

58 Update

News & Views on the Laurel Fork Project

Branch Highways, Inc. Design-Build Contractor



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The End of the Road Is in Sight

By early fall, the Laurel Fork section of the Rt. 58 project will be complete and another major step taken toward completion of Super 58.

The 8.2 mile segment in Carroll, Floyd and Patrick Counties is scheduled to be completed by early fall. The contract is between VDOT and Branch Highways of Roanoke.

“The majority of the work is done,” said Pete Copes, Construction Manager for Branch Highways.

The main tasks this spring and summer are surface paving the highway and side roads, finishing some driveways and final striping, in addition to cleaning some storm water basins and installing some guard rail. Branch will communicate with property owners before completing their driveways.

Copes said there will be some detours that may result in traffic delays. “We appreciate the patience of the motoring public and understand that everyone will be happy when the project



is completed.”

This is Branch’s fifth construction season on the project, because work can be carried out only from May through November with weather conditions.

The Laurel Fork segment is the third phase of the Route 58 Corridor Project built under a Comprehensive Agreement between VDOT and Branch

to widen the 36 miles from Stuart to Hillsville.

The 3 mile Blue Ridge Parkway crossing at Meadows of Dan was completed in 2006. The second segment, the 5.2 mile Hillsville bypass, was finished in 2011. Additional segments will be started when funding becomes available.

Contractors Contribute to Local Economy

Branch Highway employees and those of subcontractors working on the Laurel Fork segment of Route 58 have made an impact on the local economy. As many as 150 workers have been on the job during the construction.

Pete Copes, Branch’s construction

manager, praises the work of the subs: Steve Martin’s Trenching of Martinsville, D. L. Harrell Construction of Meadows of Dan, Sandra’s Marking Company of Buchanan, Adams Construction Co. of Roanoke with a plant in Sylvatus, Gregory Seeding and

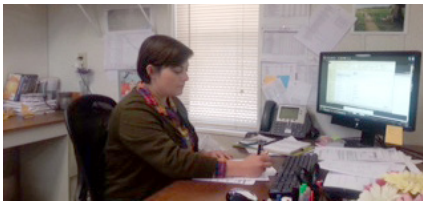
Landscape of Pulaski, Wright Brothers of Charleston, TN and Nickelston Industries of Lawsonville, NC.

“All of us have employed workers who live in Carroll, Floyd and Patrick Counties, and they are great employees,” said Copes.



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Floyd Resident at Home on Laurel Fork Project



Melissa Sowers has been involved in the Laurel Fork project as project engineer since the beginning, and the Floyd County resident is quite at home.

As a result of her outstanding work, Melissa recently was promoted to Assistant Project Manager at Branch Highways. "Melissa has demonstrated excellence in the performance of her

duties and a great work ethic," said Pete Copes, Construction Manager for Branch Highways.

Most days you'll find Melissa working behind a computer in an office trailer at the job site near Laurel Fork. She manages budgets, handles scheduling, billing, supplies, and dealing with contractors.

Melissa came to Branch as an intern in 2008 while a student at Virginia Tech and worked on the Hillsville by-pass segment of Route 58. When she graduated two years later, she joined Branch full time.

She started in the Roanoke office as

a Junior Estimator and then moved to the operations side to learn more about highway construction. It's paying off now.

After living in Louisiana for 15 years, Melissa moved with her family to Floyd, where she graduated from high school. At Virginia Tech, she began majoring in geology and biology. After working one summer at Fork Mountain Surveying and Mapping, a land surveying firm in Meadows of Dan, Melissa decided to pursue civil engineering.

"I love working at Branch Highways and with the great people on our team."



Questions/comments

We hope you will contact us if you have questions or comments about the Laurel Fork Rt. 58 project.

Pete Copes, Construction Manager, leads the Branch team. Contact him at petec@branchhighways.com or 276 398-2120.

If you have questions or comments for VDOT, contact **Jason Bond** at Jason.bond@vdot.virginia.gov or 540 387-5493.