

MWTP SC – WORKING MEETING NOTES

June 23, 2025

I. INTRODUCTIONS

- a. Approve Notes 04/29/25 - **approve**
- b. Assign Notetaker - **KP**
- c. Add new agenda topics - Attendance: (delete missing)
 - i. Steering Committee: **RS, KM, KP, BS (proxy for TM), Dustin Rouse (DR)**
 - ii. Proxy for Simon: **DA**
 - ii. PIT Crew: **ST, DW**

II. NEW BUSINESS

- a. MDT SC member transition – RS – Rob stepping officially away from MWTP – RS will be doing policy so he will stay in loop – more involved in fed and state policy as well as internal policies too. Will aim to develop consistent messaging RE wildlife crossing structures. Dustin will be doing his similar work in project development and delivery, bringing Environmental back under Engineering. DR is joining the steering committee. RS may sit in meetings on occasion.
- b. Recap of MWTP SC meeting in Helena
 - i. Takeaways – **Come back for next meeting with a few key things**
 - ii. Review and approve of Deb and others notes shared with the SC - **approved**
 - iii. Discuss timeline and action items regarding:
 - a. funding plan (US 191 – Mouth of Canyon and other projects in the hopper)
 - **Talked about project planning and need for focusing on future funding for the current projects. Updates -**
 - **Discussion about STIP – comments would carry more weight if from MSWP as a coalition, rather than individual NGOs. Ideally information and “needs” would be frontloaded ahead of project nomination phase, rather than after a project has been identified and included in the STIP.**
 - **Let’s brainstorm how partners and wildlife considerations can be proactive rather than reactive to have it in nomination phase, project planning, or very early in project development.**
 - **For load-posted bridges – WTI/Marcel western MT study will include on-system LP bridges**
 - Any nuggets in funding whitepaper Brooke Shifrin developed back in 2020 (?) - **not discussed**
 - What updates can be made to this document to help in the development of a funding plan as discussed in Helena?

- <https://arc-solutions.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/Wildlife-Infrastructure-Funding-Guide.pdf>
- b. priority area mapping – **discussed below**
- c. MSWP ideas for prioritization approach and methodologies, examples – KP – **discussion of prioritization approaches – plan with implementation frameworks** – MDT noted the value of unified prioritization map and guiding document and clarity of pathways. Kylie will put docs into the Teams workplan folder. Everyone please review it and communicate for each question the best choice(s) and any problem/show-stoppers (green light/red light), with the intent to narrow down the best options. Complete by July 15 for Kylie to consolidate in time for next meeting (shifting to early Aug). Have this document effort be the next meeting focus.
- d. WAFWA synthesis of western states “Partnership” structures and cultures – DW - **not discussed**
- e. Discuss options for application cycles (e.g., 2 x year, open all year long, application open all year but only taking submissions periodically) **Can make application form open all year to facilitate coordination with applicants and program applications. Will require some work (e.g., update guidance docs) and communications to shift application cycles. Currently thinking that applications will be open all year, but SC review and selection of projects will occur once a year in November.**
 - i. Consider internal review periods

III.NB ACTION ITEMS

- **Review workplan meeting notes and bring a few key takeaways that speak to you and can support the workplan and the partnership**
- **Review prioritization question document and select the best choice(s) for each questions and any problem/show-stoppers (green light/red light), with the intent to narrow down the best options.**
 - **Complete by July 15 for Kylie to consolidate in time for next meeting (shifting to early Aug).**

IV.OLD BUSINESS - all other items not discussed, tabled to future working meeting

- a. Brainstorm targeted outreach with potential project supporters/applicants
- b. Coordination on MWTP/MDT long-term strategy for applications to federal grant funding opportunities
 - i. Need MWTP commitment that US 191 Mouth of the Canyon will be the only application to the WCPP for 2026.
 - ii. RAISE grants (now BUILD)?

Partnership asked MDT to commit to support WCPP or BUILD grant for US 191 Mouth of the Canyon as only/priority project.
- c. MSWP develop short summaries of current projects and status for website, for committee review. What is timeframe for webpage development – new button on MWTP page?

V.OB ACTION ITEMS

- a. MSWP to develop list of community contacts – reach out to start conversation in targeted outreach on wildlife & transportation issues, MWTP project program – see 4/29 notes on this topic – DA/KP/SB
- b. MDT further consideration and discussion with MSWP regarding a role for them in the bridge program LPB) and MDT WAP track – RS/TM
 - I. Info sharing from MSWP with MDT Bios for WAP-WARM
- c. Planning Tool updates for August meeting – D&I/DW
- d. Communications Plan and Schedule of Deliverables, 2025 update – ST/DW
- e. Post past meeting minutes/agendas – ST
- f. Website page for current projects and updates – ST
 - i. Active Projects tab
 - 1. Link to MDT projects webpages
 - 2. Link to Project webpages
 - a. <https://www.yellowstonesafepassages.org/engineering-feasibility-study>
 - b. <https://missoulacrossings.org/projects/sixmile/>
- g. Create new (3rd) ‘planning ahead’ announcement to subscribers to be sent 3-4 months early. June/July, December/Nov. Draft language – depends on decisions on application cycles – ST/DW

VI. UPDATES

- a. FWP continuing to seek a replacement for RG – DW, KM
- b. Legislative bill outcomes and next steps – KM, DW
- c. MDT-FWP Summit –
 - i. FWP DO approved final report and initiation of Coordination Team
 - ii. MDT?
 - iii. Will share what's relevant to the Partnership when ready
- d. Current Active Projects
 - i. I-90 Sixmile Creek Underpass
 - ii. US-89 Dome Mountain
 - iii. US-191 Mouth of the Canyon
 - iv. US-191 North of Big Sky

VII. NEXT MEETINGS

- a. Future SC Working Meetings –
 - ii. ~~July 28th 12:30 pm – 2:30 pm~~ - MDT unavailable – moving to second week of August.
 - iii. Polls out for August – December 2025