Recovery Act jobs, economic output increasing

As the Labor Day observance begins, the hundreds of state highway construction jobs funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act are cause for celebration, Transportation Secretary Deb Miller said Friday.

The number of Recovery Act jobs in Kansas rose to nearly 600 in July – a 60 percent increase from June. Payroll for those workers, who also qualify for benefits, rose to $732,800 in July, up from $233,000 in June.

“Those numbers are only going to get bigger as more projects get under way,” said Secretary Miller.

“And when these workers spend their paychecks at the grocery store, at the gas station and at many other businesses, the economic impact of Recovery Act projects will become much larger than the initial investment.”

Bill Clarkson Jr., vice president of Clarkson Construction Co., the primary contractor for the U.S. 69 Recovery Act improvement project in Johnson County, said there are now more than 100 people a week working on the $82.3 million project, which is scheduled to be completed in 2011.

“This stimulus project has been a real life saver for our company. It not only has saved countless jobs of our seasonal workforce out in the field—but additionally, has stabilized our workforce inside our home office,” Clarkson said. “This project could not have come at a more opportune time.”
Kansas received $348 million in Recovery Acts funds for highway and bridge projects and another $30 million for transit. The state is also applying for additional Recovery Act funds. The investment in Kansas transportation projects is expected to create or sustain more than 10,000 jobs throughout the economy and generate hundreds of millions of dollars in annual economic output during construction.

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