



Historic Montana road maps—see page 7

NEWSLINE

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New Rest Area Earns Praise

“I have used this rest area before and this is a huge improvement!”

“Like a 1920 military bathroom” was how one traveler described Montana’s Sweet Grass Rest Area in 1998. Another traveler said the rest area had “the worst toilet facilities I’ve ever seen.” One traveler even said, “I haven’t seen such a bad rest area in years, except for the last one I stopped at in Montana.”

These opinions were typical of the negative comments MDT received about many of its rest areas during a statewide survey of rest area users before the 1999 update of the Montana Rest Area Plan. Based in part on comments and suggestions from the public, the updated plan committed MDT to making significant improvements in the way it plans, builds, and maintains these important facilities. Responses to a recently completed follow-up user survey at the new Sweet Grass Rest Area indicate these efforts are paying off.

During the recent survey, which took place in late December and early January, over 200 rest area users rated 30 rest area elements including design, construction materials, parking, security, and cleanliness. The responses were overwhelmingly positive. For example, more than 85% of the respondents thought the rest area design was excellent, more than 90% gave excellent marks to the safety and security of the facility, and 98% of the respondents thought the overall cleanliness of the rest area was excellent. Most impressively, more than 90% of the users responded with an excellent rating when asked how the Sweet Grass Rest Area compared to rest areas they have visited in other states.

In addition to the numeric ratings, respondents also provided general comments about the new rest area that contrast dramatically with the 1998 comments. Following are a few examples of the comments:

“Love the design and parking.”

“Always clean, great rest stop.”

“Nice design—very different.”

“Wow! Thanks!”

“This is the best—need more!”

“I know it’s new but it’s still the nicest rest area I have ever used.”

“Excellent cleaning job!”

“Need more rest areas like THIS ONE!”

In addition to earning high praise from rest area users, the Sweet Grass Rest Area also received recognition from the Montana Contractors’ Association, which awarded the facility its 2002 Award for Excellence in Concrete Design. The energy-efficient facility incorporates innovative and attractive design features and construction materials providing a well-lighted and safe facility that complements the surrounding area. The award-winning facility was designed by DTArchitecture of Helena and built by Swank Construction of Valier.

The positive survey results at the new Sweet Grass Rest Area are very similar to the survey results gathered at the Bozeman Rest Area shortly after it opened in 2000. Travelers have also responded positively to new rest areas at Lost Trail Pass and Lolo Pass. With a new rest area under construction at Dena Mora on Lookout Pass and other rest areas planned for many other locations throughout the state, Montana residents and visitors will see even more improvements to Montana’s rest areas over the next few years.

Sweet Grass Rest Area before



and after . . .



The Sweet Grass Rest Area is located on Interstate 15 at Milepost 397.8 .

For more information about the survey and MDT’s rest area program, contact Jan Vogel at 444-4262 or jvogel@state.mt.us.

GSA Proposes Upgrades for Montana Border Stations



Port of Wild Horse facility

The September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks and the possibility of future attacks have prompted Congress to enact several pieces of legislation including the U.S. Border Security Enhancement Pro-

gram. This program gives the General Services Administration (GSA) and U.S. Customs a means to improve security, living conditions, and efficiency at existing border facilities.

Through the program, GSA recently developed and submitted feasibility studies to MDT to enhance and reconstruct six of Montana's Canadian border crossing stations. So far, MDT has received studies for the Ports of Wild Horse, Scobey, Del Bonita, Whitlash, Whitetail, and Morgan. Submitting these studies is only the first step in the U.S Border Security Enhancement Program's effort to upgrade 51 existing U.S. ports of entry.

The enhancements proposed for Montana's border include increased security and control of the crossing locations and much-needed updates to the living quarters at the aging border stations. The proposal calls for all border crossings, which currently inspect inbound persons and vehicles, to inspect both inbound and outbound persons and vehicles. To achieve this increased level of inspection, the new port facilities will be constructed around a standardized design which will divert traffic off the roadway into and through the port facility.

Once feasibility studies are final, and assuming purpose and need requirements are met, construction will depend on funding from Congress. The projected cost for the port facilities ranges from \$4.5 million at Whitlash to \$5.7 million at Morgan. The cost for each of the six crossings is shown in the following table. Depending on funding availability, GSA estimates that the projects could be completed and ready for occupancy within 26 months of the submittal of feasibility studies. The plan includes phased demolition and construction of the port facilities, so the ports can continue to function and the highways continue to operate safely and efficiently.

MDT's Program and Policy Analysis Bureau is the point of contact for coordinating MDT's review of the port facility projects through the System Impact Action Process. If you have any questions about these port locations or the proposed new border crossing stations, please contact Jim Skinner at 444-9233.

Proposed Cost by Port*	
Port Of Wild Horse	\$5,600,000
Port of Scobey	\$4,700,000
Port of Del Bonita	\$5,500,000
Port of Whitlash	\$4,500,000
Port of Whitetail	\$5,600,000
Port of Morgan	\$5,700,000
* Estimates from the recommended site plan option in the feasibility studies	

TranPlan 21 Update Nears Completion

The first update of TranPlan 21, Montana's statewide multimodal transportation plan, is scheduled to wrap up in late March after a year and a half of extensive technical analysis and public involvement. In response to a request from Montana's legislature, the update focused on examining ways MDT can better support efforts to improve Montana's economy. Because of the emphasis on economic issues, the update process included the involvement of a consultant team with expertise in transportation-related economic issues as well as a wide cross-section of Montana business and government officials with expertise in transportation and economic issues.

The public involvement process for the TranPlan 21 Update included three rounds of input beginning in late 2001 and ending in January of 2003. Thousands of Montana residents and transportation stakeholders were invited to participate through regional public and stakeholder open houses, METNET presentations, newspaper advertisements, MDT's website, and via a toll-free information and comment line. The input from these outreach efforts helped MDT identify the most important issues to focus on and gave the update team essential feedback on proposed policy goals and actions.

Watch for news about the 2002 TranPlan 21 Update in the next issue of *Newsline* and on MDT's website at www.mdt.state.us. You can also contact Kristine Christensen at 444-9240 or krchristensen@state.mt.us to request a copy of the final publication.

Governor Appoints Transportation Commission Members

Governor Judy Martz has appointed Kevin Howlett of Arlee and Nancy Espy of Broadus to the Montana Transportation Commission.

Kevin Howlett replaces Dan Larson as the transportation commissioner representing western Montana. He is a native Montanan and a graduate of Harvard University. This is his first appointment to the commission.

Nancy Espy is starting her second term as transportation commissioner representing eastern Montana. She is currently vice chairman. In reappointing her, Governor Martz said, "Nancy is one of the most civic-minded women I know. She has given of herself in service in so many ways over the years. One of her passions is transportation, which is probably related to her passion for agriculture and people. Nancy makes thoughtful decisions based on a lifetime of experience and it

pleases me greatly that she will continue the work of the transportation commission."

The Transportation Commission is a quasi-judicial board consisting of five members, each of whom is appointed by the Governor for a four-year term. The commission selects and prioritizes construction and maintenance projects, awards contracts, allocates Federal-aid highway funds, designates highways by system, designates special speed zones and maximum speeds, designates access control for highways and facilities, resolves outdoor advertising appeals, and approves abandonment of highway right-of-way.

Other members of the transportation commission are Dan Rice of Great Falls, Meredith Reiter of Billings, and Shiell Anderson of Livingston, who serves as commission chairman.

New District Administrator for Butte



Jeff Ebert, formerly supervisor of MDT's Project Analysis Section, is the newly appointed administrator for MDT's Butte District. He replaces Jason Giard who accepted a position in Great Falls as the district engineering services engineer.

District administrators are responsible for all elements of highway construction and maintenance in their area. The Butte District is

one of five MDT administrative districts. It includes most of southwestern Montana, from Anaconda in the west to

Livingston in the east. Its northernmost point is the Cascade-Meagher County line, and it extends all the way to the Idaho state line in the south.

Jeff is a civil engineering graduate of Montana State University and a professional engineer. Following graduation, he worked for Morning Star Enterprises as an estimator and project manager. He joined what was then the Montana Department of Highways as a civil engineer specialist in December 1988. In 1992 he was promoted to supervisor of the Project Analysis Section.

If you would like to get in touch with Jeff, his phone number in Butte is 494-9625, or e-mail him at jebert@state.mt.us.

Larson Replaces Ebert in Project Analysis



Gary Larson has replaced Jeff Ebert as Project Analysis supervisor for the Rail, Transit and Planning Division. In his new position, Gary will manage the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program, the Secondary Roads Program, the Performance Programming Process, the Forest Highway Program, the Public Lands Discretionary Program, and the Emergency Relief Program.

Gary's career with MDT spans 22 years. He started work for MDT after graduating from Montana State University where he earned a BS degree in construction engineering technology. Starting as a Civil Engineer III on a field construction crew, where he worked on urban and rural highway projects, Gary later moved to the Safety Program and from there to Rail, Transit and Planning, where he has been Secondary Roads Engineer for the past eight years.

To contact Gary, phone 444-6110, or send an e-mail to glarson@state.mt.us.



State Trails Conference to be Held in Butte

Montana's State Trails Conference will be held in Butte April 3-5 at the Ramada Inn Copper King Hotel. Trail experts from

Montana and other states will provide educational sessions. Field trips to Butte area trails and demonstrations of on-the-ground trail maintenance and rehabilitation techniques will round out the conference.

"The conference will provide an opportunity for hikers, bicyclers, horseback riders, skiers, OHV [off-highway vehicle] users, and snowmobilers to share information and discuss issues," according to Bob Walker, Fish Wildlife and Parks state trails coordinator. Walker added that the conference is a must for trail advocates, planners, engineers, landscape architects, consultants, and park and recreation professionals. The conference will touch on all aspects of trails including urban, back-country, non-motorized, and motorized trails.

The keynote address on April 4 by Dana Bell of the *American Trails* Executive Committee will describe a trek from Canada to Mexico by a group of trail enthusiasts, their experiences, and lessons learned on the many public-land trails they crossed. The title of the address is "American Frontiers—A Public Lands Journey."

"Planning the State Trails Conference has been an excellent example of connecting communities with trails," said Dori Skrukud, Butte-Silver Bow assistant director of community development. The conference is sponsored by several local and state organizations, including Fish Wildlife and Parks, Montana Department of Transportation, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Forest Service, the National Park Service, Montana Recreation and Parks Association, and Butte-Silver Bow.

For more information about the State Trails Conference contact
Bob Walker 444-4585..... bwalker@state.mt.us
Dori Skrukud 497-6200 dsrukud@co.silverbow.mt.us
Jocelyn Dodge..... 494-0246..... jdodge@fs.fed.us

Compliance and Good Practices Reviews

MDT's Transit Section recently finished developing a new and innovative process that will help MDT and local transit providers comply with Federal Transit Administration requirements and identify ways to improve transit service. The new Compliance and Good Practices Review Process will replace the Management Review Process MDT has used since 1985.

Peter Schauer & Associates, a nationally recognized transit planning firm, developed the new process for MDT. The firm began work in the summer of 2002 and completed the project last fall after testing the process with several Montana transit providers. In addition to ensuring compliance with FTA requirements, the new process will help transit providers identify weaknesses in their programs that can be addressed in future Transit Development Plans. The Transit Section will begin using the new process this summer.

For more information on MDT's new Compliance and Good Practices Review Process, contact Tom Stuber at 444-9216 or tstuber@state.mt.us.

Marketing Plans for Small Urban Providers

Although most major Montana communities are served by at least one local transit provider, many residents in these communities are not aware of these services. This situation should change in several Montana communities thanks to an MDT-sponsored project to develop marketing plans for local transit providers.

During the project, Peter Schauer & Associates will work with Central Montana Shuttle in Lewistown, The Bus in Butte, and Ravalli County Transit to develop plans that will increase awareness of their services within their communities. This awareness should result in increased ridership and more cost-effective programs.

Contact Tom Stuber at 444-9216 or tstuber@state.mt.us for more information about the development of the new marketing plans.

Helena to Host Montana Transit Association Conference Congressional Delegation Invited

The Montana Transit Association (MTA) will hold its Spring Conference at Helena's Holiday Inn–Downtown April 16-18. This year's conference will include the Transportation Education and Advocacy (TEA) Symposium. The conference and symposium are open to all MTA members, elected officials, and anyone interested in community and rural transit in Montana.

Special invitations for the event were sent to Max Baucus, Conrad Burns, and Dennis Rehberg. MTA is asking Senator Baucus to update attendees on the MEGA RED legislation he introduced last fall, which calls for a significant increase in transit funding for rural states. Senator Burns will address Congressional Earmarks, and Representative Rehberg will update attendees on happenings in the House.

This year's MTA Conference theme "Piecing Together Reauthorization" reflects both the mission of MTA and what individual providers around the state say they're working to attain. A panel of speakers will share their personal experiences and inspire participants to think of new possibilities.

Workshops and Training:

- *Passenger Assistance Service and Safety (PASS)* training will be held on Tuesday and Wednesday, April 15-16. This will allow those who would like to attend both the PASS training and the full conference to do so.
- *Braun Wheelchair Lift Troubleshooting Workshop*: Eric Pearson has agreed to conduct his popular troubleshooting workshop following the PASS training on Thursday afternoon. This workshop will help drivers assess and repair some mechanical problems while out in the field.

Presenters: This year's conference has one of the widest variety of speakers ever offered.

- Keith Lowry, of Keith Lowry Seminars, will give a presentation on *Exceptional Customer Service*.
- Vranna Hinck will conduct an interactive workshop on *Team Building—the Foundation of Coordination*.
- Scott Bogren, Community Transportation Association of American (CTAA), will conduct two workshops, *Senior and Medical Transportation and Advocacy*.

Panels:

- Dale Marisco, CTAA, and Rob Healy, American Public Transportation Association (APTA), will discuss each association's proposals and efforts on TEA-21 Reauthorization.



Kallispell transit bus

- Paul Dore, congressional representative; Randall Popelka, lobbyist; Jarrod Thompson, congressional aide; and Lee Wadleton, FTA, will give an informative and interactive presentation on *Congressional Earmarks*.
- Mary Troupa, APTA, will talk about the PT² program and how it benefits MTA members.

Special Events: The Awards Banquet will feature presentation of the Orval Meyer Award for Transit Excellence and the Friend of Transit and Outstanding Safety Record Awards. The banquet will again include a silent auction with proceeds going to the Orval Meyer Scholarship fund. A no-host event is also planned for MTA members to meet and mingle with representatives from FTA, MDT, CTAA, APTA, Montana's congressional delegation, state legislators, and community leaders.



Specialized transportation for the elderly and disabled

CTEP* Project Spotlight



An Update for Kay Beller Park

by Richard Knatterud, CTEP Bureau

Kay Beller Park in Whitefish has a fresh, new look thanks in part to CTEP funding. Upgrades include a new lawn, trees, an asphalt pedestrian trail, a concrete sidewalk, and a boardwalk with an elevated viewing deck. Improvements also include decorative pole-mounted light fixtures, parking lot improvements, and an underground sprinkler system. Funds from the Montana Department of Fish Wildlife and Parks as well as local funds were used to pay for the majority of the project.

The one-acre park overlooks the Whitefish River and is just south of Second Street (U.S. Highway 93). In addition to providing the community with new trails, green space, and river access, the park will benefit motorists on US 93, offering them a place to take a break and relax. Nearby office workers and Golden Agers from the neighboring senior citizens center are sure to enjoy the park improvements too.

The project is part of the 1999 Whitefish Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan. The plan established a strategy and broad priorities for extending a network of bicycle and pedestrian trails throughout the community.

The project's namesake, Kay Beller, was the city clerk in Whitefish for 23 years until her retirement in 2000. She was so well liked and did such a super job that the city dedicated the park in her honor.

Sandon Construction completed construction in 2002. The engineer was Jeff Key from Robert Peccia & Associates with assistance from landscape architect Bruce Boody. Special thanks to Dan Keyes, Parks and Recreation director, and Karin Hilding, assistant city engineer, for their efforts to make this project a reality.

CTEP to Hold Training Sessions

The CTEP Bureau will hold training sessions throughout the state and distribute the new and improved CTEP Guidelines starting March 18. The team will be visiting six Montana cities according to the following schedule:

Great Falls.....	March 18
Kalispell.....	March 25
Missoula.....	March 26
Butte	April 3
Sidney	April 9
Billings	April 10

The sessions begin at 9 a.m. and will continue into the afternoon if necessary.

CTEP's focus is to improve the transportation experience in and through local communities. In addition to providing training, the bureau facilitates and streamlines the funding, design, bid letting, construction, and completion of local projects.

*CTEP is the Community Transportation Enhancement Program. For more information on the training sessions or the program itself, call Thomas Martin at 444-0809 or e-mail him at tmartin@state.mt.us.

Historic Montana Road Maps on the Web

by Jon Axline, MDT Historian

The State Highway Commission produced its first Montana highway map a year after it was created in 1913. For the next two decades, the Commission infrequently published maps, instead relying on private companies—like Rand McNally—to provide the service for the fledgling state tourist industry. Maps during this period were done mostly for the agency's benefit and were large, unwieldy and not very suitable for motorists on the road. They did not provide information about Montana's cities and towns or on any man-made or scenic attractions.

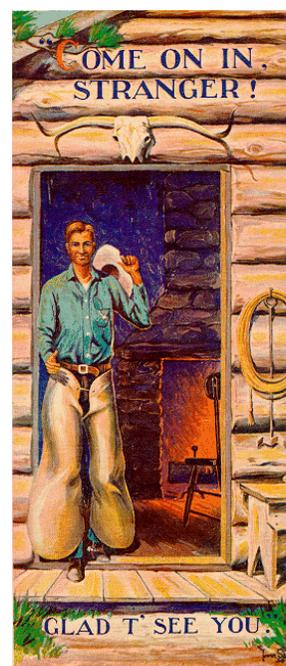
All that changed in October 1934 when the State Highway Commission authorized Plans Engineer Bob Fletcher to publish 100,000 copies of the 1935 highway map. The Commission's first easy-to-use highway map appeared the previous year and coincided with a boom in the state's tourism industry (the author has yet to see a copy of the 1934 map, however). In 1935, Fletcher was able to coerce the Commission into funding the highway historical marker program, the establishment of a system of landscaped roadside parks and rest areas, and the construction of ports-of-entry stations, museums, and information centers. All were geared to the tourist. Artwork on the maps made them attractive to tourists and Montanans by evoking images of Montana's Wild West past, its scenic wonders, and recreational opportunities offered by the Treasure State. The only deviation from this theme occurred during World War II in 1942 when the map cover showed an image of Lady Liberty looking onto a cloud crowded with battleships, artillery pieces, airplanes, and trucks.

Graphic illustrator Irvin "Shorty" Shope provided the artwork for the map covers. The Commission produced its last Shope-illustrated map in 1947, opting for photographs after that. If eBay is any indication, however, the most sought-after maps by collectors are those published from 1935 to 1947 during the golden age of Montana's highway maps.

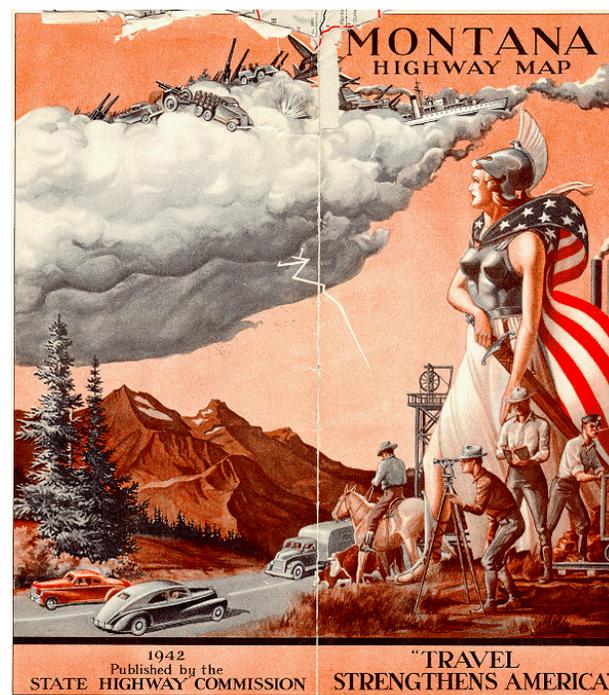
Note: Hidden in the abundance of information on MDT's Internet site are color images of Montana highway maps from 1935 through 1955. We've included a few of the more interesting samples in this issue of Newslite. If you'd like to see them all, go to <http://www.mdt.state.mt.us/history/history.htm> on the Internet.



Front cover of the 1936 highway map



Back cover of the 1937 highway map



Front and back covers of the 1942 highway map

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Rail, Transit & Planning Telephone Numbers

Only the most frequently requested numbers are listed here. For an area or person not listed, call 1(800)714-7296 (in Montana only) or (406)444-3423. The TTY number is (406)444-7696 or 1(800)335-7592.

Administrator (Patricia Saindon)	444-0410
.....psaindon@state.mt.us	
Bike/Pedestrian (Carol Strizich).....	444-9273
.....cstrizich@state.mt.us	
CTEP (Thomas Martin).....	444-0809
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Map Orders	444-6119
Multimodal Planning (Dick Turner).....	444-7289
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Projects (Gary Larson).....	444-6110
.....glarson@state.mt.us	
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MDT's Mission

To serve the public by providing a transportation system and services that emphasize quality, safety, cost effectiveness, economic vitality and sensitivity to the environment.

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