

Welcome to the ALDOT Leadership Program.

We start the Program with the History of ALDOT.

*History can show us:
the origin of our department,
the role of leaders in the past, and
how we as leaders can take pride in ALDOT.*

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Module 1 History of ALDOT

Objectives

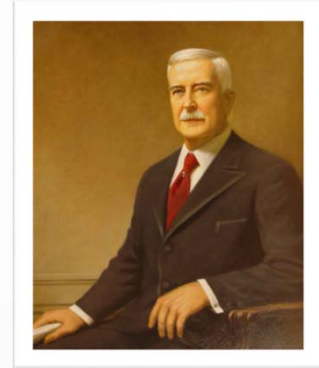
- Understand the history of ALDOT from birth out of Corrections in 1911 until today.
- Identify the many changes that have occurred through the history of ALDOT.
- Understand the many reorganizations of Areas, Regions, Divisions, and Bureaus.

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ALDOT Origin

Formative Years of 1911 through 1925

- In 1911, the State Highway Commission was created under Governor Emmet O'Neal's Administration (1911-1915).
- The State Highway Commission consisted of:
 - five commissioners
 - three regular employees



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ALDOT Origin

Formative Years of 1911 through 1925

The State Highway Commission was organized along with an Oyster Commission and was initially housed in the cloak room of the Senate Chamber in the Alabama State Capitol.

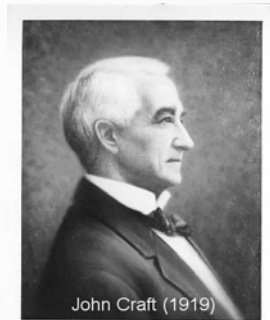
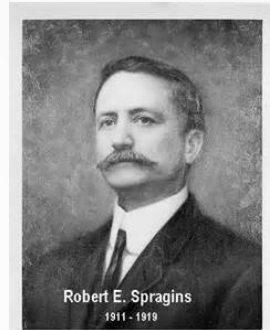


Picture Reference #1

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First Five Alabama State Highway Commission Members

- Robert E. Spragins, Chairman, of Huntsville
- John Craft of Mobile, who later became Chairman of the 2nd Commission
- V. B. Atkins of Selma
- G.N. Mitcham, Professor of Civil Engineering at Auburn University
- Eugene A. Smith, State Geologist at the University of Alabama



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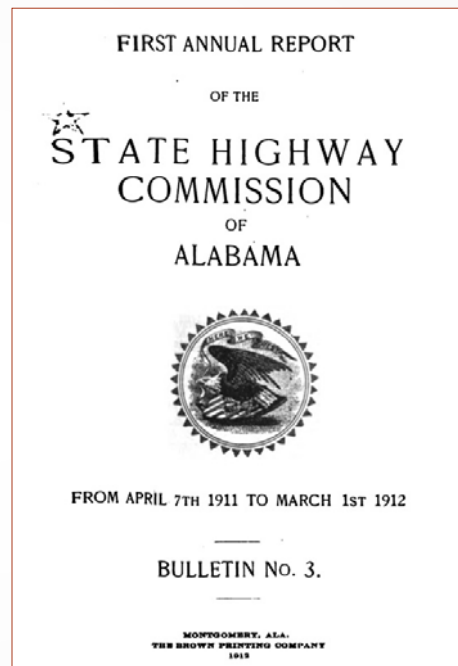
State Highway Commission's Regular Employees

- W.S. Keller, State Highway Engineer, with experience at the County Engineer level
- Robert P. Boyd, Assistant State Highway Engineer, with experience at the County Engineer level
- C.L. Rabb, Clerk



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**Cover
First Annual Report
of the
State Highway Commission
1912**



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Financial Act of 1911

- Early highway executives in 1911 shared some of the same financial woes as their current counterparts.
- The 1911 Act appropriated \$154,000 from the State Convict Fund.
- The Act allowed the funds to be used for construction of roads and for the overhead expenses of the state executives.

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A DANGEROUS CULVERT.

This picture highlights the need for a Highway Commission to help standardize safe designs.

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Financial Act of 1911

Each county received \$2,000 per year which had to be matched by the county.

- The county could accumulate the money for two years.
- If the money was not used after two years, it was then redistributed to all the other counties.
- In 1911, only Madison, Colbert, Macon, Lawrence, Blount, Bullock, Lauderdale, Dale, and Etowah received disbursements.

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State Aid Road in Winston County looking from Haleyville towards Double Springs.

It was let to construction in October 1913 and built of sand and gravel mixed with clay.

Notice the old road that it replaced on the left.

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In 1912 ...

- Engineering staff came from the counties.
- All previously ongoing work was suspended in their areas, and they surveyed within their respective areas.
- Each Engineer was paid \$5/day from the joint county and state funds.
 - Each Engineer used his own survey equipment.
 - The State provided notebooks, profile paper, and estimate blanks.
 - Per Diem was capped at \$5/day.
- All road construction was to be county-financed with bonds or warrants.
- The main role of the State Highway Commission was to educate the counties on the need for constructing roads along economical and engineering lines utilizing local materials.

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State Highway Commission's Early Work



90-FT. CONCRETE ARCH BRIDGE OVER LITTLE UCHEE CREEK, RUSSELL COUNTY, ALA.

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In the Early Years...

A gravel road in Montgomery County where the roadway was scarified.

Lafayette gravel was added and mixed in.

Then the surface was laid back down with a machine.



Gravel road, Montgomery County, near City of Montgomery. This road is ten years old. It has been scarified, several inches of Lafayette gravel added and resurfaced with road machine.

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In The Early Years ...

- Initially, many roads used chert (not crushed) as a stabilization medium.
- Montgomery County was the leader in the hard surface road movement in Alabama.
- The only power in the early years was gas steam rollers and rock crushers.
- All work was done by mules (\$300 for a good pair).
- A large contractor had ten to twenty teams of mules.

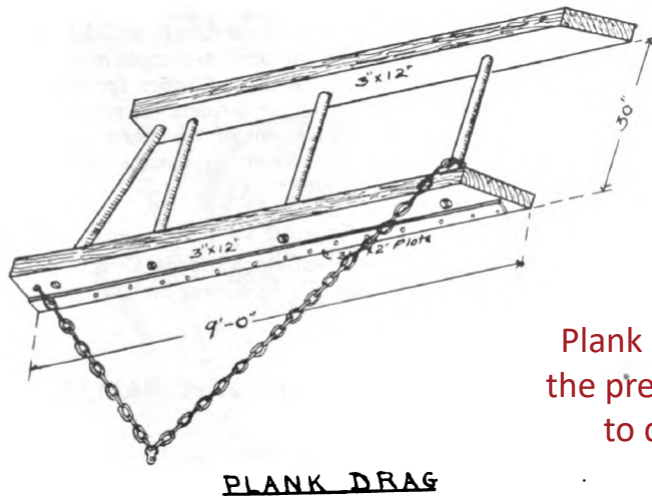
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In the Early Years...

Early road building
In Winston County,
using mules
to drag the road
for a smoother
surface.



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In the Early Years...

Plank Drag (as pictured on the previous slide) was used to drag the roads for improvement.

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Early road construction in Birmingham used mules and gas steamrollers with the bituminous macadam road penetration method.

Seen here: Rolling in the final coat of screenings. This view also shows the heating tank for the bituminous binder and the employment of convict labor.

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Federal Involvement: **The Beginning of Our 80% Brotherhood**

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Federal Involvement

- When AASHO was formed in Atlanta, GA in 1914, the three “regular” Highway Commission employees attended.
- On July 11, 1916, Federal legislation established “Federal-Aid” to states.
 - Senator John Hollis Bankhead of Alabama was instrumental in getting this legislation passed.
 - It created a \$200 million fund to provide states with matching funds for highway construction.
- When the first Federal Aid of \$10,000 was allotted to Alabama in 1917, the State Highway Commission allowed the counties to match because there were no “state” funds as yet.

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John Hollis Bankhead “Father of Good Roads”

He served as a soldier, state legislator, prison warden, and member of Congress for 33 years.

He served first in the House of Representatives and later in the Senate.

Bankhead was also a farmer, a businessman, and the patriarch of a family that produced other famous Alabamians.

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Construction of Bankhead Tunnel

Bankhead Tunnel in Mobile was named for John Hollis Bankhead after his death on March 1, 1920.

The tunnel opened to traffic in February 1941.

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State Work Continues

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During the years 1916 through 1923...

- 1919: Alabama Highway Commission was reorganized in response to changes enacted by the state legislature.
 - The Commission got a new home in the Bell Building in Montgomery.
 - The Commission enlarged to 10 commissioners and two ex-officio members from Auburn and Alabama.
- Beginning in 1921, a fee was charged for inspection of gasoline sold.
 - Chemists inspected 31 million gallons for highway departments.
 - These inspections yielded \$15,503.87 in fees.

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Also during the years 1916 through 1923...

- On October 31, 1921, Alabamians' first bond issue of \$25 million was passed by the legislature but failed to gain enough ballot votes to be ratified.
- In 1922, the bond issue was again submitted to the people for a vote and was ratified.
- The "State" system of roads was begun in 1922.
- Military equipment from WW I was distributed for use.

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Naming of Highways Begins

- "Bankhead Highway" extends from Washington, D.C. through Bankhead's hometown of Jasper, AL and on to San Diego, CA.
 - Bankhead was the Senator instrumental in the first Federal Aid bill.
 - He served as President of the United States Good Roads Association.
- "Dixie Overland Highway" extends from Columbus, GA to Meridian, MS and is now known as U.S. 80.

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Naming of Highways Begins

- “Jackson Highway “ runs from Tennessee to Florence, AL to Russellville, AL and on into Mississippi.
- “Florida Short Route” runs from Tennessee to Huntsville, AL to Gadsden, AL to Anniston, AL to Opelika, AL and on to Columbus, GA.



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**Bell Building
First Highway Department Home
Downtown Montgomery**

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From 1920 through 1940: The Patch Road Era

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Factors Affecting Roads During This Era

Inadequate highway financing, increased road use,
and unsympathetic public sentiment toward funding were issues.

- Alabama topography
- Maintenance problems
- Primitive equipment
- Serious flood damage, especially in Elba and Geneva
- The Great Depression

Despite these factors, some progress on Alabama roads was made.

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1927: Alabama State Highway Department Born

The Alabama Highway Code restructured the department again.

- Three-man commission
- Bond Commission
- Public powers
- Provisions for expenditure of funds
- Four (4) Divisions created
- Building constructed for Highway Department and Public Safety and used until a new building was built in 1964

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Original Highway Department and Public Safety Department



This building still stands on Dexter Avenue in downtown Montgomery.

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1939 through 1956: World War II and Aftermath

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1939: Reorganization of the State Highway Department

This reorganization was the result of a new law called the Merit System law, which was established for fair hiring practices, among other reasons.

- Highway Director
- Secretary to the Director
- Six cabinet members to head branches of operations called Bureaus
- New positions created:
 - Construction Engineer
 - Survey and Plans
 - Auditor
 - Equipment Superintendent
 - Maintenance Engineer

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Divisions Increased from Four to Seven

- Division 1 – Decatur
- Division 2 – Birmingham
- Division 3 – Tuscaloosa
- Division 4 – Alexander City
- Division 5 – Montgomery
- Division 6 – Grove Hill
- Division 7 – Montgomery

The 5th and 7th were housed in the original highway building in Montgomery until the 5th was dissolved in 1942 and the 7th moved to Troy in 1947.

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Additional Bureaus Added

- Bureau of County Aid
- Bureau of Materials and Tests
- Bureau of Bituminous Operations
- Bureau of Bridges

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Major Bridges Built From 1939 Through 1940



Tennessee River in Sheffield



Edmund Pettus Bridge
over the Alabama River
at Selma

Mulberry Fork Bridge
over the Warrior River
near Jasper, Alabama



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World War II

- More than 600 employees were taken into service.
- Regular Federal Aid was suspended in December 1941.
- Works Project Administration (WPA) came to a close in 1942.
- Access roads to military institutions became priority, and all were paid for by the Federal Government
- Farm to Market Road Act was enacted locally in 1943.
- Federal Aid Act of 1944 was created.

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1949 to 1955: Post World War II Bridges

- There was a new direction in construction, including improved road surfacing, ditches, rights-of-way, and a large number of bridges.
- In 1949, per a state legislative statute, the Department was required to assume the maintenance of state highways through municipalities.
- In 1951, the Captive County System was established by the Legislature.

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Alabama Highway Department: Changes and Advances Continue

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1956: Seven Divisions in the Highway Department

- First – Decatur
- Second – Birmingham
- Third – Tuscaloosa
- Fourth – Alexander City
- Fifth – Abolished
- Sixth – Grove Hill
- Seventh - Troy



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And History Continues

- In 1957, the Electronic Computer Section was organized, making Alabama one of the nation's first Transportation Departments to use computers.
- From 1951 to 1960, the Engineering Employee Training Program was started.
- In 1959, AHD "completed" the two-way radio system from vehicles to base stations.
- In 1963, Governor George Wallace (first term) had a long distance approach to public services.
 - Added 8th Division in Birmingham
 - Added 9th Division in Montgomery
 - Reestablished 5th Division in Mobile

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Changes Under Governor Wallace

Six new Bureaus were added:

- Right of Way
- Planning and Programs
- Materials & Tests
- Research & Development
- Urban Planning
- Federal Aid



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Origins of the Interstate System

- The basis of the Interstate System was the Federal Highway Act of 1956.
- Initially, a 60/40 match was provided in the 1954 act, but this was changed to a 90/10 match in 1956.



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Interstate System Continues

- Highway Trust Fund (1956)
 - The government could not allocate more to the states for any year than was already in the fund.
 - Costs were more than originally estimated.
- Highway Beautification Program (1965), including wildflowers for driving pleasure, was signed into law by Lyndon B. Johnson.
- First interstate to go to construction in Alabama (1967) was I-65 from Kimberly to Cullman (28 miles).



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Interstate System Continues

- In 1969, the most dramatic feature was the Mobile River Tunnel.
 - Largest contract to date at \$47.5 million
 - Took 3.5 years to build
 - Opened in 1973
- By 1970, Alabama had 697.6 miles or 77% open to traffic.



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Changes to Alabama Highway Department: The Last 50 Years

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Mid 1960s

- In 1964, the Department moved from the shared building in front of the Capitol to the building behind the Capitol (current State House).
- In 1965, Ninth Division (Montgomery) was dissolved, and Eighth Division moved from Birmingham to Montgomery.



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Mid 1960's

- By the end of 1965:
 - Eight Divisions
 - Average number of employees at 7,000
 - Expenditures of \$192 million
- The highway system had expanded rapidly; however, maintenance operations not so much.
 - Maintenance Management Systems were developed to help with budgeting.



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1974

Alabama Highway Department Changes Again:

- 2nd Division moved from Birmingham to Sheffield.
- 3rd Division moved from Tuscaloosa to Birmingham.
- 5th Division moved from Mobile to Tuscaloosa.
- 6th Division moved from Grove Hill to Montgomery.
- 9th Division established in Mobile.

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Alabama Department of Transportation

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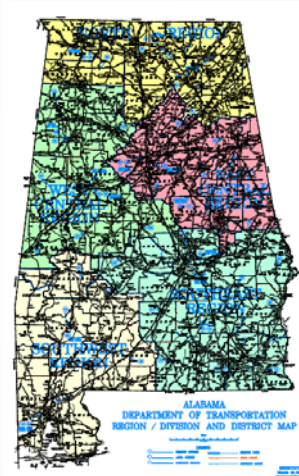
Here We Are

In 1993,
the Alabama Highway Department
was renamed the Alabama Department of Transportation
to better represent the broadened focus
of today's transportation network.

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2014 ALDOT Changes Again: Regions Formed

- Parts of the 1st and 2nd Divisions became the North Region.
- Parts of the 5th, 2nd, and 8th Divisions became the West Central Region.
- The 3rd and 4th Divisions became the East Central Region.
- The 6th and 7th Divisions and part of the 4th Division became the Southeast Region.
- The 8th and 9th Divisions became the Southwest Region.



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Current Organization Chart of ALDOT



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Current Statistics

Per ASCE's 2015 Alabama Report Card:

- Alabama has 15,986 bridges, of which ALDOT maintains 5,758 bridges.
- Alabama has 102,200 miles of public roads, of which ALDOT maintains approximately 11,000 miles of federal and state highways.



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ALDOT Family

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ALDOT Family

- Many employees have family ties to other employees within ALDOT.
 - One of the exceptional examples is Lamar (Bubba) Woodham, Deputy Director, Administration. Both of his grandfathers, his mother, father, uncle, and sister, two ex brothers-in-law, his wife and son have all worked for ALDOT at some point for a total of more than 318 years among the group.
 - The Strickland family has three brothers and a nephew working for ALDOT.
 - The Gwin family has a mother and both daughters working for ALDOT.
 - William Brown has his son and daughter working for ALDOT.

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ALDOT Family

- ALDOT is a great place to work. So much so that we recommend employment to our families (as seen in the previous slide).
- In order to lead, you must care for your employees and colleagues as you would for your family, keeping their best interest at heart while performing the mission set out for the Department and your respective areas.



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Don Arkle, PE

Chief Engineer

History of ALDOT

ALDOT has been through a lot of changes through the years!

- As technology advances, more changes will come.
- The basic needs to fulfill the mission of the Department will not change.
- The citizens of Alabama will continue to need a safe, viable transportation network.
- You, as a leader, will make this happen.

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Final Thought

“A people without the knowledge of their past history, origin and culture is like a tree without roots.”

--Marcus Garvey

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Picture References

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Picture References Continued

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