving experiences that makes effective use of their critical time together, as well as builds confidence they are doing the right things to prepare their teen for safe driving.

We were thrilled to be given the opportunity to promote the program on [WOI](#), [CW Iowa Live](#), and through a [joint press release](#) with Governor Reynolds. State and county driver's license service centers began handing out the guides to new teen drivers on March 21. This initiative has been years in the making, and it took many hands to bring the Parent's Supervised Driving Program to Iowa. You can learn more about the program and download the guide at <http://www.eregulations.com/driving/iowa/>.

Awards!

Our great work continues to garner recognition and awards across the agency. Here are several worth noting since our last report:

380 Express recognized for innovation. The I-380 Corridor Rides Express is having a large impact on commuters in the Iowa City/Cedar Rapids corridor. In a nod to the importance of mobility and access to mobility, the planning, execution and programming of the project earned it the Iowa Association of Councils of Governments' "Innovative Project Award." The I-380 Corridor Rides Express began providing transit service for commuters between Cedar Rapids and Iowa City in October 2018. All coaches in the 380 Express service are equipped with free Wi-Fi, 110V power outlets, and USB ports to meet the needs of busy commuters. The project was possible due to the collaboration of the East Central Iowa Council of Governments and the Iowa DOT. The purpose of this project is to mitigate traffic impacts during ongoing construction in the corridor. Find out more information about this exciting new service that is "Moving Iowans Forward" by going to the website 380express.com.

Iowa Bicycle & Pedestrian Long-Range Plan and statewide Complete Streets policy recognized for impact on public health. In April, the Iowa Public Health Association honored the work of our **Systems Planning team – Joe Drahos, Sam Sturtz, Cindy Shearer, Milly Ortiz, Ose Akinlotan, Sam Hiscocks, Garrett Pedersen, Andrea White** and **Justin Meade** by awarding us the 2019 Public Health Official of the Year Award at the Iowa Governor's Conference on Public Health held in Des Moines, Iowa. The award recognizes local, state, or federal policymakers for significant contributions, support, and promotion of



The bike-ped team -- seated (left to right): Joe Drahos, Sam Sturtz, Cindy Shearer, Milly Ortiz; standing (left to right): Ose Akinlotan, Sam Hiscocks, Garrett Pedersen, Andrea White; not pictured (left to right, top to bottom): Justin Meade. Note that Justin replaced Ose last December; Ose accepted a position as a city planner for the City of Pittsburgh and is now a bit closer to her home state of Maryland.

public health in their communities and/or the state of Iowa. Award winners exemplify outstanding contributions that have led to the betterment of public health. The nomination and award specifically recognized their excellence in the advancement of public health by making it easier and safer for Iowans to live healthier lives, by helping us develop and adopt the [Iowa Bicycle and Pedestrian Long-Range Plan](#) and [statewide Complete Streets policy](#) (which appears in chapter 6 of the plan). This is great recognition of our commitment to expand opportunities and improve the conditions for bicycling and walking across the state, and also recognizes that mobility and accessibility cross all modes of transportation.

Julie Cox named 2018 Examiner of the year. Each year the AAMVA (American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators) International Driver Examiner Certification (IDEC) Executive Board and Driver Committee recognizes driver's license examiners who have gone above and beyond his or her responsibilities in each state. This spring Julie Cox was named 2018 Iowa Examiner of the Year. Julie started working for Driver and Identification Services in March 1997, later promoting to examiner in the Fort Dodge Service Center in 1999. In 2018, Julie conducted 217 commercial, 21 chauffeur, 363



Julie Cox with her 2018 Iowa Examiner of the Year certificate.

operator, and 51 motorcycle examinations and issued 2,848 credentials. But volume doesn't tell the whole story. Julie shares each exam score and if the customer is unsuccessful, she explains what they need to work on or improve to be successful when they return. She also administers re-examinations to customers who want to maintain driving privileges after an accident or changes due to medical fitness. Julie understands this sensitive circumstance and shows each customer compassion, understanding and respect – a great example that our mission of getting you there demands that we kindly and professionally help our customers navigate our processes to attain the highest level of mobility they can safely attain.

Julie is now eligible for consideration as AAMVA's National Examiner of the Year, an award that will be announced in June. You can find out more about AAMVA's award program [here](#), but in the meantime join us in congratulating Julie and wishing her well!

On-line voter registration service recognized for improving access to voter services and rights. One thing many people don't know is that we helped the Iowa Secretary of State deliver on-line voter registration to Iowa citizens – we use the same identification and verification processes our customers use to access our online driver and identification services to allow US and Iowa citizens with an Iowa driver's license or ID to access the Secretary of State's on-line registration services. Since its launch in 2016, approximately 150,000 Iowans have used the system to register to vote or update their voter information.

In recognition of our collaborative work with his office, Iowa Secretary of State Paul Pate awarded the Iowa DOT a National Association of Secretaries of State (NASS) Medallion. Secretary Pate said, "The Iowa DOT was extremely easy to work with and through their cooperation, we were able to build a system at no extra cost to Iowa taxpayers. They are very deserving of this award for furthering the NASS mission of clean, fair and accessible elections."

This award highlights the impact we can have when we leverage our role in identity profile management to give Iowa citizens convenient and secure access to state services. Getting you there doesn't just mean moving you there, sometimes it means not having to go at all.

Unmanned aircraft help improve quality, cost and safety



Stu Anderson, Planning, Programming & Modal Division Director

Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) are fun toys for hobbyists but can be important tools for businesses and government agencies like the Iowa DOT. Advancements in UAS technology have created rapid growth in the popularity of these tools as a platform for aerial photography, video, and design survey.

Federal regulatory changes in 2016 created FAA (Federal Aviation Administration) Part 107 regulations for small UAS (under 55 lbs.) and simplified their use for agencies like ours. Since that time, small UAS have been used in a variety of applications to see how they might be able to improve our work, reduce costs, and increase safety. To date, our **Aviation, Design, and Location & Environment** bureaus have acquired UAS and successfully used them on projects. Uses have involved recording the impact of flooding on transportation assets, road survey, wetland mitigation analysis, recording airport assets, heliport directory photos, and even a lighting system inspection on a 2,000-foot bridge over the Mississippi River, completed with no workers on the bridge, and no lane closures to disrupt traffic. While potential uses are unlimited, applications could someday include crash clearance, traffic operations, and bridge inspections.

Recently our Management Team approved guidelines for the use of UAS at the Iowa DOT that went into effect January 1. The guidelines make it clear that UAS are an acceptable tool for improving our work, but also put in place some basic rules of the road when bureaus and districts want to utilize them. Last month, our **Aviation Bureau** created an Iowa DOT User Group with members appointed from bureaus and districts throughout the DOT. Members will champion UAS for their respective bureaus and districts and should be your first stop for questions involving the use of UAS at the Iowa DOT. The members will lean on our Aviation Bureau for assistance in keeping us in compliance with FAA regulations, and will also share its experiences to aid in the practical development of UAS at the Iowa DOT. The members are:



A UAS launches near U.S. 30 in Ames.

| Iowa DOT UAS User Group | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| Iowa DOT Bureaus | Districts and FHWA |
| Aviation – Tim McClung (lead) | District 1 – Gary Kretlow |
| Aviation – Brian Kuennen | District 2 – Pete Hjelmstad |
| Location & Environment – James Galliard | District 3 – Jason Klemme |
| Design – Dan Messerich and Alice Welch | District 4 – Bill Fox |
| Systems Planning – Joe Drahos | District 5 – Brian Kingery |
| Bridges & Structures – Mike Todsen | District 6 – Terry Haase |
| Traffic Operations – Andy Lewis | FHWA Iowa Division – Andrew Zimmerman |
| Traffic & Safety – Steve Kenton | |
| Construction & Materials – Rhonda Pecenka | |

See your UAS User Group representative for questions about using unmanned aircraft at the Iowa DOT. For general information involving UAS, our Aviation Bureau has created a [web page](#) that links to key UAS information for pilots, airports, and public safety agencies.

Song of the month

In honor of Erin I was going to go with “Old Town Road” by Li’l Nas X (I’ve noticed there are a surprising number of artists named “Li’l” these days – I also have some downloads from Li’l Peep and Li’l Yachty to name a couple more), but it was only because I’ve been driving her crazy by singing the Bill Ray Cyrus rap that’s featured on the Billy Ray Cyrus re-mix version (yes, there is such a thing), and that doesn’t seem like such a good reason on her big weekend. But then my shuffle **hit Cat Steven’s** (now Yusaf Islam) **“If You Want to Sing Out, Sing Out,”** and I thought that was a much better way to recognize all our graduates. In case you’re not familiar, it includes these lyrics:

*Well if you want to sing out sing out
 And if you want to be free be free
 ‘Cause there’s a million things to be
 You know that there are

 You can do what you want
 The opportunity’s on
 And if you find a new way
 Well you can do it today
 Well you can make it all true
 And you can make it undo
 You see, you only need to know*

As I said to the girls, maybe a little corny, but true, and not just true for graduates. We all have the chance to keep learning and growing, personally and professionally, and never have to stay defined by who we were at 18, 22, 30, 40, 50, 60 or beyond. The opportunity’s on.

Wellness tip

This time of year always brings about talk of six-pack abs, which I think is somewhat unfortunate—the truth is most of us don't really need six-pack abs. But we do benefit from a strong core—a strong core will benefit almost every activity you engage in (even sitting and standing) and helps protect you from back injury and pain. So with that in mind, let me argue for the core but against the sit up. Although most of us that survived the early days of the President's physical fitness testing in school were taught to measure our fitness by how many sit-ups we can do in one minute, the sit-up is a bad way to strengthen your abs or core – it focuses too much on hip flexors, misses important stabilizing muscles and puts too much pressure and stress on the lower spine, which leads to back pain and weakness (something I learned in my early 30s when I did hundreds of sit-ups every week). A much safer and more effective alternative is the plank, which can be done in a variety of forms and in a short amount of time (although some people like to brag about how long they can plank, anything over two minutes produces diminishing returns). For more on the dangers of the sit up and the virtues of the plank, check out [this article](#) by the International Sports Sciences Association.

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Mike Carlson, Mark Lowe, Marykay Solberg, Mark Sloppy, Brennan Dolan, and Tom Samson enjoy a day in the field.

Because I mentioned adventures at the outset of this report, I thought I should finish with the adventure I had with the former Office of Location & Environment (OLE) and now Location & Environment Bureau (LEB) (in the past they were fond of saying you can't spell "LOVE" without "OLE;" I think they are still warming to the idea that you can't spell "LOBE" without "LEB"). Every year they have a field day where they (and others from across the DOT) get hands-on with a mitigation or conservation project, and this year they kindly let me tag along. The project this year was a tree-planting project at a mitigation site in

Hardin County that had been hit by a fire and lost quite a few newly-planted trees. As you can see, we brought a little of the field home with us after we pushed out a truck that got stuck, but I had a great time, learned a lot, and really appreciated how willing everyone was to roll up their sleeves (at least figuratively, it was chilly), get their hands dirty (that was literal), and do the hard work. I think it's the hallmark of people throughout the Iowa DOT. So thank you for all the hard and sometimes dirty work you all do; stay safe and well as you do it.

Best,

Mark