

## Secretary Powell Reflects on Storm Response

In his August 2024 employee address, Secretary of Transportation Justin Powell expresses his appreciation to employees for their efforts during emergency operations as Hurricane Debby passed through South Carolina.



[Click here to watch the video.](#)

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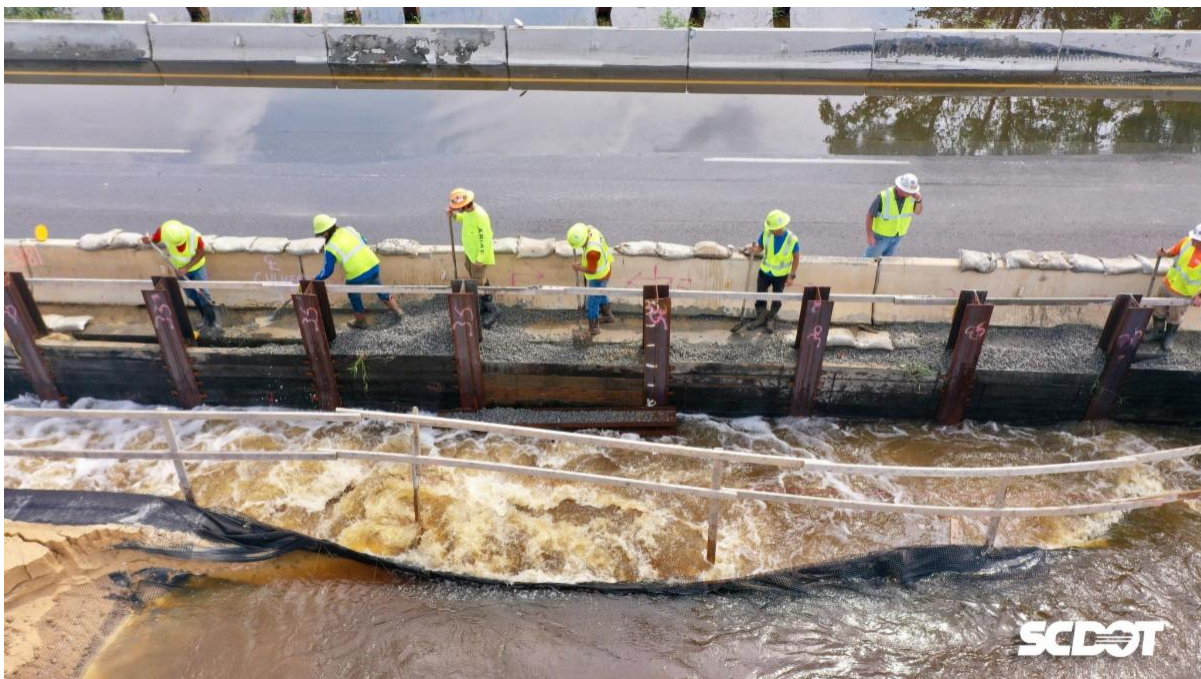
## SCDOT Employees Respond to Hurricane Debby

SCDOT employees began responding to Hurricane Debby on August 3 and have continued working as the tropical storm passed through our state, twice. Crews working on the ground were able to prevent flooding in areas along the coast and reopen roads across the state. Employee volunteers assembled barricades which were needed all over the affected regions and also helped out in the call center as they worked 24-hour operations.

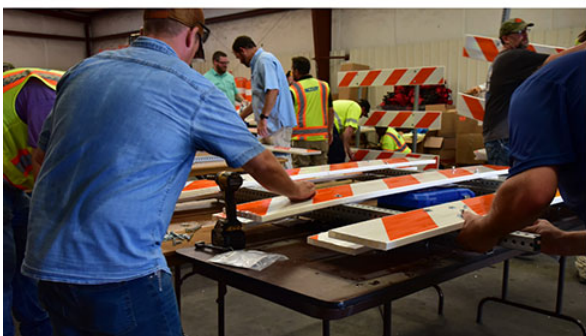
SCDOT employees staffed Emergency Support Function 1 at the State Emergency Operations Center during the entire week and coordinated with local, state and federal agencies to respond to the storm and get vital information to the people of South Carolina. Damage assessment teams traveled to areas that experienced flooding and washouts.

Tropical Storm Debby brought impacts to South Carolina, including significant flooding in the Lowcountry and Pee Dee. Days of heavy rains followed by a powerful downpour early on Friday, August 8 left a portion of Interstate 26 impassable, with water ponding on the roadway around mile marker 189 near Ridgeville. SCDOT maintenance forces responded and were able to reopen the interstate by 10 a.m. on Saturday, August 9.

As we continue to work toward reopening affected roadways in some areas, SCDOT employees may look back at Tropical Storm Debby knowing that we are equipped to respond and do our best working together as “One DOT.”







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## Shape the Future of Transportation in South Carolina



Momentum 2050 is the statewide plan for the future of South Carolina's transportation network. Your input is valuable and we invite you to join us in the planning process by taking a survey. The future of South Carolina's transportation network starts now. **Don't wait! The survey will close on September 6.**

[Take the Survey](#)

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### SCDOT Receives Federal Grant to Replace I-95 Bridges Over Lake Marion in Clarendon County

State and federal officials gathered at the Lake Marion Passage Trailhead in Clarendon County on Friday, August 2 to celebrate a grant award of \$175 million to replace the I-95 bridges over Lake Marion.

Governor Henry McMaster, U.S. Senator Lindsey Graham, and U.S. Representative James E. Clyburn **announced** that the South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) had been awarded \$175 million by the Federal Highway Administration to replace four bridges on I-95 over Lake Marion.

This award is one of the largest federal discretionary grant awards ever received by SCDOT and will allow the four bridges, originally constructed in 1968, with narrow shoulders and roadway approaches, to be rebuilt into one bridge with two 12-foot travel lanes in both the southbound and northbound direction.

**Visit this link** to watch a complete video recording of the grant award ceremony.



When completed, the new bridges will:

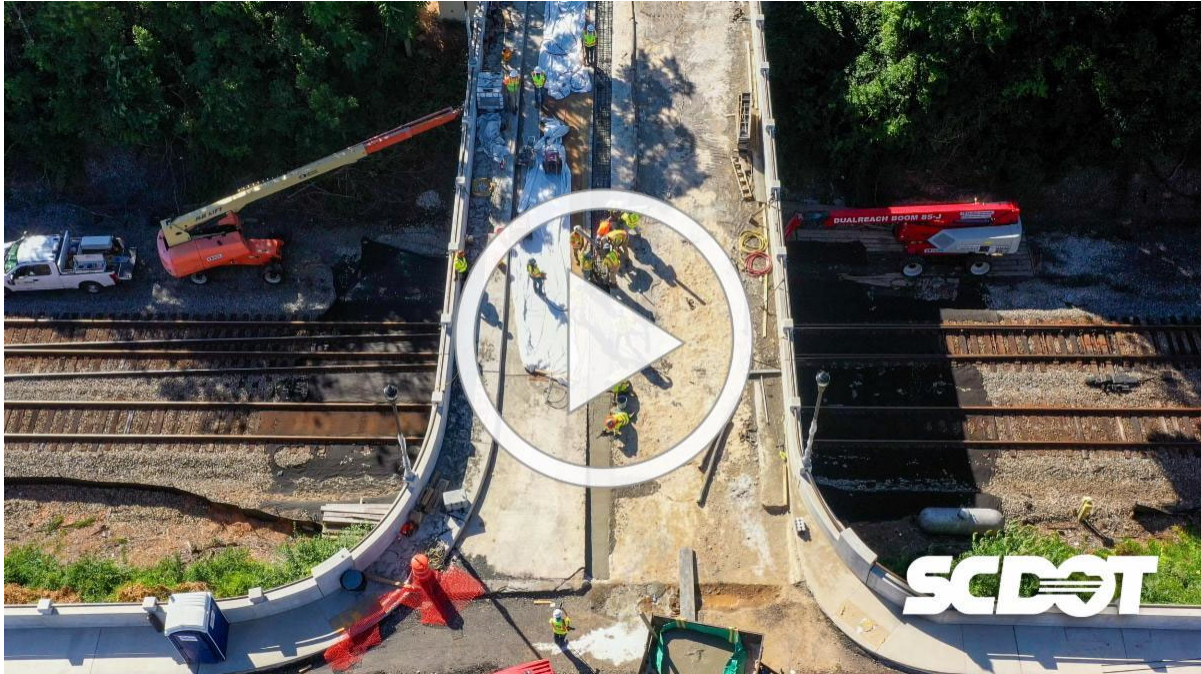
- Replace aging bridges that are essential links in the most important interstate corridor on the east coast with a new bridge that will have additional safety features, allow for possible expansion, and stand for many decades.
- Create a permanent crossing across Lake Marion for the Palmetto Trail, a 500-mile long South Carolina network of hiking and biking paths that run from the Blue Ridge mountains of the Upstate to the salt marshes of Bulls Bay in the Lowcountry.
- Support a high-volume water line across the lake from Orangeburg to Clarendon, bringing clean water and transformative opportunity for economic development to rural Clarendon County.



## SCDOT Repairs Historic Gaffney T-Bridge

The Gaffney T-Bridge, a historic structure in Cherokee County built in 1919, recently underwent much needed renovations. The renovation project involved demolishing and reconstructing the bridge deck, as well as cleaning and painting the steel

beams. Additionally, the damaged concrete on the underside of the bridge was repaired, and a pedestrian safety fence was installed over the railroad. Following completion of these necessary repairs, the South Carolina Department of Transportation hosted a ribbon cutting ceremony on July 31, 2024 to announce the reopening of the bridge to both pedestrian and vehicular traffic.



[Click here to watch the video.](#)

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## Congratulations to the SCDOT LEAD Class of 2024

Congratulations to the 2024 SCDOT LEAD class members, who wrapped up their year-long leader development course in July. Throughout the year, class members have gained hands-on experience and exposure to all aspects of SCDOT operations, completed a challenging and worthwhile class project, and formed strong peer relationships.

At their graduation ceremony, Secretary Powell urged the class to maintain those relationships, encouraging them to "Be yourself as you go beyond yourself," as their leadership journeys continue.

Congratulations to the 2024 LEAD class graduates. From left, front row; Mark Staton, Michelle Skeen, Tim Wojcik, Joey Lucas, Secretary of Transportation Justin Powell, JuLeigh Fleming, Teresa Parker, Tonya Ahtonen, C.T. York, Michael Pitts, Chris Kelly, Jim Beach. Back rows, from left; David Johnson, Stacey Johnson, Wei Johnson, Alex Bennett, Kaylon Meetze, Fran Bickley, Bruce McLamore, Roberto Ruiz, Matthew Shealy, Megan Groves, Tyke Redfearn, Robert Hall, Jason Childers, Brandon Wilson, Scott McElveen.





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## Exploring the SCDOT Internship Experience

This summer, 83 college students joined SCDOT at offices throughout the state, working in a range of disciplines including engineering, construction, project delivery, finance, information technology, and more. This video explores the experiences of three of these interns as they talk about what they gained during their time at SCDOT.



[Click here to watch the video.](#)

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## **SCDOT Interns Tour the Ravenel Bridge in Charleston**

On July 9, a group of SCDOT summer interns participated in a walking tour of the Ravenel Bridge, guided by District 6 Bridge Engineer Kevin Turner. During the tour, they learned about the historical context, engineering and construction process, and materials used in building the bridge.

The interns were also invited to step inside the elevator that takes maintenance employees to the top and bottom of the bridge's diamond-shaped support structures.

This outing was one of several offsite group trips organized by the Office of Human Resources to enrich the SCDOT internship experience.





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## Finding "Boo" in District 2: A Conure Bird Returns Home

Last month, District 2 Traffic Engineer Nick Rebovich stepped outside and spotted a small green bird sitting on top of a vehicle. After coaxing it onto his shoulder, he brought the bird inside the office with him while he got started looking for the bird's owner.

"It was clear that this was a pet because in the upstate we don't have a lot of green birds," Rebovich said.

Administrative Coordinator Sarah McKinney got in touch with her daughter to help facilitate the search. Facebook was their friend as they discovered a green Conure bird had been missing in the area. This information was forwarded to Nick, who was

able to get in contact with Missy, the woman who posted about the missing bird on behalf of the owner.

“I sent her a message with my phone number and a picture of me with the Conure,” he said. “She immediately called me and we began to plan how to get the bird back to the owner.”

The bird, whose name is Boo, belongs to Ayden, a rugby player at Lander University. Dealing with a foot injury and on crutches, Ayden was unable to chase after Boo when he flew out the door of their home a couple of days earlier. The five-year-old bird was able to travel nearly a mile and half to the Greenwood SCDOT office.

In the meantime, the bird rested on Nick’s shoulder, slept in his beard, sipped water from a clean espresso cup, and was the center of attention as visitors from throughout the building “flocked” to Nick’s office to catch a glimpse of him.

Before long, Missy and Ayden were in the front office and ready to reunite with Boo after being apart for 48 hours.

“For me, this small service was a tremendous gift,” Rebovich said.

Going above and beyond to serve all kinds of neighbors is something SCDOT employees do regularly. As active members of their respective communities, SCDOT team members often work together to solve unique problems. Nick and Sarah exemplified this type of teamwork, and helped return Boo to his rightful owner.



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## Introducing the SCDOT Innovation Challenge Showcase

Last month, the SCDOT Research and Innovation team held its first ever Innovation Challenge Showcase at the Columbia Metropolitan Center. The goal of SCDOT’s



Innovation Challenge is to seek out, recognize, and award individuals who have put innovative tools to work in the field. These tools help to create a safer work environment for workers and the public, improve efficiency in daily tasks, and save money and resources for SCDOT.

An Innovation Council was created to aid with the development of the Innovation Challenge Showcase and to serve as judges for selecting the top submissions. The Council is made up of three SCDOT retirees from Maintenance and two current members from the Director of Maintenance Office. Members of the Research and Innovation Unit serve as administrators for the Council.

A total of eighteen in-use innovations were submitted from District Field Offices this year. Each submission included a brief description of the innovation and how it benefits SCDOT. The Council met in the spring to review and discuss the submissions. The Council rated each innovation according to the following criteria: increased safety, improved efficiency, cost savings, and ingenuity. At the showcase, each of the eighteen innovations was either demonstrated or presented.

After having a chance to view one another's innovations, attendees heard from Deputy Secretary for Engineering Rob Perry and Chief Engineer for Operations Andy Leaphart before the final event of the day, an awards ceremony.

The winning innovators included:

- Christopher Barrick and Michael Anders for the Anderson Rail Clipper
- Wayne Anderson for the Hydraulic Equipment Trailer Ramps
- Lenn Gardner, Lee McDaniel and John Ives for the Guardrail Debris Cleaner
- Bryan Cavanaugh for the Backhoe Door Travel Lock and Stake Pocket Step Ladder
- Paul Phillips for the vertical Work Zone Sign Stand Rack
- Hulee Harvey for the Guardrail High Shoulder Clipper

To commemorate their achievement, each winner was presented with a sign featuring their names and innovation. SCDOT commends all of its innovators for finding solutions to their daily work challenges.

To view pictures of the winners and their awards, [click here](#).



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## Two SCDOT Employees Recognized for 50 Years of Service

Two SCDOT Employees were recognized at the July 18 Commission Meeting for 50 years of service. Edmond “ED” Garner and Jan Hudson were honored with resolutions and thanked for their dedicated service to SCDOT.

Edmond “ED” Garner joined SCDOT in June 1974 as a Highway Maintenance Worker I on the bridge crew. He was later promoted to Highway Maintenance Worker II in 1977 and to Highway Maintenance Worker II in 1979 as a Crane Operator. He was then promoted to Lead Man, Highway Maintenance Worker IV, in 1983. Garner left Bridge to be the Mowing Foreman in 1987 but then returned as Bridge Foreman in 1989 and has since remained in that position. In his 50 years of service to SCDOT, Garner was named District 5 Employee of the Year in 2000, graduated from the STEP 21 Leadership program in 2001 and is still an integral part of the SCDOT District 5 Family. [Read the resolution honoring ED.](#)

Jan Hudson joined SCDOT in July 1974 as an administrative specialist in the Spartanburg Construction A office, working there through the early years of her employment. In the late 1990s, Hudson moved to Spartanburg Construction B as an



Engineering Technician where she assisted as an office administrator and assisted the construction office in closing out projects. Hudson assumed the position of office administrator under David Hebert and remains in that position today. Hudson continues to serve SCDOT faithfully every day, and is still an integral part of the SCDOT Spartanburg Family. [Read the resolution honoring Jan.](#)



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## SCDOT Leadership Announcements

**Robbie Isgett** was selected as the Chief Engineer for Alternative Delivery and Construction effective July 17, 2024. Robbie has over 24 years of service with the South Carolina Department of Transportation. He most recently served as the Director of Construction. Robbie began his career at SCDOT in 1999 as an Assistant Resident Construction Engineer in the Lexington Construction “A” Office. He held the positions of Resident Construction Engineer, Assistant District Construction Engineer, and District Construction Engineer in District One prior to becoming the Director of Construction in 2019. Robbie also serves as a Lieutenant Commander in the U.S. Naval Reserve. He received his Bachelor’s Degree in Civil Engineering from North Carolina State University in 1996 and is a Registered Professional Engineer in South Carolina. Originally from Darlington, South Carolina, Robbie is married with two children and resides in Lexington.

**Rontreal J. Tyler** was promoted to Director of Human Resources for SCDOT effective June 17, 2024. Rontreal holds a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration from The Citadel and a Master's Degree in Practical Ministries from Erskine Theological Seminary. He has achieved the human resources designations of the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) Certified Professional and Professional in Human Resources. He is also a graduate of both CPM and LEAD programs. Rontreal has over 17 years of human resources experience, seven of which have been with SCDOT as the Director of Human Resources Operations. He began his human resources career in the private sector and transitioned into SC

State Government in 2011, where he has worked at the SC Department of Administration's Division of State Human Resources and the University of South Carolina prior to joining SCDOT. Rontreal lives in Blythewood with his wife and their three children.

**Jim Remsey** was selected to fill the role of Chief Information Officer (CIO) for SCDOT effective June 17, 2024. Jim earned a Bachelor of Science in Management from Southern Illinois University and a Master of Science in Contract Management from the Florida Institute of Technology. He is a proud veteran of the United States Air Force and a former college athlete in both football and wrestling. He currently serves as a member of the AASHTOWare Technical & Applications Architecture Task Force which is responsible for maintaining AASHTOWare standards and guidelines. Jim has over 18 years of employment with SC State Government in various roles in Information Technology (IT). As SCDOT's Chief Information Officer, he will bring a wealth of experience in IT leadership, including tenure at other state agencies such as the University of South Carolina, South Carolina Governor's Office, and the Department of Administration. He joined SCDOT in 2021 as Director of the Project Management Office. Jim has served a pivotal role in providing governance and direction to SCDOT's disparate information systems and is currently managing the agency's transition of the federal billing process from a legacy mainframe system to the South Carolina Enterprise Information System (SCEIS). Outside of his career, Jim enjoys spending time outdoors with his wife and two daughters.





**Robbie Isgett**  
Chief Engineer for  
Alternative Delivery  
and Construction



**Rontreal Tyler**  
Director of  
Human Resources



**Jim Remsey**  
Director of  
IT Services

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## **New Views of Project Progress**

SCDOT has installed new traffic signal foundations, graded curbs, and added new curbs, sidewalks, and pedestrian ramps as part of the Woodruff Road Safety Improvement Project in Greenville County. A new right-turn lane on Verdae Boulevard also recently opened to traffic, and work has begun on similar improvements on the north side of Woodruff Road.



In Richland County, SCDOT recently completed resurfacing on Broad River Road as part of the agency's Pavement Improvement Program.





A new bridge is open to traffic on US 301 southbound over the South Edisto River in Orangeburg County.





**Employee Updates**

**August 2024**

[New Employees](#)

[Retirements](#)

[Promotions](#)

[In Memoriam](#)

**We're Looking for More Folks Like You**

Know someone who would make a good team member at SCDOT?

Share this link to Search All SCDOT Jobs:

<https://www.governmentjobs.com/careers/sc/scdot>





Our historical photo looks back at SC 107 in Oconee County in 1950.

**2024 Bridge Improvement - Primary Bridges**

- Pre-approved Bridges
- New Bridges

**2024 Bridge Improvement - Secondary Bridges**

- Pre-approved Bridges
- New Bridges
- Closed Bridges

**DEPARTMENT NEWS** **SCDOT**

**Pictured:** The SCDOT Commission approved updates to the bridge program, including directing \$100 million to bridges on primary and interstate routes and \$100 million to bridges on secondary roads. [Read the press release.](#)

[SCDOT and City of Charleston announce Safety Enhancement Project along Morrison Drive](#)

[SCDOT Requests Comments on Proposed Projects](#)

[SCDOT to Reschedule Public Involvement Meeting in Horry County](#)

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