

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 12 over the Niobrara River

August 10, 2019 (Lincoln, Neb.) — Today, the Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT) announced that the Highway 12 bridge over the Niobrara River west of Niobrara is open to traffic. The March 2019 flood event caused significant damage to the approach and girders of the bridge and completely washed out the bridge over the Mormon Canal.

“Nebraska’s road to recovery continues to move forward and today marks another great milestone in our state’s efforts to rebuild after the March 2019 floods. The opening of Highway 12 over the Niobrara River is another key link in establishing connectivity for local residents, the community, travelers, and commerce in the area, which have all been so profoundly impacted by the flood damage. NDOT’s work with Benesch and Hawkins Construction on this project has been incredible and our collective efforts are the reason why today’s announcement is possible,” said Governor Pete Ricketts.

Reconstruction of Highway 12 was the most complex and expensive transportation flood recovery project in the state. On June 5, NDOT awarded a \$44,170,911 contract to Hawkins Construction to begin immediate work to repair the Niobrara River Bridge and install a 24-foot wide, single lane temporary bridge to provide access over the Mormon Canal, while a new permanent bridge is being built.

“As a proud Nebraska company, Hawkins is honored to work alongside NDOT in reconnecting our communities. Highway 12 presented a unique challenge due to the pace and complexity of the project. That, combined with the amount of flood recovery work we were already performing, required us to bring in a team from multiple states – whom we thank for their rapid response and commitment to opening the bridge early. Hawkins, our dedicated workforce, and our project partners are grateful for the opportunity to prove once again that our State is Nebraska Strong,” said Chris Hawkins, Chief Operating Officer of Hawkins Construction.

The Department also worked closely with Alfred Benesch & Company to expedite the design of the reconstruction and set an aggressive schedule to have the temporary roadway in service by August 15, 2019.



Subcontractors included United Contractors, Inc., of Johnston, Iowa, temporary bridge installation; Ames Construction Inc., of Burnsville, Minnesota, grading contractor; Contractor Services, Inc., of North Platte, Nebraska, traffic control; D-K Contracting Corporation, of Beatrice, Nebraska, concrete pavement patching; Gross Seed Company, of Johnstown, Nebraska, erosion control and seeding; Iron Works, Inc. of Nebraska City, Nebraska, reinforcing steel installation; JMN Construction, LLC, of Valley, Nebraska, bridge repair; Longfellow Foundations, Inc., of Hutchinson, Kansas, installation of shaft foundations; Midwest Fence Company – Guardrail Systems, of Ralston, Nebraska, guardrail.

Prior reconstruction efforts in the area included repair work to damaged sections of Highway 12 east of Niobrara where K. Porter Construction was able to rebuild approximately one-fourth of a mile of pavement in just 24 days.

"Getting Highway 12 reopened has been a tremendous challenge and I'm so proud of the District 3 staff and our industry partners who put in the sweat and long hours to make this happen," said Kevin Domogalla, NDOT District 3 Engineer. "As Director Schneweis said, we literally watched the canal bridge float down the river. Over the last several months, we worked every angle from design to construction to deliver a solution to get this highway reopened as soon and as safely as possible. We set an aggressive schedule and our people, with the help of Hawkins Construction and Benesch delivered."

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.

In honor of Highway 12 reopening, NDOT will be hosting a celebratory community event on Tuesday, August 13 at 2 pm to mark the accomplishment. The location of the ceremony will be on the west end of the Mormon Canal Bridge just east of where the temporary road diverges to the bridge. Parking is very limited at the event site and shuttle ride service is available for attendees at the old NDOT Niobrara Maintenance yard at the northeast corner of the junction of Highways 12 and 14.

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