FDOT DISTRICT TWO

Intelligent Transportation Systems Newsletter September 2010 Issue 36



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Aerial photos courtesy of Garrett Knoll

ITS Announcements

Alachua TIM Team	N.E. 39 th Avenue, Gainesville	October 13, 2010, 10:00 A.M.
Transpo 2010	Sawgrass Marriott, Ponte Vedra	12/12-12/15/2010

Please contact the ITS Office at (904) 360-5465 if you would like to participate in the meetings.

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DISTRICT TWO ITS ENGINEE

NOTES FROM THE

Notes from the District 2 ITS Engineer

Just when you think things couldn't get any weirder in the TMC...... "they do." If you hadn't heard, on morning of August 31st we had a small plane decide to try and use I-10 as a landing strip when the pilot began to have engine trouble. Nope....you do not know the half of it yet! Guess you could say we were fortunate in that one of our District's Right-of-Way Consultants, Mr. Gerald Springstead, was the last vehicle the plane passed over before it crash landed on the back slope of the westbound travel lanes (or unfortunate in the case of Gerald - so he says!). I will share the experience of this day with everyone hoping that the a lesson will be learned by all of you and that is "when you hear a loud noise and don't see any vehicles in your mirror you'd better duck because the noise is probably coming from on top of you!" (Per Mr. Springstead).

So, here it goes. That morning, the District was conducting its Work Program review of the 10-year plan at the Lake City Maintenance facility. The meeting started at 10:00 AM so logically everyone at the Jacksonville Urban office planned to leave by around 8:30 AM. For me, the morning began strangely and things kept popping up that delayed me from leaving at this scheduled time. As I ran around the building like a chicken with its head cut off I noticed that several other meeting attendees were also running late. Then, I got the call.....

FHP notified the TMC about the plane crash along I-10 at around 8:40 AM. We immediately went into action by contacting all of our TIM partners, the media and the airplane we utilize for morning commute reports. Within five minutes the information was on all the news channels, Jax Fire and Rescue had units on route, FHP had already arrived at the scene and JSO was coordinating traffic control. Of course, I-10 had to be closed for a while so making this meeting in Lake City within a reasonable amount of time was not going to happen. I decided to stay involved for a few more minutes before I realized that the TMC staff had it under control. My departure time was 9:00 AM, so I followed detour recommendations and took the US 90 route around the scene. Ironically, I was only late by about five minutes and noticed several of my peers from the Urban Office had also made it on schedule. I guess the Troopers were quite busy that morning and couldn't be burdened with speed patrols[©]

When I returned that evening I learned that Gerald was the person who notified the FHP so I had to run up stairs to thank him for his actions the next day. That is when I heard the "real" story and felt I had to share this with everyone. Gerald was one of the few to leave on time and he was riding along I-10 westbound at a steady pace. He says that he heard this roaring noise (like a truck with an engine problem) getting louder and louder as he proceeded down the

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Notes from the ITS Engineer continued

road. He checked his side and rear view mirrors to try and figure out what the heck was going on. He then noticed that there were fewer cars in front and behind him. Not knowing what was going on, he decided to look up just in time to see the plane's wheels flying right over his hood.

Gerald said that he decided to slow his vehicle down to about 40 mph to allow the plane to pass him. He realized that the pilot was trying to go under some power lines crossing the interstate and had problems as the plane lost elevation. The plane hit the pavement, proceeded onto the grass shoulder, went up the back slope, clipped a tree with its wing and stopped within inches of a construction staging area full of materials (oh...did I forget to mention that this area was also under construction?). Gerald pulled over beside the plane and got out of his car to share his thoughts with the pilot on his lack of appreciation for Gerald's life. After calming down he had the resolve to contact FHP to get emergency responders on site.

The amazing portion of this story was the reactionary measures taken by Mr. Springstead throughout this ordeal. Even with the suddenness of this event he had the wherewithal to slow down and put his schedule on the back burner to assist with the situation. Some things that Gerald noticed were there were no other vehicles near

the landing area except for his, the pilot did try to go under the utility lines but ditched the plane at the last second, one of the engines was still running on the plane and it wasn't a matter of talent but luck that prevented this from being a much worse scenario. I don't think the media caught all of this information when investigating the event.

Of course, something like a plane crashing on the Interstate cannot be resolved in a matter of hours. There is really no game plan in the play book for something like this incident. Instead, the TIM members must play it by ear, using their best resources and experience to get the roadway open as soon as possible. One lane was opened within less than an hour but intermittent closures were necessary to get rescue personnel to the scene.

By about 5 PM, both travel lanes were reopened to traffic while the plane remained on the shoulder. Of course, this led to the "rubbernecking" symptom that impacted traffic throughout the evening.

The next day the FAA completed their investigation, the plane was chopped up to be transported and traffic resumed to normal by noon. Gerald now spends part of his time looking overhead while he drives, the TMC staff learned to expect the unexpected and I now realize I need to add an extra half-hour of travel to my Lake City meeting to avoid the unexpected.

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Notes from the ITS Engineer continued



Plane crash landing on I-10

As for other ITS news in September, the Phase VI project along I-95 south is working out great and helping us handle incidents related to St. Johns County commuters. Also, the new Statewide APL contract has made life much easier and inexpensive when needing equipment for deployments and maintenance. The Phase VII project along northeast State Road 9A is on schedule to be Let by the end of this month. The Blanding Boulevard project should begin testing in the next several weeks and...... we finally have the temporary approval to begin purchasing the network switch necessary for the City of Jacksonville to complete their deployments!!!! Talk to you next month!

Pete Vega District ITS Engineer

Marketing

Fall is in the air, and yes that means football season is upon us, but it also means it's time for the annual Fall Home and Patio Show down at the Prime Osborn Convention Center. This 4-day event runs from Thursday, September 30th through Sunday October 3rd. Get your tickets today and be sure to stop by our 511 booth to say hello! (Booth #1542) www.jacksonvillehomeshows.com

This past month we've been busy welcoming teachers, parents and students back to school as we partnered with area PTAs to promote the 511 message. We made stops on the westside, the northside and everywhere in between. We especially want to thank Biscayne Elementary and Oak Hill Elementary for inviting us to their Open Houses.

And finally, we spent a little time with our good friends over at the Aetna building a couple of weeks ago. They graciously allowed us to set up our booth in their beautiful riverfront lobby.

It's always fun sharing the 511 message! Helping commuters save time and gas money is what we do best... that, and helping them stay SAFE on Jacksonville's roadways.

Remember, call 511... and know **BEFORE** you go!

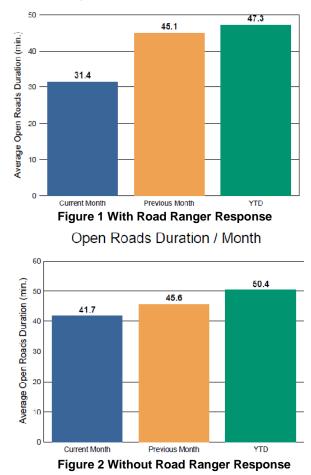
Sherri Byrd 511 Marketing Manager

Performance Measures

While there are a few minor issues being resolved, overall, the Performance Measures reports are much more effective than before. The old annual SunGuide report was simply one page with a table and some graphs that were impractical for our application. The annual new performance measures report is four pages including a table outlining the averages for each quarter throughout the year, two separate tables showing average data with and without Road Ranger response and a table listing the number of events of each event type handled in SunGuide each quarter. All tables have colorful corresponding graphs that illustrate the most relevant data. The data is pulled from January 1 to December 31 of the selected year. The Quarterly Report is essentially the same as the yearly report, only it compares 3 months of data rather than 4 quarters.

For the month of August, the Open Roads duration was significantly lower than the yearly average. The yearly average Open Roads duration has been about 47 minutes, but for August the average was only 31 minutes. The new monthly report also divides the data into events with Road Ranger response and those without. For August, the average Open Roads duration for events with Road Rangers was about 10 minutes less than those without Road Rangers. This proves the value of the Road Rangers because the quicker the road is cleared, the lower the risk of secondary crashes and subsequent misfortunes. The following charts are taken from the August monthly report with "current month" being August so that the "previous month" is July.

Open Roads Duration / Month



Jill Dawson Metric Engineering

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As discussed in the previous Newsletter, the I-95 Phase VI Project has been completed and accepted. The Project installed fiber optic cable, Dynamic Message Signs, Closed Circuit Television cameras, and Vehicle Detectors from the I-295 Southern Interchange to the St. Johns County Line. The devices continue to work well and are providing daily benefits, by providing information and easing congestion, for motorists in the corridor.

The SR 9A Phase VII Project is scheduled for letting at the end of September. This project is installing 96-fiber cable, CCTV cameras, Dynamic Message Signs (DMS), Vehicle Detectors and Roadside Weather Information Sensors along SR 9A from Atlantic Blvd North to I-95. The Project also includes two Arterial Dynamic Message Signs and two CCTV cameras on Heckscher Drive approaching SR 9A in each direction. The Construction Contract will be let in late September with an anticipated start of Construction in Early 2011.

This project is critical to this area due to the continuing growth of JaxPort and also the development along SR 9A. The ITS devices installed by this Project will provide Traffic Management Center Operators with the ability to view the roadways and provide information to motorists and responders alike. This Project has also opened up better communications with

members of JaxPort and will hopefully lead to a coordinated effort to provide both Truckers and commuters with congestion free travel.

The I-295 Phase VIII Project is working toward 90% plan submittals. This project is installing 96fiber cable, CCTV cameras, Dynamic Message Signs (DMS), Vehicle Detectors and Roadside Weather Information Sensors along I-295 from I-10 North to I-95. This project will complete the Fiber Communications ring around the Western side of Jacksonville. This project is important to this area of Jacksonville due to the large number of Trucking companies along the corridor and the proximity to Jacksonville International Airport.

The Phase IX Project, on SR 9A from Atlantic Blvd south to the I-95/SR 9A Interchange, has been awarded to Metric Engineering as a Systems Manager Contract. The project will install 96-fiber cable, CCTV cameras, Dynamic Message Signs (DMS), Vehicle Detectors and Roadside Weather Information Sensors throughout the project corridor. This project will complete the ITS ring around the City of Jacksonville and is also in the area of Jacksonville that is expected to have the largest growth over the next few decades. The project will also include Arterial Dynamic Message Signs (ADMS) on the major arterial roadways throughout the corridor. District 2 and Metric Engineering are also exploring the possibility of

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CONSTRUCTION

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Construction continued

installing environmental sensors along the corridor to monitor carbon emissions in an effort to show the benefits of future roadway widening and or new roadways in the area, which alleviate congestion and therefore reduce carbon emissions.

Several projects are ongoing with Duval and Clay Counties. The SR 21 / Blanding Blvd Project is nearing the end of construction. Device integration and testing will be done within the next few weeks and the System should be operational by the end of October. Award of the SR 5 / US 1 Project is still under protest and will hopefully be under contract soon. The US 17 Project has been given the Notice To Proceed and is currently working on 100% plans. All of projects are using existing fiber these infrastructure and adding Arterial Dynamic Message Signs and CCTV cameras to allow for the City of Jacksonville and Clay County to view their arterial roadways, provide information to travelers, and dynamically adjust their signal timing to help alleviate congestion.

John Kell District 2 ITS Construction Project Manager

North Florida TPO Update

There has not been many changes in the progress of the North Florida TPO projects since last month. We are still trying to wrap up the loose ends for projects within the region and hope that the contractors will be able to complete their assignments in the coming weeks. The highlight will be when they begin testing the system deployed on State Road 21.

One highlight that occurred is the NFTPO allotting more budget for their Systems Manager contract. These additional funds will provide the local agencies with ITS technical support as the systems come on-line and some "tweaking" is needed on the equipment. The current NFTPO System Manager is DRMP, with Jim Highland leading the team as the Project Manager.

Our target is to have a majority of our systems up and running before the Thanksgiving Holidays.

Hopefully, I will have terrific news to share with you during the October newsletter.



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INCIDENT MANAGEMENT UPDATE

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Traffic Incident Management (TIM) Update

ALACHUA TRAFFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM UPDATE

The Alachua Traffic Management Team will meet on October 13, 2010, at the Gainesville Maintenance/Operations Yard, N.E. 39th Avenue at 10:00 A.M.

FIRST COAST TRAFFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM UPDATE:

The First Coast Traffic Incident Management held its Team meeting on September 21st at the at the Florida Department of Transportation's Urban Office Training Center – 2198 Edison Avenue - at 10:00 AM.

The following agencies were represented: FDOT ITS, FDOT Central Office, FDOT PIO, FDOT Traffic Operations, FDOT EOC, FDOT Maintenance, Jorgensen, Road Ranger Service Patrol, Metric Engineering, SmartRoute Systems, FDEP/Division of Law Enforcement, City of Jacksonville Environmental Office, St. John's County, Nassau County Sheriff's Office, HNTB, DBI Services, and After agency updates, traffic incidents JTA. occurring in the last two months were discussed and evaluated. Team members worked together to achieve faster, safer response with future incidents. Performance Measures were presented by Jill Dawson, Metric Engineering.

Following the meeting several members joined the National Unified Goal (NUG) Webinar sponsored by the FHWA I-95 Coalition and the NTIMC.

Congratulations were given to FHP Trooper Danyen Komorek for being rewarded *FHP Trooper of the Year.* Trooper Komorek was also Trooper of the Month in April, 2010

District 2 TRAFFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM MISSION:

The Florida Department of Transportation District Two's Traffic Incident Management Teams through partnering efforts strive to continuously reduce incident scene clearance times to deter congestion and improve safety. The Teams' objective is to exceed the Open Roads Policy thus ensuring mobility, economic prosperity, and quality of life.

District 2 TRAFFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM VISION:

Through cooperation, communication and training the Teams intend to reduce incident scene clearance times by 10% each year through 2015.

Donna Danson District 2 ITS Operations Program Manager

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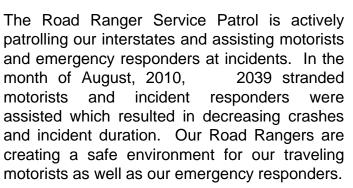
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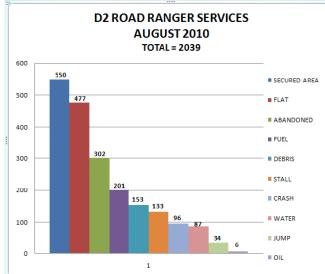
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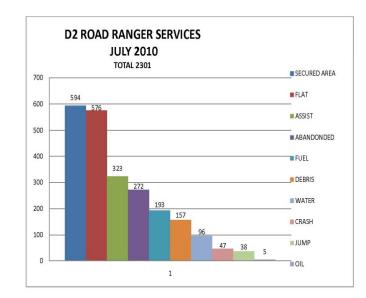


Donna Danson **District 2 ITS Operations Program Manager**



RISC (Rapid Incident Scene Clearance) Update

Since December 18, 2010, we have not had an incident that required the services of our Rapid Incident Scene Clearance (RISC). Our Contractors - Southern Wrecker and Recovery, LLC., Walt's Wrecker Service, John's Towing Auto and Truck Services, Inc., and University Towing and Transport, Inc. - are ready to be activated if the need arises.



Maintenance

The ITS Maintenance Contractor, Traffic Control Devices (TCD), continues to do a good job of maintaining the ITS field equipment. There have been quite a few lightning strikes, as usual, during the summer months. TCD has been vigilant in trying to repair the devices as soon as possible.

TCD has also been installing and splicing fiber on several major arterial roadways around Jacksonville in order to create connections between the City of Jacksonville, Clay County FDOT District 2 fiber systems. These connections will be used to share traffic information and video between the three agencies and will be of great benefit during planned events and emergency evacuations.

As an update on the fiber connection to the Jacksonville Maintenance Yard, the conduit is installed along Ellis Road and the fiber optic cable should be installed and spliced within the next few weeks. Once this connection is complete, employees at the Jacksonville Maintenance Yard complex will be able to view CCTV images being fed to them from the D2 Traffic Management Center. This advancement is expected to provide benefit by allowing personnel to see incidents before responding and allowing them to gauge the severity of the incident and the items needed for response.

On a side note, some members of the ITS Section have moved to a new location on the first floor of the Jacksonville Urban Office. I am fortunate to be one of those employees. Not only do I have a new office but also has a new storage room and device lab, along with an office for TCD personnel when needed.

This additional space will be very helpful for our team and TCD to repair damaged devices and also try out new technologies in a controlled environment.

Kevin Jackson District 2 ITS Field Specialist



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Operations

Construction around town has been a part of everyone's everyday routine for longer than we all would like to remember. Last month we talked about the new and improved area at I-95 and Butler Blvd. and the new ramp from I-95 southbound to 9A southbound coming from the Airport. On September 16th we saw another massive project take a huge step forward with all the new openings and traffic patterns at the I-95/I-10 merger. (see cover picture)

The project witnessed the opening of the two previously closed lanes on I-95 southbound over the Myrtle Avenue viaduct. This will be for traffic going southbound over the Fuller Warren Bridge and will eliminate the current mixing of I-95 southbound and I-10 westbound traffic at this point. Opening of one new lane on I-95 southbound to I-10 westbound, making a total of three lanes for this traffic movement. I-95 southbound will also have a new off ramp to Forest Street. Lastly, a new ramp from Forest Street to I-10 westbound opened.

Just five afternoon drives in and you can see a vast improvement to traffic flow headed southbound on I-95 approaching the I-10/I-95 merge. The five business days leading up to the opening saw congestion last on average for over two hours per day, generally between 3:30 pm

and 6:30pm. In the first five business days since the opening we observed a drop in the average duration of the congestion to under an hour! If we take away the first two transition days from the calculation it drops even further down to a mere 40 minutes.

Traffic on I-95 southbound at the merge may have improved of late, but August was another busy month at the TMC. Total events for the month dropped to slightly over 2,100 and Road Ranger events dropped to 1,450. Despite the decrease in events for the month the recent trend of lane blocking events continue to rise as Augusts' numbers jumped to 425.

In areas without ITS, the TMC depends on FDOT and FHP personnel to give us traffic information reports. You can reach our 24/7 line at (904)301-3700 extension 122 or our work day line at (904)360-5465. You can now also leave feedback on the Next Generation 511 system about road conditions and bugs you may find in the system that is relayed to our operators in real time.

Remember: Know Before You Go! Dial 511.

Ryan Crist Lead TMC Supervisor

OPERATIONS

FHP Video Wall Upgrade

The FHP Traffic Management Center got a facelift this month and it looks good from every angle. Eight 40-inch LED-LCD HDTV Flat screen monitors replaced the 32-inch TV monitors and an upgrade to the projector replaced the old blurry and yellowed image. It looks like a million bucks, but it didn't cost that much. The installation cost for the entire wall was about \$3,000, while the purchase cost of the TV and projector was about \$6,500, for a total cost of around \$9,500. This was a bargain considering that a video wall this size could easily run up a tab of over \$60,000. The frugality doesn't stop there though, the old TV monitors were recycled. and didn't move very far. They are now placed in two sets of three on the north and south walls of the JRCC dispatch floor. These are useful to display other camera images for dispatchers and dispatch supervisors.

When asked if he loves the new wall, Santos Morin, answered with a resounding "Yes." In fact, everyone has something good to say about the new wall. FHP Duty Officer Shavers comments, "The increased size of the monitors is a great asset to the dispatchers." Duty Officer Fouraker adds, "The clarity is very good." Call Taker Musgrove says, "The new TVs are a perfect size to view from where I sit in the back of the JRCC. We can see crashes with more definition than the old monitors."

I couldn't agree more with the dispatchers that it's a great improvement to the Jacksonville Regional Communications Center. The photo shown tries, but doesn't do justice to the beauty of the new video wall.

Jill Dawson Metric Engineering



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Spotlight on...Mike Goldman

Mike Goldman is the FDOT Public Information Manager for the Jacksonville Urban Office. He has been employed by the Department of Transportation since 1993. His early career includes stints at United Press International in Tallahassee, the Florida Times-Union and the Jacksonville Chamber of Commerce.

Talk about your upbringing – where were you born / raised?

I was born in Portland, Oregon but was raised in Minneapolis, Minnesota. I jumped the border and earned an undergraduate degree at the University of Wisconsin in Madison. After two years in the Army (I was drafted) I received a masters degree in journalism from Ohio University in Athens. I also had graduate credits in urban planning (with no degree) from Florida State.

Give us a general overview of your role in Transportation – My role in transportation involves media relations, dealing with public and elected officials, handling inquiries from the general public, attending and organizing public meetings and handling internal inquiries from FDOT personnel.

Do you have any funny stories relating to your career? Such as a foot-in-mouth moment or a bad day at the office story? Probably one of the craziest incidents was waiting for the new the Fuller Warren Bridge to fully open to traffic in November 2002. There was a large media

contingent on the bridge on a cold, rainy and windy Sunday. And of course, there were the weather delays. The new lanes couldn't open until the pavement was in the dry enough condition for striping to set properly. Explaining the delays was a challenge....One of the best days on the Fuller Warren project was the last ride across the old bridge before it closed to traffic. It involved Gov. Warren's family to join the processional and go down in history as the last riders (from the general public) across the old bridge. It was an interesting historical link between the past and the future.

What's the best advice anyone's ever given you? Never assume anything. (That came from my late father.) Jim MacLaughlin (who retired as the D2 director of operations and brought me into my current position), said when there is a public meeting, taking part in a presentation or talking face to face with an individual or business owner about an upcoming traffic change, always leave them with a piece of paper stressing the important points you are making. Don't assume they are going to remember things, particularly when it involves important information.

Do you have a favorite quote? Something that inspires you? I believe it came from the legendary Speaker of the House Tip O'Neill. He said (and I'm paraphrasing), "One of the traits of being a good Irishman is the ability to tell -CONTINUED ON FOLLOWING PAGE

FDOT DISTRICT TWO ITS NEWSLETTER

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Spotlight on...Mike Goldman continued

someone to go to hell and make them feel good about it." Obviously I'm not Irish and obviously I can't tell people where to go. But there is an ability to deal with angry people who are all fed up with government, road conditions, construction delays, business access problems and related adverse situations. But there is a way to listen to individuals, humanize the situation, politely tell them their opinions are incorrect and make them feel like they learned something and someone is listening to them. Tip O'Neill stressed that type of message in his books. Listening to individuals and explaining situations is a significant part of what I do.

Are there any job related awards or special recognition you've received? I received an "employee of the month" citation.

Describe a 'defining moment' in your career or personal life. My marriage and birth of my two children and watching them grow up into responsible, young adults.

Best job ever / worst job ever... or both? Two best jobs—working as a club house attendant at a public golf course in Minneapolis and waiting tables and tending bar at a resort/melodrama playhouse in Cripple Creek, Colorado. The worst—washing pots and pans doing "kitchen police" in the United States Army.



Mike Goldman in the ITS Office Tell us a little about your family. My wife is a logistics consultant and aspiring fiction writer. My son graduated from the University of South Florida and is working for an insurance company in Jacksonville. My daughter in December will finish her undergraduate degree in criminal justice studies and psychology at the University of Central Florida.

Do you have any hobbies? I am an avid golfer and can break 100 occasionally. I read a lot and like to travel. I've been in all 50 states.

Favorite vacation spot? That's a tough one. Possibly, the Grand Canyon/Monument Valley area. We had great times in the Pacific Northwest. We never had a bad vacation at Sanibel Island.

Anything else you'd like to add...There are some really good people working for the FDOT. They are conscientious, hard working and great to be around, even on the golf course.

FDOT DISTRICT TWO ITS NEWSLETTER

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SPOTLIGHT

Photo Gallery



Happy tenants of the Aetna Building visit the 511 table to learn more about the system and to spin the whee!!



An early morning crash on I-95, northbound near Old St. Augustine Road, proves the need for rapid clearance goals in this resulting gridlock, from before CR-210, looking north.

PHOTO GALLERY

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TMC Desk at FDOT **360-5465** Mon-Fri 6a-6p TMC Desk at FHP - ***FHP (301-3700) x 122** -24/7/365 Penny Kamish, Project Manager Ryan Crist, TMC Lead Supervisor John (Sean) Wilcox, TMC Supervisor Jason Summerfield, Network Manager Santos Morin, TMC Assistant Supervisor Derrick Odom, TMC Assistant Supervisor Sherri Byrd, 511 Marketing Manager

D2 Day Operators

Jesse Gilmour Jessica Lakey Adam Page

D2 Night & Weekend Operators

Jason Evans David Rolfe Rebecca Reid Tyler Sowers

D3 Day Operators 511 Probe

Santos Morin Sherri Byrd Adrienne Catapano Michelle Warren Jessica Vazquez Ed Capps

CONTACT INFORMATION