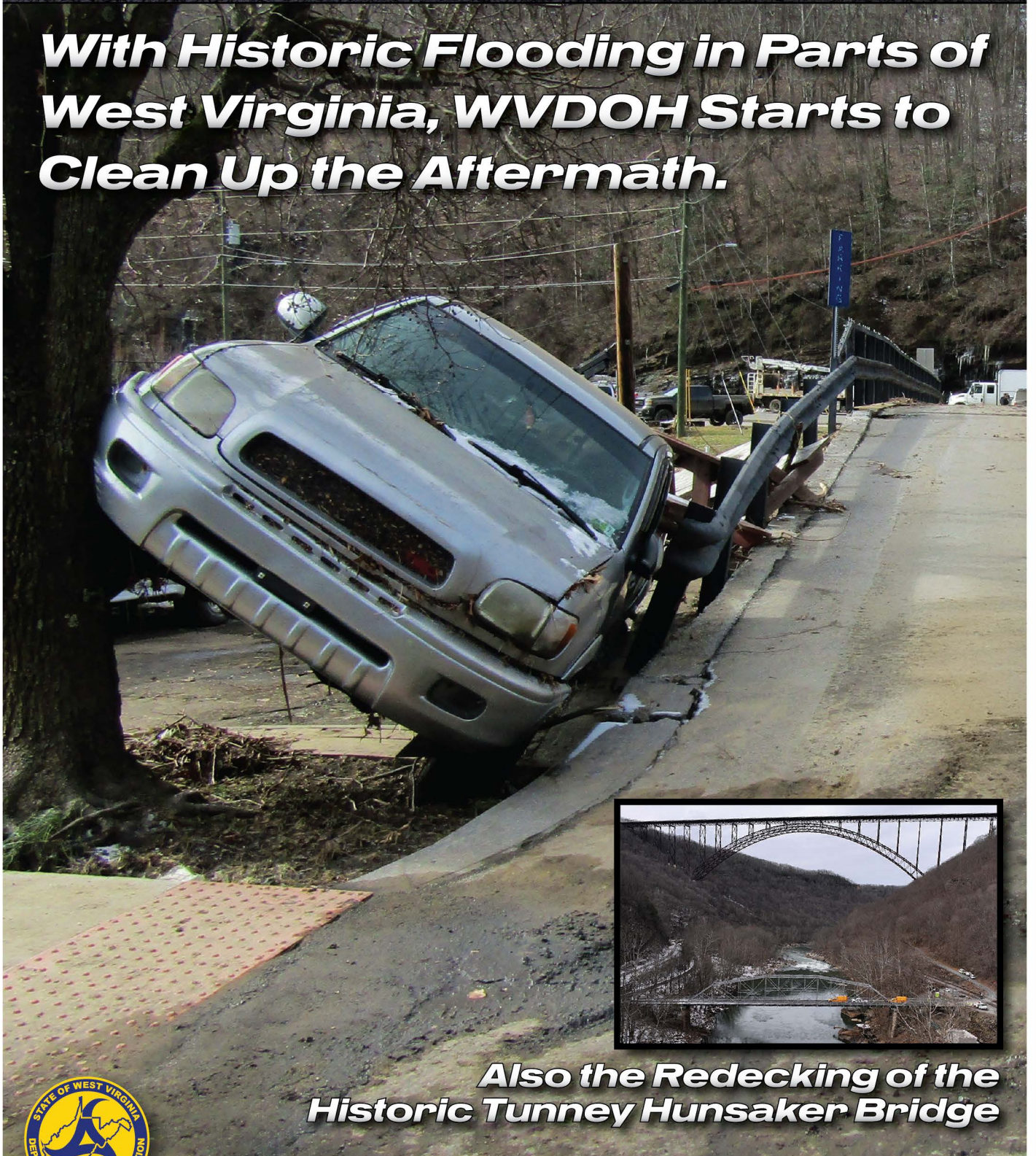


WV DOT Today!

• MSTA Renovation of Summersville Headquarters • DMV Reminds Residents to get REAL ID to Fly • WVDOH Hosts Public Meeting on Teays Valley Widening Project

With Historic Flooding in Parts of West Virginia, WVDOH Starts to Clean Up the Aftermath.



Also the Redecking of the Historic Tunney Hunsaker Bridge



March 2025, Volume 7: Issue 3

WVDOT Announces Mountain State Transit Authority Renovation Project on Summersville Headquarters

The Mountain State Transit Authority (MTA) has officially started on the renovation project at its headquarters in Summersville, said Bill Robinson, Executive Director of Public Transit in the West Virginia Department of Transportation's (WVDOT) Division of Multimodal Transportation Facilities. The development marks a significant milestone for the public transportation service, which has been an essential part of the community and surrounding areas for decades.

MTA operates bus services in Nicholas, Webster, Pocahontas, and Greenbrier counties, including the communities of Summersville, Richwood, Webster Springs, and Lewisburg. The addition of Pocahontas County to the bus lines in 2021 provided access for Pocahontas County residents to the rest of the county and to the other counties served by MTA.

"We have several people tell us, if it wasn't for MTA, they would not be able to go to jobs," said MTA General Manager Tim Thomas. "They would not be able to go to medical. They would not be able to go to school. And by school, I mean college."

In addition, its service routes connect to the Kanawha Valley Regional Transportation Authority (KRT), providing crucial links to transportation hubs in Fayette County and beyond.

"This is the beginning of headquarter rehabilitation projects that will serve the public's needs for the next 20 years." Robinson said.

The renovation project aims to modernize and expand the current facilities at MTA's Summersville headquarters, accommodating the growing demands of the service. Plans include the construction of new office spaces to support the administrative and operational needs of the agency. This will also involve the creation of a dedicated training room, which will serve as a valuable resource for driver education and other professional development programs.

In addition to office and training space, the project will focus on expanding the garage area to house more buses, ensuring that MTA can continue to accommodate its growing fleet of vehicles. The total cost of the renovation is estimated at \$2.12 million, with a substantial portion of the funding—\$1.69 million—coming from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA).

The completion of the renovation will allow the Mountain State Transit Authority to continue to grow and enhance its network, ultimately benefiting both residents and visitors throughout the region. As more residents rely on public transportation for daily commutes and other needs, the MTA's upgraded facilities will provide the necessary infrastructure to keep pace with the region's evolving transportation demands.

This investment in public transit is part of a broader effort by the Multimodal Division to improve transportation access throughout the Appalachian region of West Virginia, where public transit options are vital for connecting remote areas to larger urban centers. With this project, MTA reaffirms its commitment to providing efficient, affordable, and sustainable transportation for all. The timeline for completion of the headquarters is fall 2025.

WVDOT Today!

is a monthly newsletter published by the West Virginia Department of Transportation's Public Relations Division. The purpose of this publication is to facilitate connection across the diverse worksites and professions represented among WVDOT employees to empower us to function as **one West Virginia Department of Transportation**.

West Virginia Division of Highways
Attn: WVDOT Public Relations
1900 Kanawha Boulevard East
Building 5, Room A-137
Charleston, West Virginia 25305

Editor: **Rusty Marks**

Layout and Design: **Chris Moynahan**

Submit articles, letters, suggestions, and Vision Award nominations to;

Jennifer.J.Dooley@wv.gov



WVDOH Making Progress in Wake of February Floods

Most of the roads closed by flooding that began on Saturday, February 15, 2025, have reopened to traffic.

Floodwaters that ravaged southern West Virginia initially closed 221 different roads, leading Gov. Patrick Morrisey to declare states of emergency for Boone, Cabell, Greenbrier, Kanawha, Lincoln, Logan, Mercer, McDowell, Mingo, Monroe, Raleigh, Summers, Wayne, and Wyoming counties. West Virginia Division of Highways (WVDOH) work crews went to work immediately in flood-ravaged areas to clear debris, assess damage, and begin repair work as soon as water receded enough to form a plan of attack.

WVDOH crews have been working around the clock to reopen roads so families can access their homes and communities.

As of noon Tuesday, March 4, 2025, 13 roads remained closed in southern West Virginia, of the initial 221 shut down by flooding.

McDowell County was the hardest hit by flooding. Of 58 roads initially closed by flooding, nine remained closed on Tuesday.

“McDowell County was absolutely the most devastated down here,” said Ryland Musick, P.E., WVDOH District 10 Engineer. “We’ve got everything from general flood debris – mud and stone and all that stuff that requires many, many tandem trucks to haul away just to get to the roadway – all the way to roads that are completely missing.”

On WV 83 near Bradshaw, flooding undermined the creek bank next to the road and washing out a main water line. “Those people can’t get water to their homes until we do something,” Musick said.



District 10 road crews were out Tuesday throughout McDowell County clearing debris and making repairs.

Other counties were also making progress getting roads back open. In Mercer County, the number of roads closed due to flooding had dropped from 20 at the time of the floods to two on Tuesday.

Raleigh County went from 20 roads closed on February 15 to one.

In Summers County, all roads were open Tuesday; two had been closed by flooding.

“Our hearts go out to those affected by the flooding,” said WVDOH Chief Engineer of Operations Jake Bumgarner, P.E. “We have additional resources from other parts of the state in the counties that still have roads closed.

“We have made good progress in doing whatever work is needed to get roads opened back up, that were closed due to damage from the flooding,” he said. “Crews worked all weekend, after fighting snow through the end of the week last week, to make the progress we are seeing.”



WVDOH Work Crews Redecking the Historic Tunney Hunsaker Bridge

Far down in the New River Gorge, in the shadow of the towering New River Gorge Bridge, a West Virginia Division of Highways (WVDOH) bridge crew is painstakingly replacing the wooden deck of the historic Tunney Hunsaker Bridge.

Built in 1889, the Tunney Hunsaker Bridge was the first bridge across the New River in the New River Gorge. The span was built to connect the mining towns of Fayette and South Fayette.

When the New River Gorge Bridge opened in 1977, high above the gorge, the modest span at the bottom of the gorge was closed to vehicular traffic. But the increase in tourism brought about by the larger bridge and the recognition of the New River as a national river led to the small span being rebuilt in 1997 and reopened to traffic. The Gorge is now part of the New River Gorge National Park and Preserve.

Time and traffic had worn down the wooden deck of the historic structure, and it was time to replace the deck. WVDOH bridge engineers decided to do the work in-house to save time and money.



“We typically do work for 50 to 75 percent less than contractor prices,” said Nathan Thomas, P.E., Deputy District Engineer for WVDOH District Nine, which includes Fayette County. Cost of putting a new wooden deck on the bridge is approximately \$180,000.

District Nine called on DisForce, a special crew of workers in the district who take on special projects. A 10-person bridge crew began the painstaking process of replacing the deck on the 420-foot bridge in late January.



Workers are replacing each board on the wooden deck one at a time. It takes eight boards placed side by side to make up a foot of bridge deck, so the entire 420-foot bridge will require about 3,360 individual boards.

Workers are replacing the deck as they go, pulling up the old boards and replacing them with new lumber.

On the ends of the bridge, where they have to work around the bridge truss and girders, each board must be measured and cut by hand. But once they reach the 278-foot main span of the bridge, they'll switch to foot-long prefabricated sections of board they nailed together beforehand to speed up the work. Each section contains eight boards and is about 29 feet wide.

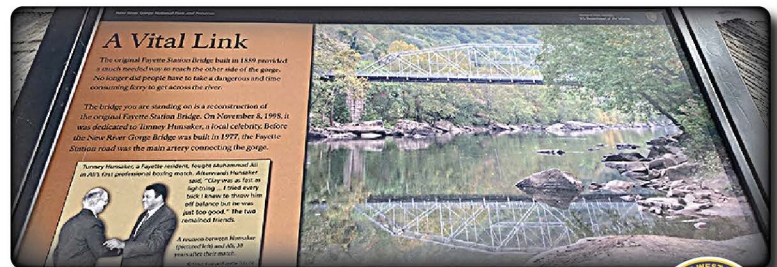
Work is expected to be finished by the end of March.

“We’re working long hours to get this done in the short window outside peak tourism season for the park,” Thomas said.

“These men and women are very diligent in the work they do,” Thomas said. “We’re fortunate to have them.”

In 1998, the bridge was renamed in honor of Tunney Hunsaker, longtime Fayetteville police chief and a former professional boxer who was matched up against Muhammad Ali in Ali’s first professional boxing match. Ali was declared the winner by unanimous decision after six rounds.

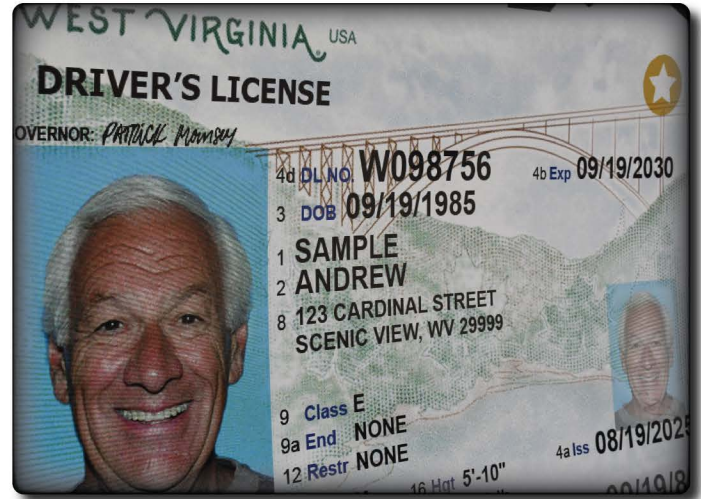
Ali and Hunsaker remained friends over the years, and Ali came to Fayetteville in 1997 for Hunsaker’s retirement celebration.



West Virginia Residents Will Need REAL ID to Board an Airplane Starting May 2025

West Virginia residents who want to board an airplane for a domestic flight will soon need a REAL ID-compliant driver's license. If their driver's license is not REAL ID-compliant, they will need another form of approved identification, such as a passport, to board their flight or enter a secure federal facility or military base. The REAL ID driver's license has a small gold star on it to indicate that it meets federal regulations that establish minimum security standards.

Lisa Ferbstein of the Transportation Security Administration said Tuesday, February 25, 2025, at a press conference at West Virginia International Yeager Airport, "While May might seem like a long way off, it is only 70 days away, so we want to encourage people to go to their local DMV and ask for a REAL ID license."



To get the REAL ID compliant license, individuals will need to visit their local DMV office in person and bring certain documents to prove U.S. citizenship and West Virginia residency. Or they can go online to the DMV REAL ID HeadStart page or use the WV DMVEZ app to upload documents to speed the licensing process. Required documents include one proof of identity (passport or U.S. birth certificate), proof of legal presence for non-U.S. citizens, two proofs of West Virginia residency, your social security card (if you've been issued one) and a current driver's license if you are applying to exchange one issued by another U.S. state.

"If you do not have a REAL ID, please do not wait until the last minute as we do expect an influx of people trying to obtain that," said Commissioner of the West Virginia Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV), Everett Frazier.

Transportation Security Administration officers who staff the ticket document checking station at airports will be checking for a REAL ID-compliant license or another form of acceptable ID after May 7, 2025, because of a federal law (The REAL ID Act of 2005) that mandates that a REAL ID is needed for federal identification purposes. TSA may phase in implementation starting on May 7, 2025, and if so, TSA will post those details on its web site.

Travelers will notice signs at airports nationwide to remind people that REAL ID-compliant licenses or other acceptable forms of ID, such as a valid passport, will be mandatory for air travel beginning on Friday, May 7, 2025.



WVDOH Hosts Public Meeting on Teays Valley Widening Project

The West Virginia Division of Highways (WVDOH) held an informational workshop on Tuesday, February 25, 2025, at Teays Valley Christian School in Scott Depot. The WVDOH is studying the Teays Valley Road (County Route 33) corridor for enhancements due to increased traffic from Scott Depot's growth. The project aims to improve access and safety for both residents and businesses along the entire corridor. It will involve roadway improvements featuring roundabouts, bicycle and pedestrian accommodations, and lighting.

Several residents said they were glad to have the opportunity to come and voice any concerns they may have, and gain a better understanding of the project's plan.

The meeting's workshop format gave attendees a chance to view detailed project plans, ask questions directly of project managers, and provide valuable feedback regarding the project. The meeting had a large turnout, including local residents, business owners, and commuters, all interested in the outcome of the project.



The proposal is for a boulevard style roadway from Great Teays Boulevard to Scott Lane with roundabouts at key intersections to ease congestion. There would also be a six foot bike lane and five foot sidewalk in each direction. The center island would be eight feet wide and could be used for plantings and lighting.



The project is intended to improve the infrastructure and decrease congestion in the area. For additional information, questions, or to submit feedback, residents are encouraged to visit <https://teays-valley-hdr.hub.arcgis.com/> for project information and the opportunity to comment.

Comments are due by Thursday, March 27, 2025. Those wishing to file written comments may send them to:

Sondra Mullins, Assistant Director
Technical Support Division
West Virginia Division of Highways
1900 Kanawha Blvd., East
Building 5, Room 820
Charleston, West Virginia 25301



Brent Walker Named the Public Relations Division Executive Director

There is a familiar face on the first floor of Building 5 as Brent Walker returns as the Executive Director of the West Virginia Department of Transportation's Public Relations Division. Brent has been with WVDOT since 2003, where he spent 18 years in the Office of Communications, and the last four in Human Resources. "I am honored to be back and excited to work with another talented and creative team in helping Governor Morrisey and Secretary Rumbaugh communicate their message(s) and vision(s) for West Virginia and its modern, safe, and efficient transportation system and, tell the stories of the hard-working professionals that make up the WVDOT," Walker said.



Finalists Chosen for 2025 West Virginia Bridge Design and Build Contest

Finalists have been announced for the 2025 West Virginia Bridge Design and Build contest.

Twenty-six high school teams and nine middle school teams will participate in the finals at the WVU Institute of Technology Campus in Beckley on Friday, March 28, 2025, and Saturday, March 29, 2025.

The event – sponsored by the West Virginia Department of Transportation (WVDOT) for over 25 years – focuses on engineering by using real world design principles in the software with which students design their bridges. The Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) educational outreach program is part of the WVDOT's ongoing commitment to education; the WVDOT also offers summer co-op programs, scholarships, and tuition reimbursements as they work to recruit tomorrow's engineers and other professionals.

There were 116 teams, either an individual or team of two students, from schools all over the state submitting a total of 462 designs in this year's contest.



To advance to the final round of the competition, students must use Engineering Encounters Bridge Designer 2025 software to design a bridge that a truck can cross successfully, cheaper than competitors' spans. Teams at the top of the leaderboard designed bridges with the lowest cost. The top 35 teams on the leaderboard are invited to participate in the final competition, where they will design bridges in a timed activity using the software and also compete to test the strength to weight ratio of balsa bridges.

To view the final leaderboard, visit:
<https://wvbridgedesignandbuildcontest.com/leaderboard/>



WVDOH District 3 Crews Hard at Work



West Virginia Division of Highway (WVDOH) crews were hard at work in District 3, Pleasants County. Crews were installing steel piling wall beams to help provide lateral support for the roadway slope, this support helps to prevent future road slips. Thanks for all your hard work and for keeping our roadways safe for the traveling public!



We Keep on Plowing

This year has been one of the harshest winters in recent years and the West Virginia Division of Highways (WVDOH) has been full force to keep our roadways clear through multiple winter storms. We just want to extend our full gratitude to all the ten districts snowplow drivers who have worked long hours in suboptimal conditions to allow the public to safely travel. Thank you all for what you do and the hard work you!



Longtime Personality and Events Guru Randy Damron Retires

Anywhere Randy Damron goes, it seems like he can find a friend. After more than 20 years with the West Virginia Department of Transportation (WVDOT), the longtime broadcaster, events coordinator and all-around good guy finally retired on Friday, February 21, 2025.

“Radio is what I wanted to do from a very early age,” Damron recalled on a recent edition of the WVDOT “Around the DOT” podcast. Damron began dabbling with electronics at around age 10, and got his first job at a radio station at 15. From there, he went on to host various radio programs at local radio stations before branching out into event planning and coordination. We’ll miss him lugging heavy equipment around single-handed, eschewing all offers of help.

Good luck in retirement, Rando!



Some of the major accomplishments Randy made over his long career include:

- Event Director.
- Public Relations Division Leadership Team.
- Winner of 2024 Transcomm Skills Award for Public Event for the Wellsburg Bridge Ribbon Cutting.
- Mountain Rides Motorcycle Roads Project Manager.
- Work Zone Safety Committee Chair.



Congrats



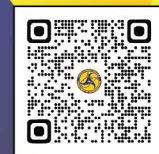
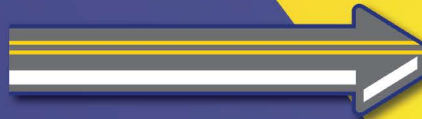
New Guests Each Week!



Follow us on SoundCloud & Apple Podcasts. Listen at: transportation.wv.gov * Click on Podcast



Seven Ways to Stay Connected With the WVDOT



UP TO DATE INFORMATION ON:

TRAFFIC & ROAD CONDITIONS

NEWS

INFORMATIONAL VIDEOS

PUBLIC HEARINGS

SAFETY TIPS



Mason County Commission Extends Thanks to WVDOH

RICK L. HANDLEY, President
POINT PLEASANT, WV

DIANA N. CROMLEY, Clerk
POINT PLEASANT, WV



CHRIS A. JOHNSON, Commissioner
LETART, WV

SAM D. NIBERT, Commissioner
GALLIPOLIS FERRY, WV

THE COUNTY COMMISSION OF MASON COUNTY
COURTHOUSE - 200 SIXTH STREET SUITE 2
POINT PLEASANT, WEST VIRGINIA 25550

PHONE (304) 675-1110
FAX (304) 675-4982

Mason County Department of Highways
Jimmy Purett, District Superintendent
225 Fairground Road
Point Pleasant, WV 25550



February 20th, 2025

Dear

The Mason County Commission would like to extend our immense gratitude to the Mason County Department of Highways for your exceptional efforts in maintaining the cleanliness and safety of our roads over the past few weeks.

Your hard work and dedication have not gone unnoticed. The residents of Mason County have greatly benefited from your commitment to ensuring safe travel. We greatly appreciate the long hours and tireless efforts put forth by your staff.

Once again, thank you for your outstanding service and dedication to the well-being of our community.

Sincerely,

Rick L. Handley, President

Sam D. Nibert, Commissioner

Chris A. Johnson, Commissioner

CC: Stephen Rumbaugh, WV Secretary of Transportation

Stefan R. White, District 1 Manager

E.E.O./AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

