Each year on the Fourth of July, the population of Seward, Alaska swells from around 2,500 to more than 40,000. The annual Mount Marathon footrace draws runners from around the world and is a favorite hometown event that has drawn Alaskans to Seward for the Fourth of July since 1915. This year tourists had the opportunity to drive through a new attraction on the way to Seward: a Hamilton job site!

Despite a seemingly endless stream of RV’s pouring through, John Szymik, Hamilton Project Engineer reports that work on all three Seward Highway bridges is progressing well:

“Over the past month the team has completed crossbeams at Trail River bents 2 and 3. Crossbeams where supported by eight pile that were capped with HP 14x89 beams and stringers,” John said. “Each crossbeam included 39 cubic yards of concrete which is delivered from Soldotna, an hour and half from the job. After pouring the crossbeams, falsework and pile were removed to prep for the beam setting. Six ea. 53” deep deck bulb tee girders where set in June to complete span 2 at Trail River. Next, the workbridge slips and remaining detour widening will be removed to allow girder erection at spans 1 and 3.”

Work at the Ptarmigan Creek Bridge and the Falls Creek Bridge is happening simultaneously: During June at Ptarmigan, Bristol completed rip rap work while Hamilton completed Bents 1 and 2 pile caps and wingwalls; girder erection is scheduled for July.

Permanent pile driving started at the end of June at Falls Creek.

Bob Sherman spent some time in Alaska recently and had this to say about our work in the Northern Frontier: “After spending a few recent days in ‘the Alaska summer’ it was only raining half the time, but beautiful all the time, he said, “with 20+ hours of daylight to enjoy the scenery and keep active.

“The crews are doing a great of working together on a challenging summer of work on this project, with all reports that Hamilton employees are doing a fantastic job of ‘making schedule’ and building that ‘HCO Quality’ into the project. Keep up the good work,” he encouraged.

The summer tourist traffic running between Anchorage and Seward in the summer adds to the difficulty of construction for the crews,” Bob observed, “but showcases our road and bridge construction for the travelers from across the world that are visiting the last frontier.”

Chris Bailey (who celebrates his 4th anniversary with Hamilton this summer) and Seth Price at Trail River Bridge
Cleve Clark: Hard Work, Love of Family...and Anything with a Motor!

When you talk to Cleve Clark, a Hamilton TCS (Traffic Control Supervisor) and laborer at the I-5 Sandy River Bridge job it doesn’t take long to figure out that three things define Cleve’s life: hard work, love of his family, and anything with a motor.

As a boy in Mill City, Oregon (just west of Detroit Lake in the Willamette National Forest), Cleve says his favorite hobbies growing up were dirt biking and working on cars. His first car was a ’73 Ford Mustang and he paid for it the old fashion way. “My first job was working on a farm hauling irrigation pipe—clearing fields. I also worked in the mills. When I turned 18, I worked at the I-5 Sandy River Bridge job it doesn’t take long to figure out that three things define Cleve’s life: hard work, love of his family, and anything with a motor.

“Hard Work, Love of Family...and Anything with a Motor!”

He worked there about two years, until one day his Dad, who was living in Nevada, encouraged Cleve to move down and go to work for a massive Granite Construction paving job outside of Winnemucca. That was 1996 — and a benchmark year for Cleve. Not only did it mark his first year as a TCS, and his first move away from his home town, but it was also the year his oldest daughter Alisha was born. After six years Cleve decided to give up the gypsy life of highway construction and go to work for Hamilton.

One of his first Hamilton jobs was the I-205 Columbia River job. “The toughest job I’ve ever done,” Cleve said, “was the Phase 3 I-205...but also the most fun—I like a challenge.”

For more than a year, Cleve and his six-man TCS crew worked demanding night shifts that had them putting up six to eight closures a night—some of them as long as four miles. “Then, by 7:00 or 8:00 am the next day, we would have to have them taken down,” he said, “Sometimes we would be doing the traffic control for as many as 3-5 different subcontractors. If we had failed to get the roads opened we would have been fined $1,000 for every 15 minutes of missing the deadline.”

“I am proud to say we were never fined—no LD’s!” he says with obvious satisfaction. He said their success was due to teamwork. “We couldn’t have done it without the guys I worked with.”

Now at the Sandy River job since 2010, “I move from one end of the job to the other—Bryan Cloe’s right-hand man—always working on something different,” he said.

Every day of the week Cleve drives round trip to Mill City—more than an hour and a half each way—so he can spend evenings with his family. “We’re a really close family. We’re pretty adamant about sitting down together at dinner every night,” he says proudly. Now, Cleve’s family with his wife of 15 years Angie, numbers five kids—four girls and a boy: Alisha-15, Kesey-13, Jasmyn-10, Quentin-8, and Alexa-6. They enjoy a lot of the same activities Cleve enjoyed growing up: camping and boating on Detroit Lake where the kids like to ski and kneebord.

“What’s it like for a rough and tumble construction guy to head home every night to a home filled with females? No problem for Cleve Clark! “I raised ‘em strong and I raised ‘em tough,” he laughs. Obviously they give him a run for his money and he couldn’t be happier!

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Hamilton Wins 2012 DJC Top Projects Award

Four Hamilton projects won awards in two transportation categories at the recent DJC Top Projects competition. Winning projects/award recipients included (from left):

**OR 241 Isthmus Slough East Approach** – First Place Transportation $1-5 million/Project Manager, Mike Phillips

**US 26 Volmer Creek and Johnson Creek Bridges** – 3rd Place Transportation $1-5 million/Project Manager Chris VanderPloeg

**Broadway Bridge Portland Streetcar Loop** – 2nd place Transportation $5-15 million/Aaron Standeford (accepting on behalf of Joe Hampton)

**Siuslaw River Bridge** – First Place Transportation $5-15 million/Project Manager Evan Stuart

Pouring it on at Sandy!

The deck pour on the Eastbound structure at I-84 Sandy River Jordan Rd. (with Bruce Ellingsen and Phil Cross pictured here) was completed in July, marking a major accomplishment on this project which is now 65% complete. The deck required 2,300 cubic yards of concrete placed in five separate pours requiring 30 hours total pour time. According to Sandy’s new Project Manager, Joe Hampton (who replaced Colorado-bound Wendell Snook) everything went well and now crews are constructing bridge rails; dismantling the overhead gantry cranes (to be re-assembled for use on the Westbound structure); and working on bridge end panels.

Port of Vancouver Awards Hamilton West Vancouver Freight Access Project

In July, the Port of Vancouver U.S.A. approved a $2.5 million contract with Hamilton to conduct retaining wall, pile driving and trench work for the West Vancouver Freight Access (WVFA) project.

Hamilton will start retaining wall and access construction in August, which will lead to the installation of 276 battered steel piles to support a trench type bridge. Ultimately, the project will enable trains entering the port to travel underneath BNSF Railway Co.’s north-south mainline that crosses the Columbia River. Hamilton’s Brandon Young will manage the project.

Actual bridge construction will be let in a follow-up contract next year.

Hamilton Project Estimator Randy Burg pointed out that the most challenging portion of this project involves a section where pile is driven on a four-to-one batter underneath the existing BNSF bridge with less than 30 ft. clearance.

The work is part of a $137 million WVFA project, the largest capital project in the port’s 100-year history. The project will provide new dual-carrier rail access into the port via both BNSF and Union Pacific Railroad; enlarge the port’s rail yard and loop track; and accommodate track realignment and roadway improvements.

SAFETY

Real Men Wear Sunscreen (And 3 Other Tips for Taking Care of Yourself This Summer)

1.) Use sunscreen: Be sure to lather up a couple times a day with a high SPF sunscreen. Skin damage from overexposure may not show up for years, so don’t think you’re OK without protection.

2.) Drink plenty of water – not Energy Drinks which may contain as much as 6,000 milligrams (mg) of caffeine per serving (equal to about 240 cups of coffee). Why are energy drinks bad? Caffeine speeds the heart rate and raises blood pressure. Also - energy drinks can significantly dehydrate a person which further stresses your heart!

3.) Wear dark glasses – Protecting your eyes from the sun throughout your life will help protect you from cataracts in later years.

4.) Take extra care when driving: Young drivers are out of school, kids are on vacation, road construction is in full swing, RV’s are out in force: all contribute to increased risks on the road. Be extra alert!
Summer has finally made a late arrival and with the good weather and longer days comes long hours. We currently have crews working on projects in Oregon, Idaho, and Alaska, and we are starting in Washington, and our bridge access division has been working all over the west and southwest and even done some work in Louisiana. All in all we are in another very busy construction season. Associated with a lot of work and long hours is safety. We urge everyone to work safe and look out for those working with and around you as well. Dave Holland, Rich Carden, and Mike Phillips our Safety Managers are working hard to assist you in making Hamilton a safe and healthy place to work. Our goal as always is for all of our employees to make it home safe and sound every night.

We are excited to announce the opening of our office in Denver, with the Snook family just last week making the move and setting up home in time for the new school year. While it is a long journey to Colorado, we have made a decision to open a full time office and actively pursue work in what we are calling our Mountain West division. Work in Oregon has been slowing down with the end of the bridge replacement program, and thus the need to look for opportunities in other areas. Thus the need to open an office in Alaska last fall and the opening of an additional office in Denver just last month.

While we hope to keep everyone busy in our current geographical area (Oregon and Washington) we also need to be realistic and go to places that provide opportunities for us to showcase our expertise. We hope by this time next year we will be writing about our successful projects in Colorado.

Our rail division is busy working in Idaho, with another job to complete near Shedd later in the fall. In addition Bob Hirte reports that there is a lot more projects coming, with the UPRR looking to replace the big truss bridge over the Willamette in Harrisburg next year. Bob and his crew plan on that being our project.

Over at American Concrete Cutting, Eric and his crews are busy with another summer of sawing, drilling, and demolition. They too have been very successful in adding work, and will soon start a major drilling project at Bonneville, one of the first Corp of Engineers jobs they have worked on. In addition they are closing in on 100,000 accident free hours without an injury. Congratulations to the ACC crew for their safety record, it is truly impressive.

Lastly, many of you follow the news about the Columbia River Crossing in Portland. We are currently working on a team ‘Interstate Bridge Partners’ that will propose on this landmark bridge project. It is very early in the process as both states work at putting their funding in place, but we plan on being on the frontline when this project does get built. More to come as the project plans become clearer and we actively begin pursuing the project.

As always we appreciate the work that all of you do for the Hamilton team. Your efforts in safety, innovation, and building demanding projects set us aside from our competition.

Thanks to all of you! We truly appreciate your efforts.

Sincerely,

Scott Williams