

Highway 63 - 2013 update

Mike Allen, Special Advisor to the Premier on Highway 63, consulted the public and submitted a report on June 29, 2012.

Highway 63 projects recently tendered and currently under construction:

- 27 km of twinning grading near Wandering River - \$42 million – fall 2013 completion
- Climbing lanes North of Crow Lake Provincial Park to South of Highway 881 junction - \$7.1 million - summer 2013 completion
- 55 km of tree clearing South of House River to North of Mariana Lake - \$3 million - spring 2013 completion
- 17 km of twinning grading from North of Algar Tower to South of Horse Creek – \$33 million - fall 2013 completion
- 15 km of twinning grading from North of Mariana Lake to North of Algar Tower – \$18 million - fall 2013 completion
- 17 km of twinning grading from North of La Biche River to South of Wandering River – \$35 million – Spring 2014 completion
- Slide repairs South of Highway 881 - \$2 million – summer 2013 completion
- La Biche River Bridge 14 km north of Atmore – Summer 2014 completion

Highway 63 projects to be tendered in the next few months:

- 31 km of twinning (grading/paving/bridges) from South of House River to North of Crow Creek - fall 2015 completion
- 28 km of twinning (grading/paving/bridges) from South of Horse Creek to North of Hanging stone River - fall 2015 completion

Current projects in Fort McMurray include:

- Confederation Way and Thickwood Boulevard interchanges are open with temporary ramps. Construction continues and will be complete by fall 2013
- Construction continues on Steinhauer, Franklin and Grant MacEwan Bridges over the Athabasca River with a 2014 completion target
- Work also continues to provide access for the Parsons Creek Development with a 2015 completion date

The Alberta government also remains committed to a host of other activities to improve safety for Albertans on this important highway. Recent actions:

- accelerated completion of 36 km of twinning,
- additional signage,
- increased enforcement,
- digital speed signs,
- accelerated timelines for contracts for new passing lanes, clearing and grading, and
- additional advertising and social media.

We have hired 16 new officers for our Integrated Traffic Units that patrol Highway 63:

- Nine of these additional officers are already patrolling the highway;
- All 16 officers are expected to be in place by late spring this year.

In addition to enhanced traffic safety enforcement on holiday long weekends, unannounced enforcement blitzes occur along Highway 63, the surrounding highways, and throughout the entire province.

The Alberta Government is committed to communities along Highway 63 through the Alberta Transportation Community Mobilization Strategy, engaging Regional Traffic Safety Consultants and community stakeholders to promote behavior change through increased awareness, education and community events and campaigns. This initiative represents an important investment in communities promoting change at a local grass roots level, to 'think globally, act locally'.

Some current projects include:

- P.A.R.T.Y. Program (Prevent Alcohol and Risk Related Trauma in Youth)- which promotes experiential learning around impaired, distracted, occupants restraints, speed, young driver responsibilities, and includes a mock collision, visit to the morgue, trauma presentation and victim impact statement. Almost 700 grade 9 students will participate this spring.
- iDrive for young drivers (May 4) is an interactive event specifically for teens 14 and up focusing on driver responsibility, impaired, speed, distraction, occupant restraints and also welcomes parents and community members
- Traffic Safety Consultants continue to work on initiatives in communities to increase awareness and change driver behavior around impaired driving, speed, occupant restraints and young drivers.