

M-22 Leelanau County



PROJECT: M-22 Leelanau County —
Thorson Road to M-204

CHALLENGE: A lengthy 12.75-mile job site; navigating the logistical challenges of staging equipment and materials throughout the job site; summertime tourist traffic.

SOLUTION: Staging lane closures; communication with public, area land owners, and municipal representatives for scheduling updates; persistent patience.

OWNER: MDOT

CONTRACT AMOUNT: \$4,846,772.00

DESIGN ENGINEER: Dave Pax, MDOT

ENGINEER CONTACT: (231) 941-1986

LOCATION: Leelanau County, Michigan

DATE STARTED: May 15, 2017

DATE COMPLETED: August 31, 2017

PARTNERS: Action Traffic; RS Contracting; Bella Concrete

M-22 is one of Michigan's most iconic roads. In fact, these days, thanks to the business of the same name, M-22 is more than a road. M-22 has become a symbol of the northern Michigan lifestyle, its road sign emblazoned on countless shirts, bumper stickers, and keychains throughout the state. The road itself reveals much of northern Michigan, stretching for over 116 miles along the Lake Michigan shoreline of the Leelanau Peninsula. Travelers eager to visit top attractions like Empire and Sleeping Bear Dunes, once named by Good Morning America as the "Most Beautiful Place in America", can take M-22 to reach their destinations.

While M-22 cuts across beautiful country, the road itself wasn't so beautiful as of early 2017. M-22 was ready for resurfacing, falling apart under the weight of constant tourist traffic and rough northern Michigan winters. The narrow shoulder sections,

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especially, were rapidly deteriorating, making M-22 a less than ideal spot for bikers, joggers, and other pedestrians.

Team Elmer's was entrusted with the job of restoring the most damaged part of M-22, an almost 13-mile stretch from Thorson Road to M-204. There was enough space to provide an ample shoulder addition without clearing away any trees or otherwise damaging the natural beauty of the M-22 corridor.

All told, Team Elmer's put down 7,000 tons of road gravel and more than 65,000 tons of asphalt. Add 7,500 lineal feet of guardrail, 135,000 feet of shoulder trenching, and 68,000 square yards of millings, and Team Elmer's utilized a lot of resources to get the job done.

The location added logistical hurdles to the mix. The northwest side of the Leelanau Peninsula is neither easily accessible nor in close proximity to the Team Elmer's headquarters. The busily traveled two lane winding highway has many blind curves and long distances between side roads. Add the timing of the project — right in the middle of the summer tourist season — and there were certainly days where Team Elmer's crews were feeling the challenge. In particular, anticipated heavy traffic during the Fourth of July holiday and Traverse City's Cherry Festival celebration made it smart planning to pause the construction efforts during these two time periods.

Team Elmer's was able to finish work on schedule. And while some local residents and businesspeople dreaded the project and its unavoidable lane closures and road delays, Team Elmer's kept things moving with friendly traffic direction and a smart construction plan. Through continued dialogue with several property owners, Team Elmer's was able to stage their equipment at multiple points throughout the 12.75-mile job site. The staggered staging areas made it easier to keep work moving forward at a steady clip.

Now that the work is done, everyone can enjoy the benefits of a revitalized M-22. Five feet of shoulder was added for bikers and other pedestrians. The resurfaced roadway, meanwhile, makes for a smoother and safer ride for vehicles. Locals and tourists alike will enjoy the improved drivability and walkability for years to come.

M22 Leelanau County By The Numbers

- Class II Shoulder: 7,034 Tons
- Trenching: 13 Miles
- Cold Milling: 68,270 Square Yards
- HMA Corrugations Milled: 67,259 Feet
- HMA Approach: 532 Tons
- HMA, LVSP: 67,526 Tons
- HMA Curb, Sloped: 1,800 Feet
- HMA Quality Incentive: Yes
- Restoration: 5,333 Square Yards

