

PROJECT PROFILE



AIL acts quickly to provide solution for highway washout

When the torrential rains of June 2008 washed out portions of Highway 11/17 at Arnold Creek, west of Thunder Bay, ON, the Ministry of Transportation knew they were up the proverbial creek. Luckily, the AIL team had a quick solution to bail them out.

This stretch of highway is the main route westward and it was important that it be restored quickly. Fortunately, AIL had a longstanding relationship with many of the parties involved in the project and they knew that AIL would come through in the crunch.

"We've had a good working relationship with Cook Engineering for more than eight years and they had experience working with our unique products," explains Scott MacRae, AIL's Central Region Engineer.

The Ministry of Transportation wanted to avoid washouts in the future. The original structure was an open-bottom, concrete box culvert which could not sustain flood-like conditions. As the water flow rose, the structure scoured and collapsed into the stream.

Project at a glance:

Name: Arnold Creek Washout Project

Owner: Ontario Ministry of Transportation, Northwest Region

Consultant: Cook Engineering a division of Genivar, Thunder Bay

Contractor: LH North Contracting

Product: Super-Cor



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To avoid a similar outcome, MTO determined that the project should be completed using a Super-Cor Box Culvert with sheeting headwalls (span 14 m, rise 3 m, length 35 m). Understanding that time was of the essence, we fast-tracked the culvert's production in true design/build fashion, working very closely with the owner, the consultant and the contractor. Design took place in late June and early July and the structural plate was shipped and assembled in late July and early August.

The contractor received the culvert so quickly that they faced a unique challenge. The water levels were still very high and it was impossible to extract the water entirely, so the construction crew was forced to work while up to their knees in water to install the precast footings and attach the structure to the base channels.

Although the working conditions were rugged, the crew worked through the unfavourable conditions with determination. The highway was repaired quickly and by late August traffic flow was back to normal.

AIL proved once again that we'll always go above and beyond for our clients.

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