

MEMORANDUM

To: RRC Members
Debbie Alke, Administrator/Aeronautics Division
Mike Bousliman, Administrator/Information Services Division
Jeffery M. Ebert, P.E./District Administrator-Butte
Larry Flynn, Administrator/Administration Division
Dwane Kailey, Administrator/Highways and Engineering Division
Bob Seliskar/FHWA
Jerry Stephens, P.E./MSU
Jon Swartz, Administrator/Maintenance Division
Mike Tooley/Director
Duane Williams, Administrator/Motor Carrier Services Division
Pat Wise/Deputy Director
Lynn Zanto, Administrator/Rail, Transit, and Planning Division

From: Susan C. Sillick, Manager
Research Programs

Date: January 31, 2013

Subject: 1/30/2013 RRC Meeting Notes

Action items are bolded and underlined.

1. **Budget Report:** Attached

No discussion.

2. **Research Projects – current listing:** Attached

No discussion.

3. **Reports:** Available on the [Research Website](#) and Upon Request

No discussion.

- a. **Assessing the Extent and Determinates of Induced Growth** (10-016) – Task 6 Report
- b. **Evaluation of Wildlife Vehicle Collisions and Habitat Connectivity in the Madison Valley** (11-007) – Task 1 and 2 Reports
- c. **Peer-to-Peer Traffic Safety Campaign Program** (11-009) – Task 2 Report
- d. **Re-evaluation of Montana’s Air Quality Program** (11-006) – Task 3, 4, and 5 Reports
- e. **Relative Operational Performance of Geosynthetics Used as Subgrade Stabilization** (10-008) – December 2012 Progress Report
- f. **US 93 S Wildlife Structure Monitoring** (04-016) – January 2013 Progress Report

4. **Proposals:** Attached

a. **Assessing the Effectiveness of Montana's Occupant Protection Program (12-003) – Attached**

Audrey Allums attended to present this proposal for funding on behalf of the technical panel.

The purpose of this project is to evaluate MDT's occupant protection programs to identify program strengths, problem areas, and provide recommendations for improvement to help MDT reach its occupant protection goals. Montana seatbelt usage has remained at about 80% over the last few years, but recently has been declining. Montana is considered a low usage (<90%) state and, therefore, has less control over how funds are spent. In addition, there is less funding for behavioral safety programs in MAP-21. This makes it especially critical that available funds are spent in the most cost-effective manner.

The research involves a literature review, development of best practices for assessing occupant protection programs, and assessing Montana's occupant protection programs. Products include occupant protection programs assessment guidelines, training packet, and assessment tools. The project cost is \$91,249 and will take 15 months to complete.

Dwane asked if there was merit in knowing what works for other states. Lynn and Audrey responded that this is already done to a certain extent with networking opportunities and the research also includes a literature review which can help to identify best practices outside of Montana. In addition, there will be recommendations in the final report.

Dwane also asked if this research would still be valid if a primary seatbelt law is enacted. Lynn responded that she thought it would still be valid. If a primary seatbelt law is enacted, we should expect a higher usage rate, but the most effective programs will still be the most effective programs.

Jeff made a motion to fund this proposal. Dwane seconded the motion. All present voted in favor of the motion; the motion passed. **Research staff will prepare a contract.**

b. **Transportation System Preservation AASHTO Technical Services Program – Attached**

Mary Gayle Padmos attended to request funding for this AASHTO Technical Services Program. In 2005, MDT joined the Midwestern Pavement Preservation Partnership (MPPPP). In 2008, a western group formed and MDT actively participated in this partnership group, Rocky Mountain West Pavement Preservation Partnership (RMWPPP). In 2009, a Bridge Preservation Program began and MDT participated in the Western Bridge Preservation Program (WBPP). The current Transportation System Preservation Program includes both the RMWPPP and WBPP. Each partnership meets

annually for training and networking, and includes state agency members, industry, and academia. Mary Gayle requested \$20,000/year for 3 years and a total of \$60,000.

Dwane made a motion to fund this program. Mike seconded the motion. All present voted in favor and the motion passed. **Research staff will transfer \$20,000 for FY 2013 participation of this program.**

5. **Implementation/Technology Transfer - None**

6. **Department/Division Hot Topics – RRC Members Roundtable Discussion**

Jerry Stephens discussed the current federal University Transportation Center (UTC) competition. There will be three levels of UTC funding: \$3.5 M for 10 national centers, \$2.75 M for 10 regional centers, and \$1.5 M for 20 Tier 1 centers. The Western Transportation Institute (WTI) at MSU submitted five letters of intent, with proposals being due March 20, 2013. The five proposed UTCs include: (1) National center focusing on safety, with WTI as the lead and the University of Alabama and Montana Tech as partners; (2) Tier 1 center focusing on economic competitiveness (in terms of winter maintenance), with WTI as the lead and the University of Iowa as a partner; (3) Tier 1 center with WTI as the sole institution and a focus on safety culture; (4) Tier 1 focusing on livable communities, with WTI as the lead and North Dakota State University (NDSU) as a partner; and (5) Tier 1 focusing on safety (in terms of run-off-the-road accidents), with WTI as the lead and Iowa State university as a partner. WTI was a national UTC through 2010. In 2010, there was a new competition for a total of 22 UTC consortia; however, WTI was not selected. Jerry indicated NDSU has been the regional UTC for Montana's region for a number of years. He also stated that competition will be fierce as about 120 Tier 1 proposals are expected with only 20 receiving funding awards.

In addition, Jerry stated Pat McGowen is leaving MSU and there will be a national search for another civil engineering professor. They are seeking a candidate with an economics and statistics background, preferably in a rural environment. Finally, Jerry announced MT-Tech hired a new transportation professor.

cc: Craig Abernathy/Research Section w/attachments
Steve Albert/WTI
Audrey Allums/Grants Bureau
Kent M. Barnes, P.E./Bridge Bureau
Katy Callon/Research Section w/attachments
Kevin Christensen/Highways and Engineering Division
Kris Christensen/Research Section w/attachments
Chris Dorrington/Data and Statistics Bureau
Lisa Durbin/Construction Administration-Bureau
Mike Dyrdaahl/Highways and Engineering Division
Paul R. Ferry, P.E./Highways Bureau
Paul Jagoda, P.E./Construction Engineering Bureau
Tom Martin, P.E./Environmental Services Bureau
Doug McBroom/Multimodal Programs Bureau
Shane Mintz/District Administrator-Glendive
Ed Toavs/District Administrator-Missoula
Roy Peterson, P.E./Traffic & Safety Bureau
Suzy Price/Contract Plans Bureau
Jim Skinner/Planning and Policy Analysis Bureau
Rob Stapley/Right of Way Bureau
Stefan Streeter, P.E. /District Administrator-Billings
Matt Strizich, P.E./Materials Bureau
James A. Walther, P.E./Highways and Engineering Division
Doug Wilmot/Acting District Administrator-Great Falls
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