

Oklahoma Senate Bill 1288

\$100 Million for Critical Bridges

Accountability Report



December 3, 2007



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Early in the 2006 Oklahoma Legislative Session, SB 1288 was signed into law in March 2006 that provided ODOT with \$100 million of much needed funds that were directed to the ambitious goal of replacing critical bridges across the entire state. Specifically, it was anticipated that this \$100 million would allow for the replacement of 35 to 40 bridges and the goal of having the entire \$100 million let to construction contracts by October 2007. The Department felt it necessary to provide this brief accountability of the expenditure of these legislatively directed funds.

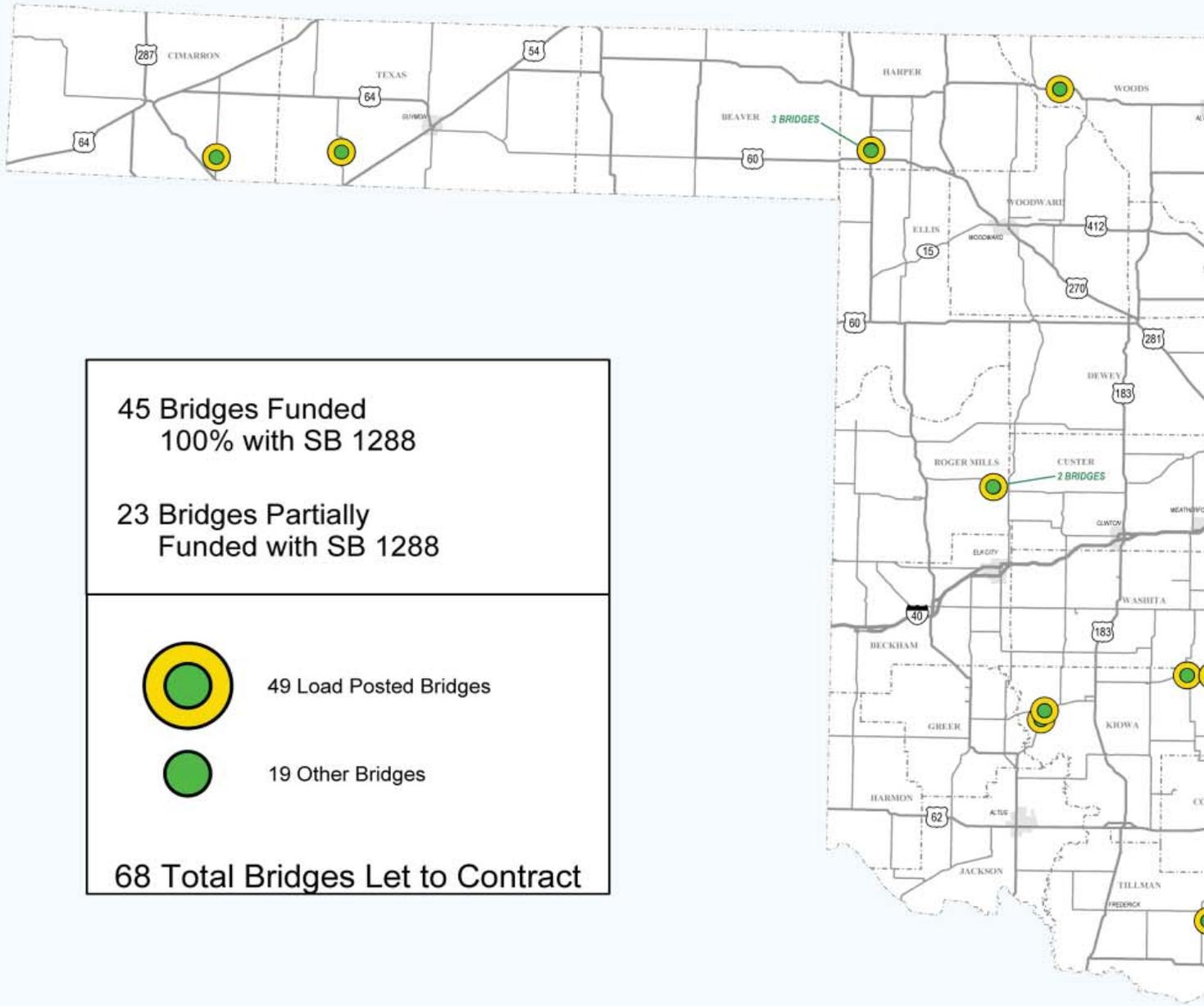
The Department is proud to report that SB 1288 resulted in the replacement of 68 critical bridges of which 49 were part of the 137 load posted bridges identified in January 2006 on the state highway system. Load posted bridges are structurally incapable of carrying legally loaded trucks. In achieving this goal, all of these bridges have been constructed, under construction, or let to construction contract by October 2007. Indicative of the magnitude of our bridge problem, these 68 bridges are geographically representative of the entire state as multiple bridges are located in each of the eight field divisions.

SB1288 offered the opportunity to work and succeed in stretching the dollars available to construct more bridges than initially estimated. In certain instances these funds were leveraged with federal funds to maximize the program. Normally the engineering activities including planning, environmental clearance, survey, design, right of way acquisition and utility relocations for a bridge replacement is a 3 to 4 year process. The Department committed extensive resources and solicited the assistance of consultant engineers to deliver these bridges to construction in an 8 to 12 month period. Highlights of this timeline are as follows:

March 2006	Field trips to collect reconnaissance information on each of the bridges
April 2006	First project awarded to construction included 2 load posted bridges on SH-44 near Lone Wolf in Kiowa County
July 2006	21 consultant engineering firms hired to expeditiously prepare design plans
October 2007	The last of the 68 bridges let to construction contract obligating the entire \$100 million in 18 months.

In May 2002 when the I-40 bridge was knocked down by a barge and traffic was placed on a long detour route, Oklahomans publicly became painfully aware of the deplorable condition of our highway system bridges. The Department desperately tried to maintain these detour bridges while carrying I-40 traffic. Over the past few years, the Department has feverishly tried to carve additional funds from its limited budget to increase the bridge replacement and rehabilitation program. Of the original 137 load posted bridges identified in January 2006 on the state highway system, 58 are still in need of replacement or major rehabilitation. Since January 2006, an additional 13 bridges have become load posted bringing today's total to 71 load posted bridges needing replacement or major rehabilitation. These 71 bridges pale in comparison to the 626 narrow or low sufficiency rated bridges that are in need of immediate repair or replacement that are currently not included in the 8 Year Work Plan and have no funding solution. The recent collapse of the I-35W bridge in Minnesota has brought national awareness to a problem we in Oklahoma were all too familiar with.

The Oklahoma legislature should truly be commended for committing an additional \$100 million in 2006 for bridge replacements on the state highway system through SB 1288. We trust the Department has illustrated that these funds were spent expeditiously and focused on the most critical bridges on our state highway system. The Department stands prepared to deliver additional projects with the same approach should funding be made available.



45 Bridges Funded
100% with SB 1288

23 Bridges Partially
Funded with SB 1288

 49 Load Posted Bridges
 19 Other Bridges

68 Total Bridges Let to Contract



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SB - 1288

(\$100 million)



Before

After



Before

After



