



ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Sept. 28, 2020

U.S. 231 bridges now open to traffic

Travel safely resumes two months ahead of deadline

HUNTSVILLE — The Alabama Department of Transportation advises motorists that both roadways of U.S. 231 between Lacey’s Spring and Morgan City, including the twin bridges constructed to safely span the landslide on Brindlee Mountain, opened today, more than two months ahead of the scheduled deadline for reopening.

Following completion of the bridge and approach work earlier today, ALDOT’s contractor on the \$14.6 million bridge project, Brasfield & Gorrie, opened the highway around noon.

The reopening was celebrated by state legislators and local officials in a ceremony at Ditto Landing in Huntsville.

Governor Kay Ivey issued the following statement:

“I am proud that the people of Morgan County and surrounding areas will now be able to enjoy an easier and smoother commute on Highway 231. Not only has a repair and improvement been made to the infrastructure, but it was completed more than two months ahead of schedule, thanks to the state working hard with a private sector partner. We remain committed to enhancing Alabama’s transportation infrastructure to ensure every Alabamian in all parts of the state can reap the benefits. This is certainly exciting and welcome news.”

The opening comes 7½ months after heavy rain triggered a landslide, forcing total closure of the highway in both directions. ALDOT used all means available under Gov. Ivey’s proclamation of a state of emergency due to February flood damage, including expedited bidding and contract award. ALDOT produced the bridge design on a reduced timeline, advanced one phase of work simultaneous with preparation for the next phase, ordered \$4.2 million in custom-fabricated materials in advance to reduce procurement time, and attached substantial incentives/disincentives to the project to spur early completion.

After Reed Contracting of Huntsville finished removal of about 200,000 cubic yards of dirt and debris from the slide area in May, Brasfield & Gorrie of Birmingham began bridge construction June 1. Brasfield & Gorrie completed the structures in less than four months, despite initial estimates placing the timeline at a year or more.

“We’ve been honored to work with the Alabama Department of Transportation on this important project in our home state,” said Brasfield & Gorrie Vice President and Division Manager Bryan Myers. “Our accelerated construction plan was developed with the goal of completing the bridges as quickly as possible. Brasfield & Gorrie’s self-perform concrete crews, along with our trade contractors and supplier partners, have worked extremely hard over the past four months to get to this point in the project. We’re grateful that we were able to complete this important job well ahead of schedule.”

The contractor stands to receive nearly \$2.5 million in incentive payments for reopening U.S. 231 well ahead of the Dec. 2 deadline. Because some further work items are exempt from the deadline, motorists are advised that the area will remain a work zone and temporary single-lane closures are possible.

Each bridge is about 1,000 feet long and 44 feet wide, accommodating two 12-foot lanes with 10-foot shoulders, and is constructed on stable foundations— massive drilled shafts socketed in solid rock beneath the landslide. Prior to the closure, a daily average of 10,000 to 15,000 vehicles traveled the road in western Morgan County, about five miles south of Huntsville.

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