

## Meeting Minutes - Technical Panel #1

Date: 4/13/2016

Time: 9:00 AM

Facilitator: Kris Christensen, Kathy Harris

Attendees:

Minutes: MDT Wildlife Accommodations #HWY-311733-SH

Name	Company/Organization	Phone Number	E-Mail
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CC (via email): Kris Christensen

### Discussion (note: *Action items are shown in italics*).

The project kick-off meeting was held at the MDT Headquarters to discuss the MDT Wildlife Accommodations with the Technical Panel.

1. Project Administration:
  - a. Kris will be MDT's project manager while Bill is the Technical Panel Chair.
  - b. The contract stipulates that 15% of total cost will be retained until all deliverables are accepted as final.



- c. Changes in consultant's key personnel will need to be coordinated with Kris.
  - d. Any publications need to be coordinated through MDT a minimum of two weeks prior.
  - e. Any surveys, interview template, etc. will be reviewed by the Technical Panel prior to KLJ's use. Kris will handle the internal distribution and review of materials.
  - f. Reports generated as a result of this study will follow MDT format for research writing.
  - g. Deliverables will be posted on the MDT research website.
  - h. Project drafts will be transmitted in electronic format, preferably Word, to allow MDT staff to use electronic tracking of changes.
  - i. MDT requires a separate document responding to each comment (line item response) with revised documents.
  - j. For final deliverables, one electronic copy will be submitted.
2. MDT correspondence.
    - a. Project correspondence and file transfer will be coordinated through Kris and Kathy.
    - b. MDT/FHWA will utilize a shared drive within their network.
3. MDT Project Introduction. An initial project introduction will be sent via email to MDT (affected) staff.
    - a. *KLJ will draft email text for MDT distribution from a member of the Technical Panel (Bill or Tom). This email will introduce the project and request MDT staff support of KLJ's inquiries, etc.*
    - b. A separate email will be considered for resource agencies, in future.
    - c. A survey monkey format was discussed and will be considered for future use.
4. Resource Agency Outreach.
    - a. After discussion of roles and integration of various agencies, KLJ was directed to have stakeholder-level discussions with wildlife agencies, FWP and USFWS, to help integrate with MDT's internal process as a data collection source and end user.
    - b. Second tier, land management agencies, such as USFS, BLM, NPS, State Parks, DNRC, Western Federal Lands, Tribal (wildlife biologists) may be involved later in process development.
    - c. Other entities were discussed but identified as data sources, not stakeholders in the MDT process (National Heritage database, NGO or universities).
    - d. Resource agency meetings should be held in the June/July timeframe and targeted to avoid hunting season, if possible.
    - e. Bill, as the Technical Panel Chair, needs to participate in all agency coordination. Jen Nelson is an optional MDT attendee. *Technical Panel will consider which other MDT staff should be involved.*



5. MDT EPS Processes/Flow Chart. This is anticipated to be initial activity.
  - a. *Kris will assemble a list of MDT flow charts and activity descriptions and linkages (including reconstruction, bridge replacement, bridge rehab, major reconstruction, bridge w/ culvert replacement, consultant, etc.).*
  - b. *After reviewing this list of flow chart activities, KLJ will meet with John Pirre, MDT Engineering Information Services to delve into the processes. Bill should be included in process meetings, when feasible.*
  - c. *After discussion, KLJ will not delve into Maintenance as part of process development but will focus on data source (carcass data, etc.). Maintenance involvement may be adjusted in future.*
  
6. The following summarizes input from individual Technical Panel members and represents direction for KLJ regarding Goals for this Wildlife Accommodations Process:
  - a. *Project outcome is to be an internal, MDT process; not a science-based assessment or design guidance for accommodations.*
  - b. *Process needs to assist in predictable project delivery (of MDT's mission for safe public transportation fitting within the natural environment) and provide a timely, consistent decision structure.*
  - c. *Process needs to be manageable, flexible, predictable, trackable, and define-able.*
  - d. *Process needs to clearly justify the need for these treatments based upon various inputs which could include safety, wildlife or habitat connectivity.*
  - e. *Process needs to establish consistent criteria for consideration which reflect need and feasibility of wildlife accommodations.*
  - f. *Process needs to define decision points-that are not changed (in future stages) without due consideration.*
  - g. *New activities or milestone documents may need to be developed (which then would connect with other milestones and processes). An official recommendation and separate (specific) document may be needed to document and justify decision to include/exclude wildlife accommodations. (Could be separated into two stages; e.g., preliminary recommendations early on for initial design team consideration (more need driven), followed by final recommendations as the project development matures (more feasibility and design feature driven).*

*Other considerations:*

- h. *Outcomes of this process should result in educating MDT staff for more efficient project delivery. (e.g., Construction not understanding need for accommodations due to not understanding needs or wildlife accommodation decisions are solely embedded into design development.*



- i. This process may address a concern that many decisions are made based upon data-driven decisions (b/c ratios, etc.). Wildlife accommodations may not have the traffic-related data to be included in a (typical) project.
  - j. Process should assist with minimizing re-work by defining the wildlife accommodations decision at a specific stage.
  - k. Technical Panel discussion indicated the timing (or stage) when wildlife accommodation decision should be made varies from AGR to SOW or possibly earlier.
  - l. Consider that many larger projects that are ripe for wildlife accommodation considerations are consultant projects. This process should be integrated into consultant processes which may a major effort. Discussion will be needed on how this is scoped/handled.
  - m. Flexibility is needed, including incorporation of professional opinion and the ability to grab opportunities when they arise. We are seeking a predicable analysis process (not absolute yes/no decision) which will provide informed decisions regarding need and feasibility of wildlife accommodations on a project-by-project application.
  - n. Note that safety is typically addressable through economic standards and existing formulaic approaches. "Soft" values associate with wildlife connection and landscape permeability (with the exception of both consumptive and non-consumptive recreational value for wildlife, which is addressed by other entities in the state) are less able to be quantified and analyzed through traditional b/c approaches. This process should recognize that cost and b/c ratios are typical considerations but not the sole driver for inclusion or exclusion of wildlife accommodations.
  - o.
7. *Please respond to Kris Christensen with any corrections within one week of issuance date.*

- END -

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