

NEBRASKA

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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Pete Ricketts, Governor

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Nebraska Department of Transportation Announces Opening of Highway 281 Bridge South of Spencer

July 26, 2019 (Ainsworth, Neb.) — Today, the Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT) has announced that Highway 281 over the Niobrara River south of Spencer is open to traffic. The highway has been closed since March 13 due to flooding that caused significant damage and washed out a segment of the highway just south of the bridge.

The NDOT partnered with contractors and subcontractors to open the temporary bridge and restore mobility within months of the historic 2019 flooding. Olsson, of Lincoln, Nebraska, worked alongside the NDOT on the design work of the project and on May 22, Hawkins Construction of Omaha was awarded the \$25,470,887 contract, which covers the temporary bridge and roadway as well as a permanent 1,050-foot bridge over the Niobrara River Channel. Hawkins mobilized within hours and with the help of subcontractors Acrow Corporation of America, of Parsippany, New Jersey, temporary bridge construction; Kirkham Michael, of Omaha, Nebraska, construction engineering; and Prouty Construction, of O'Neill, Nebraska, grading contractor, were able to open several days ahead of the projected August 1 contract date.

"Today is about partnerships and community," said NDOT Director Kyle Schneweis. "The 2019 flooding caused devastating damage to many of our Nebraska communities and the transportation system took a large hit in the northeast part of the state. Opening the temporary bridge in under five months took large-scale efforts from all involved and is really an accomplishment. I couldn't be more proud of the work the NDOT has done with our partners to rebuild this road for the community."

The temporary bridge will be open to one-lane traffic controlled by a traffic signal, with a 12-foot-wide width restriction. Motorists with legal loads are permitted to cross the bridge, but no overweight or over dimensional vehicles will be allowed. The traffic restriction will be in place until the permanent bridge is completed, currently scheduled for November 2020.



Completion of the entire project is anticipated to be spring of 2021. Motorists are reminded to use caution when driving through the construction zone and to wear seatbelts.

The NDOT thanks the community and all involved in the reconstruction for their patience, partnership, effort, and dedication on completing repairs in an expedited time period.

To celebrate, Governor Pete Ricketts and the NDOT will be partnering with the local community and KBRX radio station to host a Bridging the Gap Community Celebration on Monday, July 29, at 3:30 p.m. recognizing those who helped make the project a reality.

#NDOT#

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