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NDOT NEWS

Summer 2007

New Technology Plugs Nevada Motorists Into Safer Transportation



NEVADA
DOT



The Road Ahead

By Susan Martinovich, P.E., Director

This is an important, and exciting, time in Nevada Department of Transportation history.

It is a time when we welcome distinguished new transportation board members and usher in new technology. It is also a time when we build roads to the future while reflecting on a rich transportation history.

Governor Jim Gibbons, Lieutenant Governor Brian Krolicki, Attorney General Catherine Cortez Masto and State Controller Kim Wallin are providing invaluable insight and guidance as new State Transportation Board members, and are joined by new civilian board members Paul Morabito, Frank Martin and Tom Fransway.

And now, NDOT technology is providing smarter transportation. Our 511 Nevada Travel Information puts detailed road condition reports just a call away. Meanwhile, four new welcome center wireless Internet stations provide vital safety, road and travel information at the touch of a button. Part of the department's renewed focus on communication, these technological advances are vital in delivering unparalleled transportation.

There is nothing more important than roadway safety. The Nevada Department of Transportation and partners have developed the Nevada Strategic Highway Safety Plan to reduce statewide traffic fatalities and guide innovative road and service safety solutions.

And, as always, NDOT dedicates itself to building and maintaining top roadways that move state motorists and commerce alike, whether widening southern Nevada interstates such as I-15 or enhancing northern Nevada transportation.

This is indeed an exciting time for the Nevada Department of Transportation, and I hope you enjoy this edition of NDOT News.

On The Cover: *NDOT's new 511 Travel Info system now offers complete Nevada freeway conditions, from construction to weather and chain controls, by phone and internet. New wireless internet access at the Mesquite State Welcome Center (pictured) and three other welcome and rest centers is another new technology providing vital road and travel information to Nevada motorists.*

Pioneer Program Paves Way To Innovative Transportation Solutions

NDOT is paving roads to the future with a new Pioneer Program that will enhance Nevada transportation with public-private partnerships and other innovative road projects.

The new program will help develop innovative road funding and construction partnerships to provide faster project delivery, less congested freeways and greater road funding and partnerships amid a statewide transportation funding deficit that is expected to reach billions of dollars through 2015.

“A pioneer project could take many forms,” NDOT Deputy Director and Pioneer Program manager Scott Rawlins explained. “But, at the heart of every pioneer project will be an innovative way to fund, build or partner in road projects.”

While toll roads and lanes are a primary example of public-private partnerships, Pioneer Program innovations could also take the form of design-build and developer-paid projects, such as NDOT’s upcoming I-15 design-build project. Availability payment programs are another possibility that would allow NDOT to pay back road builders/operators based on the number of vehicles using the road, while asset management programs could allow outside companies to provide certain road services. Congestion-relieving technologies such as traffic systems, managed lanes, variable message signs and intelligent transportation systems are among other possibilities that NDOT is already utilizing. While the concept of tolling would first need legislative approval before becoming a reality in Nevada, NDOT

is preparing for all possibilities to help fund needed Nevada transportation projects.

“Whether through taxes, tolls or other fees, there are costs to build and maintain our public roads,” Rawlins explained. “We will look to this new program as another avenue to help provide quality transportation for Nevada. With national firm Carter-Burgess serving as consultant, we have the opportunity to develop programs that work specifically for Nevada while building upon lessons learned from other states.”

The initial preparation phase of the program is already underway, with NDOT staff developing goals, criteria, procedures and review mechanisms for potential partnership projects. The second phase will include further refinement of pioneer project selection, contract procedures and environmental, risk and legal reviews. Upon approval of the State Transportation Board, the final phase will see approved pioneer projects built following a multi-year process of environmental and right-of-way clearances and construction.

Governor Gibbons’ recently-established Public-Private Partnership Advisory Panel will review and assist the work of the Pioneer Program, and the public will be able to share information on pioneer projects with upcoming public meetings and a dedicated Pioneer Program Web site. The Pioneer Program will join other NDOT initiatives to deliver quality transportation projects, including cost-benefit analyses and prioritization of existing projects that the Department is currently undertaking.



Public-private partnerships: Contractual agreements between a public agency such as NDOT and a private company.

On the Web: Find additional information on public-private partnerships at www.fhwa.dot.gov/ppp.

NDOT WELCOMES NEW TRANSPORTATION BOARD MEMBERS

The Nevada Department of Transportation is overseen by a seven-member Board of Directors. Chaired by Governor Gibbons, the state transportation board includes the lieutenant governor, attorney general and state controller, as well as three civilian members. This year, NDOT welcomes new transportation board members who serve the state by providing invaluable oversight and guidance on transportation issues.



*Governor
Gibbons - Chair
Transportation
Board*

Nevada Governor Jim Gibbons serves as state transportation board chair.

The decorated former combat pilot and Vietnam and

Persian Gulf War veteran received 19 service medals for an outstanding career in the United States Air Force, Air Force Reserves and Nevada Air Guard. Governor Gibbons also spent many years in the private sector as a commercial airline pilot, Federal Water Master hydrologist, geologist and mining and water rights attorney.

During three terms in the Nevada State Legislature, Governor Gibbons rose to Republican Whip of the State Assembly. In 1996, he was elected to represent Nevada's 2nd District in the U.S. House of Representatives. Serving five terms, Governor Gibbons was ranked the top 5% of House legislators in effectively passing legislation.

A co-author of the Gibbons Tax Restraint Initiative, which amends the Nevada Constitution to require a 2/3 super-majority to increase or implement any state tax, the governor has emphasized continuation

of the state's favorable, stable-tax environment. The governor also recognizes the importance of transportation in preserving Nevada's quality of life. To keep commerce and people moving throughout Nevada, Governor Gibbons has helped to ensure transportation and infrastructure needs are well-funded, whether by use of potential budget surpluses or one-shot funding programs that keep Nevada moving without additional taxes or expanding the size or scope of government. Another element of the Transportation Board Chairman's plan – working with local governments to ensure transportation planning and funding are in place before approval of future housing or commercial developments.

New State Transportation Board Members



*Brian K. Krolicki
Lieutenant Governor*

During two terms as Nevada State Treasurer, Brian Krolicki established groundbreaking programs to provide more affordable college education to Nevada families and was

named Most Outstanding State Treasurer in America.

He also consistently maintained the state's strong bond ratings and successfully secured the first credit upgrade for state bonds in over twenty years. The accomplishments helped NDOT financially jumpstart vital road projects through bonding, a program that has saved an estimated \$600 million in road project inflation costs alone, while allowing motorists to use needed roadways sooner.

A strong believer in public service, Lieutenant Governor Krolicki brings dedication, integrity and innovative thinking to his seat on the Transportation Board.



Catherine Cortez Masto
Attorney General

A legal career devoted to public service and fighting crime has led Catherine Cortez Masto to the seat of Nevada Attorney General and State Transportation Board member.

Attorney General Cortez Masto first assisted NDOT and other state agencies by providing legal counsel, organizing legislation for new programs and facilitating public policy as chief of staff for Governor Bob Miller, where she also became familiar with state budget preparation. She assisted the integration of state and county services while working with Department of Family Services on the transfer and integration of state child welfare services into Clark County and has fought crime as Assistant United States Attorney. Now, she provides guidance and support to the department as a State Transportation Board member.



Kim Wallin, CMA, CFM, CPA
State Controller

Former Institute of Management Accountants president, Kim Wallin serves as state controller and transportation board member.

Responsible for ensuring collection of all monies owed the state, as well as auditing and settling all financial claims made against the state, the state controller administers the state accounting system. With two years on the Ethics Committee of the Nevada

Society of CPAs, State Controller Kim Wallin will establish ethics guidelines detailing strong conduct for all state controller office personnel.

The Las Vegas resident and transportation board member grew up camping, hiking and backpacking throughout Nevada, and is long familiar with the state's abounding transportation and adventure amenities.

Three new civilian transportation board members, Tom Fransway, Frank Martin and Paul Morabito have joined the state transportation board and will be recognized in a future NDOT newsletter.

Retiring Members



Jim Thornton

NDOT is appreciative of the dedicated service of civilian transportation board members Jim Thornton, Tom Gust and Father Caesar Caviglia.

Tom Gust

Together, the members served NDOT with years of insight and leadership



as board members before retiring on June 30.



Father Caesar Caviglia

NDOT Looks to Future of Transit and Carpooling in Ever-expanding Las Vegas

Amid the lights of Las Vegas, the Nevada Department of Transportation is looking to high-occupancy vehicle, or HOV, lanes to lighten up demands on freeways.

Nevada's first HOV lanes will open on U.S. 95 between Martin L. King Boulevard and Rainbow Boulevard with the year-end completion of U.S. 95 improvements. The new lanes will be added to the road to whisk passenger vehicles of two or more occupants, as well as busses and motorcycles, along in their own dedicated lane.

"The main goal is to give drivers more of a consistent trip, so travel time is the same day-to-day for HOV users," NDOT Project Manager John Terry explained.

The Las Vegas HOV lanes are also expected to help mitigate ever-increasing traffic by encouraging carpooling. Another added benefit: environmental rewards reaped from fewer vehicles on area roadways.

And visions of carpool transportation solutions in the ever-expanding valley do not end there. "We truly envision the U.S. 95 lanes as the possible beginning of a larger HOV network," Terry said.

A larger HOV network may potentially be built as expansions to the city's most vital freeways, from Interstate 15 and the Las Vegas Beltway



A proposed Las Vegas HOV network would whisk commuters from park-and-ride lots to HOV carpool lanes that would connect drivers from freeway to freeway on direct HOV connector ramps.

to U.S. 95, dependent on funding and public input. Following NDOT research to best pinpoint those freeways that would most benefit from HOV lanes, preliminary plans were unveiled at an early-spring Las Vegas public meeting, allowing area residents to view and comment on the proposed HOV network.

With an average of 12,000 new Clark County residents each month, and more than 35 million additional Vegas visitors a year, the number of Las Vegas vehicle trips is estimated to increase 76% by 2020. HOV lane traffic is expected to increase over time as drivers become familiar with carpooling benefits.



A mock-up of possible HOV lanes on I-15 in Las Vegas



New NEVADA 511 Travel Info Logs Drivers onto Safer Travel

NDOT phone number and Web page puts travel information at touch of button

NDOT's new 511 travel information system logs travelers onto easier road information by phone and Internet.

The number, established statewide in fall 2006, allows Nevada motorists to dial 511 toll-free, 24-hours-a-day. Designated by major sections of state road, callers select their state route for automated weather conditions, scheduled event road closures and construction updates, including lane reductions and estimated travel times if available. Callers are even able to leave recorded feedback through the system. Hands-free, interactive voice recognition allows voice commands without the hazard of pushing number selections while driving.

The road listings are also available under "Road Conditions" at NDOT's www.nevadadot.com Web site. On the Web site, a Nevada road map zooms into the viewer's desired state travel route, with 16 different icons detailing construction, accidents, scheduled road closure events and specific snow chain requirements.

Overseen by NDOT Assistant Chief Operations Engineer Denise Inda, the system allows department road updates, Nevada Highway Patrol reports and other information to be entered by NDOT district operation centers directly onto the Web site. The written Web site

information is then translated into a concatenated voice that links the messages together in voice form for 511 phone use.



The \$168,000 system start-up costs, as well as ongoing maintenance fees, are offset by the Nevada roadside sign program designed to save taxpayer money. Charges for long-distance calls to the system are also intended to be covered by the roadside sign program. "Meridian (our project contractor), works with six other states, and AT+T is their long distance carrier, so our fees will be less through use of lower interstate phone charges and volume discounts," Inda explained.

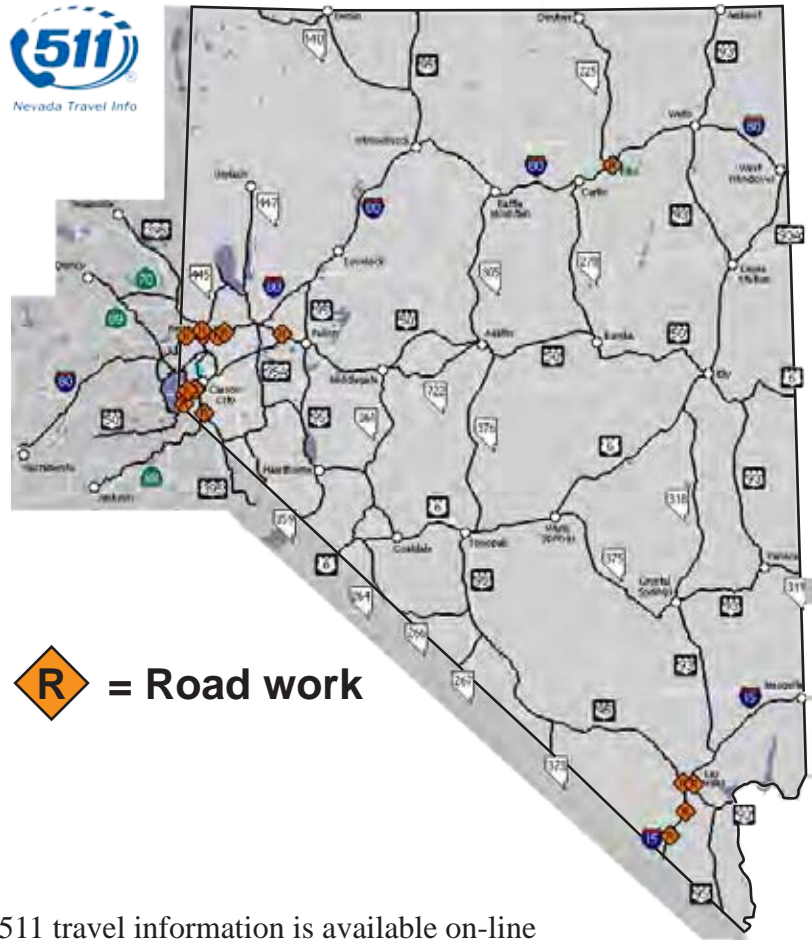
The new program posts current traffic, weather, construction and road closure reports to a new 511 phone number and the www.nevadadot.com Web site.

In the future, Inda looks to possible Amber, national security and other informational alerts to be broadcast on the phone system or by instant text messages.

Interoperable elements such as call transfer from other states, as well as other application sharing components, are being developed to ensure the continuation of the service in rural areas and along statelines.

The system improves upon two previous Web pages with separate construction and weather condition listings, and a 1-877-NV-ROADS phone number that detailed all district information, which did not permit users to quickly choose their designated road.

The 511 number was designated after the U.S. Department of Transportation



 = Road work

511 travel information is available on-line at www.nevadadot.com

On NDOT's www.nevadadot.com website, a full 511 map displays road conditions in an easy-to-view format.

requested a national, consistent three-digit travel information phone number from the Federal Communications Commission. Envisioned as a permanent and well-recognized seamless network taking over 40 million annual calls nationwide, the number is being successfully used in some states and urban areas. As the system is not mandated, no funding support was established for start-up of 511 systems.

NDOT's new 511 system gives travelers information on Nevada road conditions.



NEVADA'S TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT: A History

We recently celebrated the 50th anniversary of the interstate highway system. And now, we bring the celebration home with the rich history of our state's own transportation department. The following is the first in a series detailing the department and people that brought our state's highways and interstates to life.



Nevada roads were much different at the beginning of the state's transportation department.

The Beginning 1893-1919

The increasingly interstate nature of economic life, the requirements of national defense, the dramatic growth of motor vehicle ownership and the rise of tourism created a demand for a national highway network. The Office of Road Inquiry came into being in 1893 as part of the Department of Agriculture. It functioned as a fact-gathering and advisory agency until 1916, by which time it had become the Office of Public Roads and Rural Engineering.

A real highway program for Nevada had to await federal financial support. It came in the form of the Federal Aid Road Act of 1916. To be eligible to receive funding, a state had to have a highway department with adequate equipment and authority. In 1917, the Legislature, following Governor Emmet D. Boyle's recommendation, created a Department of Highways. The act doing so provided for three directors, to be appointed by the governor. A State Highway Engineer, appointed by the directors, was to attend their meeting and give "advice and counsel." The Attorney General was named as the Department's legal advisor.

The statute accepted the provisions of the Federal Aid Road Act and pledged the "good faith of the state . . . to make available funds sufficient to at least equal the sums apportioned

to the state" by the federal legislation. Other parts of the Nevada act defined projected routes, and addressed such matters as bids and contracts, staffing, purchase of machinery, right of way, and the erection of guideposts and signboards. The statute created a State Highway Fund and a County-State Highway Fund. *Look for 'Bonding and Expansion 1919-1920' in the next edition of NDOT News.*

Article courtesy of Dr. Michael Brodhead and the Nevada Department of Cultural Affairs' www.nevadaculture.org Web site.

NEVADA WELCOME CENTERS LOG ON TO INFORMATION SUPERHIGHWAY

The Nevada Department of Transportation is logging on to the information superhighway with new, free wireless Internet access at the Primm, West Wendover and Mesquite state welcome centers and Wadsworth rest stop.

Available 24 hours, users simply log on from their wireless-capable device such as PDA or laptop while parked within 1,000 feet of the centers. After establishing a free sign-on, a homepage links to the NDOT nevadadot.com site and other important travel information. Use is free for the first 30 minutes. Extendable 30-minute sessions and access filters to prohibited sites prevent misuse.

The locations on Nevada's major I-80 and I-15 thoroughfares provide the vital travel information to visitors and trucks entering the state's foremost north, south, east and west access points—all vital tourism and commerce lifelines. Interstates next to the rest areas see up to 50% truck traffic.

"For travelers, it's an opportunity to travel smarter and safer," NDOT Assistant Chief Operations Engineer Denise Inda said of the project she coordinated. "For truckers, it's an opportunity for quick road and weather conditions."



The \$27,000 system installation costs and \$12,000 annual maintenance fee will be offset by the Nevada logo sign program. Contracted through leading wireless broadband Internet provider Scientel Wireless, system repairs are required within 72 hours. New DSL Internet connections were installed to provide the high-speed Internet service.

Motorists can now log on to free wireless Internet at four Nevada welcome and rest areas.

LET THERE BE LIGHT

Testing New Pedestrian Crosswalk Lights

A Nevada Department of Transportation research project has activated a state-of-the-art in-road warning light system to help pedestrians safely navigate roads near the University of Nevada, Reno.

Walkers simply push a button to activate the bright yellow warning lights recessed into both sides of the pedestrian crosswalk. Each light contains a microcomputer that matches brightness to light present at any time of day, alerting oncoming traffic to pedestrians in the crosswalk.

“This system will greatly enhance the safety of our students, faculty and staff who walk to campus,” Adam Garcia, University of Nevada, Reno police department chief, explained of the over 10,000 daily cars and 16,000 UNR students and faculty in the area.

The inroad warning lights are the first of three systems to be installed near the campus as part of a two-year NDOT research project testing different systems’ ability to withstand cold northern climates.

“The project aims to evaluate the effectiveness of the crosswalk devices in cold weather conditions and snow plow traffic,” said NDOT Product Evaluation Coordinator Jason Van Havel. “Each of three contractors will maintain the crosswalk system for two years, allowing NDOT to determine the feasibility of permanently using the systems.”

According to the Federal Highway Administration, nearly 5,000 pedestrians are killed and 70,000 injured every year in the U.S.

New in-pavement flashers will be evaluated for their effectiveness in the snow of northern Nevada.



PUTTING SAFETY FIRST

New Nevada Strategic Highway Safety Plan

The Nevada Departments of Transportation and Public Safety and other partners have developed the Nevada Strategic Highway Safety Plan in an effort to reduce statewide traffic fatality numbers by a third by 2008, which translates into saving more than 100 lives each year.

Developed after an evaluation of Nevada crash data, the plan identifies and provides proposals on the most effective potential safety measures in enforcement, education, emergency services and engineering, as well as crash data integration.

The NDOT Safety Division systematically evaluated frequency, rate and primary factors of fatal and severe injury auto and pedestrian crashes. With expert input from more than 75 Nevada safety personnel, hundreds of potential safety strategies were prioritized

based on greatest likelihood of reducing crashes. Twenty critical safety strategies in the areas of enforcement, education, emergency services and engineering were then suggested, including possible heightened seat belt/DUI enforcement campaigns, increased intersection lighting and signing, even possible computer-aided navigation in emergency service vehicles.

Those possible safety strategies will now be thoroughly reviewed for potential funding, legislative approval and coordination within existing agency safety efforts to determine actions to most efficiently and quickly reach the plan's goal and budget.

"This is truly a monumental effort across all agencies to pinpoint the most valuable joint traffic safety measures to best supplement the safety measures we already have out there," Nevada Department of

Transportation Director Susan Martinovich said. "But, we all must remember that safety truly starts with each individual. Safe driver behavior is the most vital element in this effort."

In the nation's second fastest-growing state, Nevada's annual vehicle miles traveled rose nearly 75% from 10.2 billion in 1990 to 17.9 billion in 2000. With approximately 400 yearly traffic deaths on Nevada roads, an estimated \$10.7 million is needed annually to reach the safety goal. Development of the safety plan is expected to make more federal highway safety funding available for the state.

CRITICAL SAFETY STRATEGIES

The graphic is titled "Critical Strategy Summary" and features the Nevada state seal in the top left corner. It is organized into five categories, each with a red header and a small icon: Enforcement (police hat), Engineering (car on a ramp), Education (books), Data Systems (computer monitor), and EMS (ambulance). Each category lists specific strategies.

Critical Strategy Summary

- Enforcement**
 - Highly publicized DUI checkpoints
 - Seize Vehicle/License Plate for DUI offenses
 - Highly publicized Seat Belt enforcement campaigns & Primary seat belt law
 - Enforce pedestrian laws at high crash areas (judicial follow-thru)
 - Automated Enforcement
- Engineering**
 - Keep vehicles in their lane
 - Flatten slopes and remove roadside objects
 - Increase ped safety by constructing sidewalks, refuge islands, and upgrading signals
 - Access management
 - Intersection geometric improvements
 - Increase intersection awareness with traffic control devices
 - Traffic signal upgrades and improvements
- Education**
 - How to maintain vehicle on the roadway
 - Public service campaigns to reduce impaired driving
 - Subsidized transportation to/from bars, hotels, etc.
 - Pedestrian safety education
- Data Systems**
 - Improve ability to perform data analysis across agencies
 - Develop criteria to identify high pedestrian crash locations and crosswalk placement guidelines
- EMS**
 - First responder training for state patrol, maintenance workers, etc.
 - ITS Technology to reduce response times

FREEDOM'S ROOTS RUN DEEP

The 'Freedom Tree' had stood in front of the Las Vegas state office building for nearly 35 years as a memorial to the nation's missing soldiers. Now, thanks in part to help from NDOT, the tree has been moved to a new home where it flourishes as a symbol of freedom.

The olive tree was planted in 1972 to honor military heroes missing in action, particularly William "Skip" Skivington Jr., a 19-year-old Las Vegas soldier missing in action in the Vietnam War. When renovation begun last year on the state building that the tree stood near, there were no plans for saving the memorial tree. But, Division of Parole and Probation Sergeant Merritt Carlton soon took interest in the tree outside of his office building and got to the root of its meaning. Carlton was able to track down Skivington's father, William Skivington Sr., and unravel a story that had begun nearly 40 years before.

Skip's heroic story so inspired Parole and Probation's Merritt Carlton that he and other volunteers raised over \$20,000 to preserve and move the tree that was dedicated to Skip's memory. That's where NDOT came in.

Following inter-agency coordination from NDOT District 1 Engineer Mary Martini, Crew 150's Chad Pollock designated a safe moving route for the overheight 30-ton tree, and arranged for the help of heavy-moving specialists Dielco Crane. Willie Washington and Kenny Smith, also of Crew 150, pitched in to set up safe traffic control and refill the hole left by the tree. Meanwhile, Chad Pollock joined the Nevada Highway Patrol and National Guard in providing safe escort and traffic control as the large tree ventured nearly 30 miles down U.S. 95 to its new home at Southern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery in Boulder City.

SKIP'S STORY



In the late 1960s, William Skivington, Jr., known as "Skip," graduated from Las Vegas' Western High School and went on to college in Idaho. But, the Vietnam War weighed heavily on the patriot's mind. After signing up for military service, Private First Class Skip Skivington found himself in Kham Duc in South Vietnam. The U.S. military observation post had been heavily hit by enemy grenade attacks, and as radio operator, Skip was positioned directly on the right of his lieutenant when enemy forces overran his team. The last radio communication from Skip's group came when the lieutenant radioed battalion headquarters that they were shooting the enemy as they came through the door. Then the radio went silent. It was Mother's Day 1968, and Skip had been officially missing since that time.

There, a rededication ceremony saw the tree replanted with full military dignity, including a 21-gun salute, color guard and “Taps.”

“It was quite an experience, and we couldn’t have done it without NDOT,” Carlton said of the rededication ceremony he organized.

“It was great. It was one of the most rewarding projects I have been part of,” Pollock echoed. “We all felt very patriotic.”

The moving of the tree was not the only recent chapter in Skip’s story. During the same time the tree was moved, the military’s joint POW/MIA Accounting Command recovered



the soldier’s wallet and high school ring from below six feet of dirt on the Vietnam mountaintop battleground where he perished, and identified his remains. Skip is now laid to rest in Arlington National Cemetery.

The military burial was bittersweet for Skip’s father, William Skivington Sr. The World War II veteran has seen his other two sons die, one from a rare lung ailment and another from cancer believed to be caused by Agent Orange.



NEW NDOT PROGRAM KEEPS NEVADA CONSTRUCTION TRUCKIN'

A new, free Nevada Department of Transportation construction truck driver training program has integrated minorities and women into Nevada's vital construction industry.

The seven-week courses, taught at Reno's Horizon Commercial Truck School, focused on construction truck driving and safety skills, from water and dump truck driving to snow plows and safety checks. Registration was available through various Reno-area employment agencies such as Nevada JobConnect.



Pictured (left to right): NDOT Contract Compliance Manager Roc Stacey with graduates Candy Fuller, Bill Foster, Angela Sasek, Michelle Impala, Frank Allan, Gerardo Garcia, Jessica Bickel and Harmeey Bancroft, as well as Rebecca Bennett, FHWA Nevada Division Civil Rights Program Manager.

The first class of graduates are off to a good start, with seven of eight graduates securing construction-related employment before graduation.

"Now, it's like 'Wow, I can do this,'" graduate Michelle Impala said. "I am pretty excited I actually have a career!"

The program is part of the Contract Compliance Division's highway and construction training program providing minorities the opportunity to train to become part of Nevada's construction workforce. NDOT secured a \$200,000 on-the-job-services supportive services fund grant from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to provide the program, and hopes to secure another grant to continue the class.



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