



2011 realignment

Along with the other five districts of ITD, District 6 has reorganized. The change was part of a broad realignment initiated by Director Brian W. Ness.

District 6 now is realigned into four main groups – Engineering, Maintenance Operations, and Administration – and a Planning & Public Involvement Section (see org. chart on pages 4-5).

The 2011 realignment combines similar functions and reduces supervisors from 27 to 18. The average number of employees per supervisor now is approximately eight instead of six.

“This realignment streamlines the
(continued on page 4)”



Dan Hawkins, Brock Goff, Donovan Shipton and Craig Stewart competed at the D-6 roдео in Dubois on May 18. Not pictured is Camilo Serrano, who won fourth place.

Stewart, Hawkins win D-6 ‘roдео’

Craig Stewart, Arco maintenance, won the District 6 Truck Rodeo in Dubois May 18, earning 2,568 points.

In second place was Donovan Shipton, Dubois maintenance, with 2,500 points, and placing third was Brock Goff, Dubois, with 2,495 points. Camilo Serrano, Dubois, finished fourth, earning 2,478 points.

Dan Hawkins, Arco, won first place in the foreman category, with 2,480 points, and Don Gilstrap, Idaho Falls, finished second, with 2,425 points.

Donovan went on to place fourth in the state truck rodeo June 14 in Athol, which is north of Coeur d'

Eagle new foreman

Jeff Eagle is District 6's maintenance foreman in Salmon, replacing Bill Vermaas, who retired (see **Bill Vermaas retires with 42 years...**, page 3).



Jeff previously was lead worker of the Salmon crew (area 660), where he worked 14 years. Prior to transferring to Salmon, he worked 7 years on the Dubois crew. Jeff was promoted to a transportation technician principal.

Alene, garnering 2,810 points. Brock placed 14th, Craig 21st and Dan 24th.

Mike Rearden, of District 1, won the state rodeo competition, amassing 2,983 points.

D-1's sign and striping crew foreman, Mike competed at the national competition of the Western Snow Fighters conference in Estes Park, Colo., Sept. 28, where he placed 10th in loader.

Contestants from District 3 claimed second and third place in the state rodeo finals, winning the team title.

Project design

This is the sixth in a series of articles on how to complete a highway project.

A picture's worth a thousand words. In Project Development, that's especially true.

This section of District 6 *draws* what needs to be done – grade, elevation, alignment, piping, access, walks... you name it. Drawings form the project plan. *Drawn* equals *planned*.

Big picture

But draftsmen also enter words.

(continued on page 3)

Horsch on board

Gov. C.L. “Butch” Otter has appointed Dwight Horsch to a six-year term on the Idaho Transportation Board. He succeeds Neil Miller, of District 5, who retired.



A lifelong farmer, Horsch began his career in the Pocatello and Aberdeen areas in 1971 and still farms his homestead, perpetuating a 101-year-old family business.

Horsch understands the pivotal role transportation plays in Idaho's economy and is committed to maintaining the state highway system with available resources.

Of note, 25 years ago he served eight years in the Idaho Legislature – six as a representative and two as a senator.

Kirk Finn gets last laugh, putters around house

What you miss about Kirk Finn is his delightful laugh.



Of course you also miss his easy-going but conscientious manner.

Kirk retired April 30 after 35 years at District 6, the last seven as a maintenance supervisor.

“It’s hard to beat a job that gives you a pickup, a good work environment and three-day weekends,” he says.

Retirement agrees with him. “The best part of puttering around the house is knowing you don’t have to hurry,” he says.

The 55-year-old says he notices things around his neighborhood that he didn’t notice before. “I never had time to notice.”

With time and a willingness to use his operator skills, he drove a belly dump truck for a friend’s gravel-crushing operation east of Bone this summer.

Kirk started on the Rigby-Idaho Falls maintenance crew in 1976. Later, he joined the Vegetation Crew to “see the world” – of Eastern Idaho.



Kirk captured this view of the South Fork Snake River Bridge on U.S. 26, west of Swan Valley Oct. 4, 2007. The shot illustrates his love of the outdoors and photography skills.

A couple of promotions later in 1993, he found himself in the Rigby office. He became a transportation staff engineer assistant (TSEA) in Rigby in 2004.

Favorite memory?

“When certain individuals retired or quit,” he laughs.

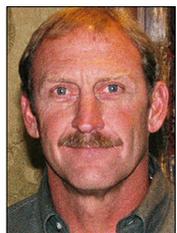
Kirk enjoyed District 6 Christmas parties, rodeos and friends.

He loves snowmobiling, four-wheeling and camping. He often totes his Nikon D40 camera on trips to record nature (see photo above).

Now Kirk looks to the future. “I relish life without the daily grind,” he laughs.

Mike Hare moves on after no-nonsense career at POE

By Devin Weaver
Port of Entry Inspector



Port of Entry (POE) employees have seen major changes in the last 20 years, and expect to see many more.

In District 6, none has been as profound as the changing of the guard during the past two years.

Supervisor Dean Berggren retired in May 2010, and Senior Inspector Mike Hare retired 11 months later.

Mike turned in his badge April 29 after 36 years of service.

The inspector started in 1972 as a dispatcher for Idaho State Police and went on the road as a trooper in 1973.

He later joined POE, working as an inspector in the old Bliss station.

Mike transferred to the Idaho Falls area in 1982, where he served with Dean Berggren as a “rover” – a traveling inspector who sets up temporary ports of entry at designated highway pullouts.

In 1991, he became senior inspector at the Sage Junction POE.

Known for straight talk, but quiet manner, Mike will always be respected by his colleagues. His no-nonsense style of leadership will be greatly missed.

Retirement plans?

Upgrade his house and then pursue hobbies – horseback riding, golfing and skiing.

And do whatever else he pleases.

Incidentally, he trims horse hoofs at competitive rates.

Mike is a man of many talents, who will be fondly remembered.

Bill Vermaas retires with 42 years of ITD service

His name is *Vermaas*, which is Dutch. Bill Vermaas, to be exact.



June 23, 2011, was his last day – after 42 years. Actually after 41 years. Accrued overtime added another year of service (this accrual policy has since been discontinued).

Bill stayed with ITD more than four decades because he enjoyed having a steady job and operating equipment.

Tracing his career starts in District 5.

He joined the Pocatello maintenance crew in 1970 at age 20, and worked there four years.

He then transferred to Montpelier, his home town, where he worked 12 additional years.

One winter night during those years, he and Nile Nelson ascended Geneva Summit to clear snow. Suddenly,

there was a “whoosh,” and their rotary (big truck with gigantic snow blower) spun 180 degrees, taking the brunt of a massive snow slide.

The two men spent the next 18 hours digging out and pushing through other slides in search of motorists trapped in the snow on U.S. 89. Fortunately, there were none.

In those days, you had to shovel hard snow into the rotaries by hand, Bill says. Rotaries couldn’t eat into wet, packed snowdrifts like they do today.

In 1986, Bill landed the maintenance foreman position in Salmon and then moved his family to Lemhi Valley at Christmastime.

One night at seven-mile slide south of Salmon, boulders the size of Volkswagens shot across U.S. 93 in Bill’s headlights, which was “scary.”

Assisted by his crew, two contractors eventually cleaned the slide area, but

not before boulders knocked a tractor-trailer rig into the Salmon River.

It was one of many problem areas Bill and his crew maintained during his years heading Area 660.

Key things learned in 42 years?

“Don’t panic. Things will work out.”

Advice for new employees?

“Don’t panic. Ups and downs even out.”

Today, Bill spends his time helping family members.

He probably won’t return to his native Montpelier. His house is paid for and his wife Hanna, who grew up in Hagerman, still has her home-health business in Salmon.

Bill misses his colleagues, but he doesn’t miss the late-night phone calls.

“It came time for someone else to step into the breach,” he says.

In Project Development (Design), seeing is believing

(continued from page 1)

That is because lines, arrows, shapes and numbers need explanatory notes.

These draftsmen prepare drawings using computer-aided drafting (CAD) software and print them on 11 by 17-inch technical sheets.

The drawings resemble schematics, which are depictions only an engineer could love.

Draftsmen and engineers spell out every little requirement of the job.

The reason is that contractors need all these details. Otherwise, they won’t know what is expected, and construction will suffer.

Burke and Sons Inc.

Ben Burke leads the Project Development Section as “project development engineer.”

Rayce Ruiz, Ryan Day, Gary Johnson, Mike McKee, Jeff Call, Beau Hansen,

Jeremy Hunting, Kurt Cox, Darryl Pinnock and Travis Sorensen fill out the team roster.

It’s a conscientious and productive outfit.

PS&E

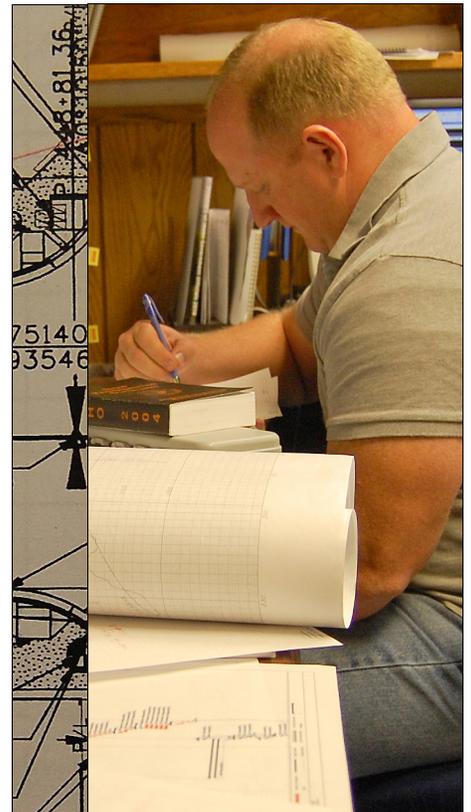
“We prepare the PS&E,” Ben says.

Plan, specification and estimate, that is.

The *plan* is the stack of construction drawings.

The *specification* is the book of construction standards or “proposal,” which includes “pinks” (special provisions printed on pink sheets) and “yellows” (supplemental specifications printed on yellow sheets). Both sets of requirements supplement the *2004 Idaho Transportation Department Standard Specifications for Highway Construction*, which contains the

(continued on page 6)



Project Development Engineer Ben Burke.

District 6 realigned into three main business units,

(continued from page 1)

district for greater efficiency,” District 6 Engineer Blake Rindlisbacher says.

Organization chart of District 6 in October.

“The reorganization groups similar functions and simplifies reporting relationships,” he says. “This will help improve operations and decision-making.”

In announcing the ITD-wide realignment, Director Ness said: “Our current system has built an organizational pyramid with numerous layers of supervision. ...too many approval steps are required to make decisions.

“...[this organizational realignment] will improve customer service, efficiency and accountability.”

He added, “[Employees are being given their jobs back] – to make decisions, find efficiencies and implement new ideas. It will make our decisions more transparent and accountable and I believe our performance more efficient and effective.

“...with time and perspective...these changes will make us a stronger department and provide opportunities...to better use [individual] skills and experience.”

Director Ness established five rules for the department realignment:

- No more than five layers of supervision across the agency.
- An average span of control of 8 to 10 employees per supervisor.
- No 1:1 supervisory ratios.
- No employees lose their jobs.
- No employees lose pay.

The 2011 ITD realignment moves the agency closer to becoming the best transportation department in the country. ■

and a new Planning & Public Involvement Section

(continued from page 3)

primary stipulations for a project. Contractors must comply with these basic standards and with any deviations found in the supplements prepared by District 6 and ITD Headquarters.

The *estimate* is the cost breakdown, by item, such as asphalt, guardrail, pipe, signs, light poles, etc.

Instruction sheets in the specification or “specs” explain requirements for item materials, construction, measurement and payment.

Once completed, Project Development ships the PS&E to Headquarters to be advertised for bids to construct the project.

The acronym *PS&E* is as common at District 6 as *FBI* is in Washington, D.C.

To Be or Not to Be

Drawing things is the easy part.

Deciding what to draw is the challenge.

With help from Materials, Right of Way, Environmental Planning, Traffic and Location sections, draftsmen – better described as designers – decide what goes where.

But their job is more than placing things, Ben says.

“To determine the size of pipe to install, they have to perform a hydraulic analysis,” he explains.

“To find out proper elevation at pipe ends, they must apply engineering formulas.”

“We use engineering software to develop earthwork quantities and to identify and locate items,” Ryan says.



Veteran designer Ryan Day, TSEA.



Designers Jeremy Hunting, Mike McKee, Beau Hansen, Kurt Cox and Jeff Call, with Travis Sorensen and Darryl Pinnock (inset), take a breather from project development.

Determining what needs to be done at every point along the route is tedious and time-consuming.

That is why design of a big project can take months, even years.

Due process

Project development involves careful review and analysis. In fact, it calls for thinking of everything.

On balance, only complete plans yield acceptable construction.

(See **Process** sidebar opposite page.)

Vicissitudes

“We sit at terminals identifying all the minutia and drawing it in,” Ryan says.

“It is stressful, especially when under deadline, which we almost always are.”

Completing a design is satisfying, he says.

Ben adds: “It’s a relief.”

Completing a design only to learn the project has changed and must be redesigned is frustrating, of course, he says.

Ryan typically prepares the pink instruction sheets of the specs. Fortunately, this is largely a process of cutting and pasting established, proven language – the old boilerplate trick.

“We have to prepare a biddable package,” he says.

Miscellaneous chores

“We arrange open houses and hearings to obtain public input, as needed,” Ben says.

This is often when public questions surrounding ITD land purchases arise.

With projects designed, advertised and awarded, Project Development helps Construction interpret plans, if needed.

“Somebody wants a turn bay, or an environmental problem emerges,” Ben says. “We have to start over.”

Qualifications

Designers obviously need CAD training, which they generally obtain at college or trade school. But they must learn project design on the job.

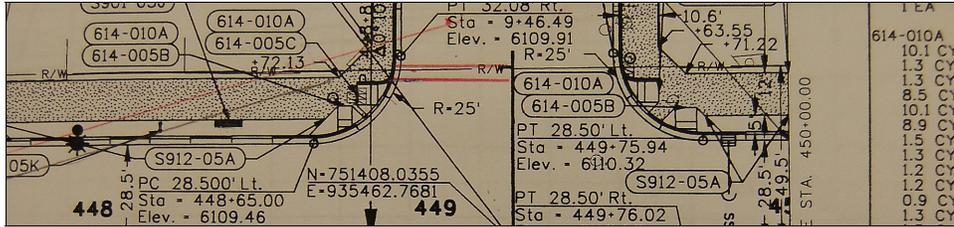
By design, designers learn design while designing.

Former Transportation Staff Engineer Assistant (TSEA) Dale Hiatt said it takes five years of on-the-job training to learn all you need to know to be a

competent designer of highway construction.

It takes patience and attention to detail. It takes teamwork.

Checking, rechecking. Drawing, redrawing. ■



Typical drawing.



District 6's Land Surveyor Rayce Ruiz.

Process - - - - -

1. *Concept.* Ben and Ryan help the Planning and Public Involvement Section determine where the road will go and the standards against which to design it.



Surveyor Gary Johnson

2. *Survey.* Gary surveys the project area to identify topography: roads, bridges, fences, trees, mailboxes, etc. Designers must know exactly what's on the land.

Meanwhile, Rayce identifies public right-of-way boundaries and private property lines. With these data, the team prepares topography and "record of survey" maps.

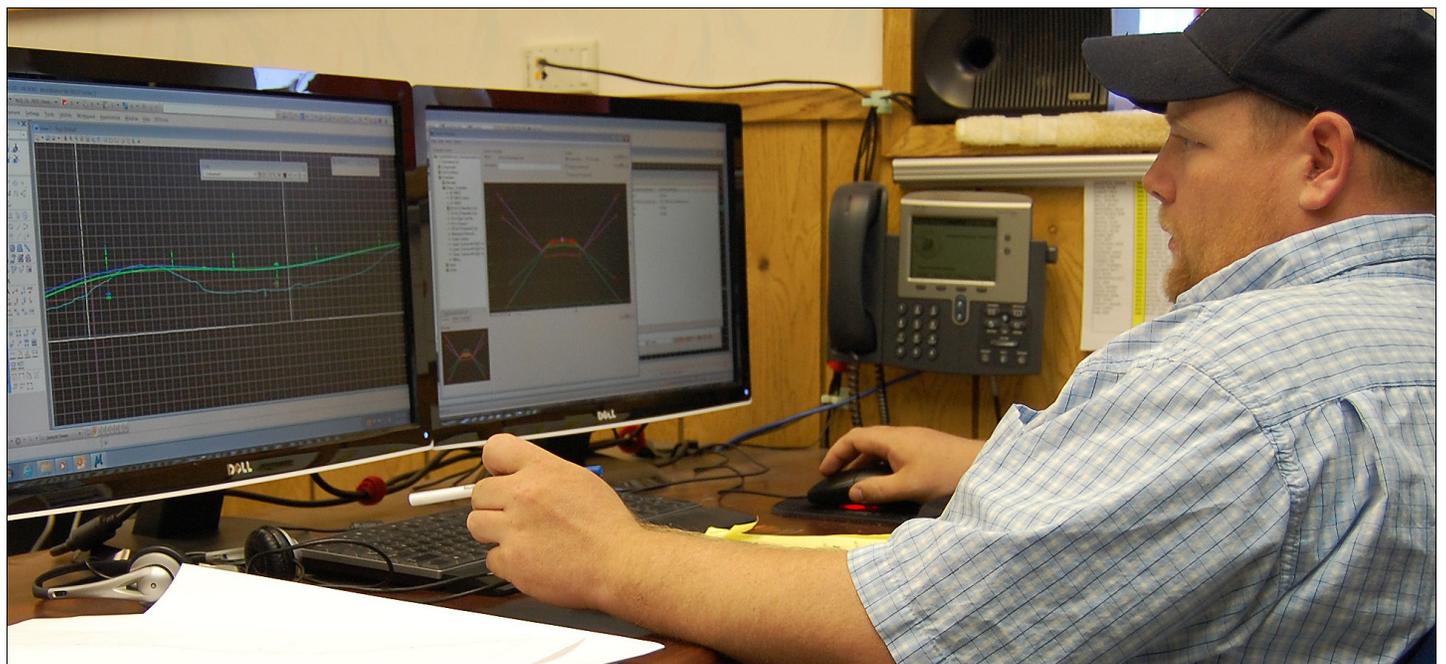
3. *Preliminary Design.* Designers import these survey maps into Microstation (the CAD software used) to see existing land using the design program and to determine and describe what needs to be done to it.

4. *Preliminary Review.* Once the project is drawn with the software, District 6 and Headquarters officials review plan sheets. These sheets may number in the hundreds. The Menan-Lorenzo Interchange project totaled 300 sheets.

5. *Final Design.* Designers incorporate management suggestions.

6. *Final Review.* Officials of District 6 and Headquarters review the final plan, and the district engineer approves it. Designers enter final changes, and the appropriate engineer stamps each sheet with his or her professional engineering credential. "It's what we went to school for," Ben says.

7. *Submittal.* Project Development – or Design for short – sends the PS&E to the Roadway Design Section in Boise for processing. Officials there recheck document accuracy and comprehension before preparing a bid proposal and then advertising for construction bids.



Designer Jeremy Hunting determines cut and fill quantities for the Newdale East project, using Microstation CAD software.

Comings and Goings at District 6

New employees are Shannon Esser, transportation technician apprentice (TTA), Salmon (Shannon previously worked as a winter hourly worker in Arco); Dallas Dupree, TTA, Gibbonsville; Andrew Rogers, TTA, Ashton; Cole Wagoner and Derk Hurst, TTAs, Dubois; and Tyrell Jewell and Dalton Rice, TTAs, Challis.



Shannon



Dallas



Andrew

Promotions: Beau Hansen to transportation technician principal (TTP), Project Development; Jeff Eagle to TTP (see **Eagle...**, page 1), Salmon; Kurt Cox to transportation technician senior (TTS), Project Development (Kurt worked as an hourly before starting full-time in August 2007); and Robert Taylor to TTS, Challis.

Departing employees: Rhett Green, storekeeper, Supply Operations; Beau Thomas, Transportation Technician (TT), Sign Crew; Karl Grover, Sign Crew; Jeremy Neville and Brock Goff, Dubois; Scott Trubl, Construction; Stephen Wanstrom, Island Park; and Brandon Knight, Challis.

Retirees: Kirk Finn, Maintenance Operations, 35 years (see **Kirk Finn...**, page 2); Mike Hare, POE, 36 years (see **Mike Hare...**, page 2); Bill Vermaas, Salmon, 42 years (see **Bill Vermaas...**, page 3); and Gary Madsen, Rigby Maintenance and Vegetation, 20 years. Gary summed up his career at ITD by saying that he enjoyed the people with whom he worked. He added: "I am enjoying retirement because you have more control of your life instead of someone else pulling the strings."

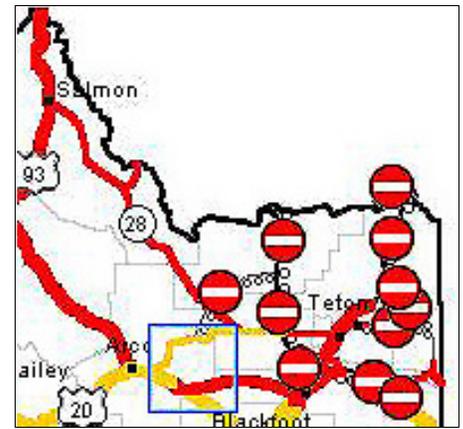
Marriages: Stacey McCurdy, Arco, who wed Lori Rairdon in Moore April 2, and Justin Ryan, Sign Crew, who married Ivy Hale in Rexburg July 8.



New arrivals: Wyatt Keith Williams, Records Inspector Myron Williams's grandson. The toddler is the son of Myron's oldest son Clint and his wife Adrienne, of Rexburg.

Bono passes engineer exam

Tracy Bono, of Maintenance, has passed the national civil professional engineering exam. He is applying for a professional engineer license in Idaho. Congratulations!



Road closures from whiteout Nov. 23, 2010.

In the mood

Above and below are images to put you in the mood for winter.



Photo courtesy of J.B. Harris

Old Ririe Highway Feb. 2, 2008.



Photo courtesy of Don Gilstrap

Elk cross U.S. 26 east of Ririe last winter. ITD closed the highway for two controlled crossings of the animals. Wolves and deep snow drove the herd from their wintering range at Tex Creek Wildlife Management Area 15 miles above Ririe Reservoir in February 2011.



Kent Holden fights 2008 storm on Idaho 33.



Cole



Derk



Tyrell



Dalton



David



Melody

Also on board is David Hankla (above), Port of Entry (POE), who took District 6 POE Area Supervisor Dean Berggren's place. Dave was previously District 5 POE Area supervisor. He now oversees both D-5 and D-6 POEs.

In addition, District 5 POE Senior Inspector Melody Cunningham (above) took over the position of District 6 POE Senior Inspector Mike Hare, who retired (see **Mike Hare...**, page 2). Melody also covers both D-5 and D-6 POEs, working in Inkom and Sage ports.



Tyson

Also in place at District 6 is Tyson Carpenter, engineer in training, Construction. Tyson comes from District 5, where he joined ITD Jan. 5, 2009. He first worked at District 6 last year in Traffic.