

## News Release

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**Contact:** Sue Roe

**Office:** 651-366-4268

**Cell:** 651-503-2467

Susan.Roe@state.mn.us

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### MnDOT seeks Adopt a Highway volunteers; realizes \$6 million benefit in 2017

**ST. PAUL, Minn.** – The Minnesota Department of Transportation is looking for individuals and organizations to join the more than 4,100 groups and 16,000 people in the state who are Adopt a Highway volunteers. There are more than 30 highway segments available in southeast Minnesota.

The program, which realized an estimated \$6 million benefit in 2017, is a public service project that helps reduce litter along the roadsides. It's been part of MnDOT's maintenance operations since 1990.

"Volunteers pick up litter, keep the roadways beautiful and save taxpayers money," said Ann McLellan, statewide Adopt a Highway manager. "When our volunteers are out cleaning the roadway ditches, MnDOT crews use their time to build and maintain our highways. It's a win-win for all and it shows that Minnesotans care about their state."

There are 5,455 segments of roadways defined for the program. Of those segments, 1,719 are available for adoption. In southeast Minnesota, segments are available on Interstate 35 and Interstate 90 in the Albert Lea and Austin areas and highways 56, 65, 69, and 218 near the Iowa border in the Albert Lea and Austin areas. Other areas where segments are available include I-90 west of Stewartville, portions of Hwy 63 north and south of Rochester, Hwy 60 and 42, 43, 44, 80, 76 and 61.

People who are interested in learning more about the program and available highway segments in southeast Minnesota may contact Darnell Anhorn in Owatonna at 507-446-5500, [AAHD6B.dot@state.mn.us](mailto:AAHD6B.dot@state.mn.us) or Julie Dodge in Rochester at 507-286-7508, [AAHD6A.dot@state.mn.us](mailto:AAHD6A.dot@state.mn.us).

The volunteers, representing schools, businesses, faith-based organizations, families and individuals, clean up nearly 10,000 miles of Minnesota roadways each year. Last year volunteer groups, ranging from four to 25 people, spent an estimated 239,000 hours picking up 36,658 bags of litter or more than 112,000 pounds of litter.

Individuals and groups who want to volunteer should go to [www.mndot.gov/adopt/](http://www.mndot.gov/adopt/) to find their local area program coordinator. MnDOT provides safety training, trash bags and safety vests, and picks up the filled bags that volunteers leave at the side of the road. MnDOT also posts signs along the adopted segments of roads with the names of the volunteer groups.

Volunteers are asked to commit to the program for at least two years and pick up litter on both sides of the roadway at least twice a year. The average length of an adopted roadway is two to three miles, although some roads are longer.

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[www.mndot.gov](http://www.mndot.gov)