

MWTP SC – WORKING MEETING NOTES

August 20, 2025

I) INTRODUCTIONS

- A) Approve Notes 06/23/25 – **approved**
- B) Assign Notetaker – **Nick Clarke**
- C) New Agenda Topics – **license plate judges, FHWA WCPP debrief on 191 MofC, state \$ in bills strategy**
- D) Attendance: (delete missing)
 - 1) Steering Committee: **DR, TM, SB, KP, KM, DA**
 - 2) PIT Crew: **DW, NC**

II) NEW BUSINESS

- A) Planning Tool updates from D&I Work Group – **Brian Klapstein (MDT GIS) and DW gave updates on the tool. Brian presented a power point which has been uploaded to Teams: [2025 Planning Tool updates.pptx](#)**
Major updates include:
 - **ALTIS Maturity**
 - **NAC 1 – added FWP carcass salvage data, updated crash, carcass, traffic data**
 - **NAC 2/3 - moved wolverine data from NAC 2 to NAC 3 as now federally listed as threatened; SOC list updated**
 - **NAC 4/5 - no notable changes**
 - **All NAC reweighted, NAC 1, NAC 2 and NAC 3 layers within NACs reweighted**
 - **New reference data was made available in web map (e.g., wildlife accommodation locations, load posted and scour critical bridges, SO3362 priority areas and highways of interest for wildlife movement)**
 - **MDT server was upgraded – better performance and reliability**
 - **Tool migrated to new ArcGIS Experience Builder**
 - **Simon suggested making the updates to PT more prominent on the MWTP webpage**
 - **Tom expressed some concern over the down-weighting of NAC1 – reevaluate as only AVC/safety metric among 4 more conservation-based metrics**

- Tom requested ability to apply separate filters for each NAC – may be possible but may take a little work to make available
- Updates to the Planning Tool Summary Report and Help Guide needed

B) Recap of [MWTP May 8 Work Plan](#) meeting in Helena

- 1) Review [shared notes and summary](#) from Work Plan
- 2) What are few key things to be included in the (now) 2026-2027 Work Plan?

Finalize a 2026-2027 Workplan – Ken started a draft

- Outline a call for projects, project evaluation and selection stepwise process, including timelines
- Prioritization Process – steps, timing, products, use
- Craft funding plans for the projects already in the hopper. First priority is US 191 Mouth of the Canyon.
- Long-term durable funding to sustain the public private partnership projects
- Increase public engagement and awareness of the MWTP, our planning tool, our work – a place for MSWP lead?
 - Media, news stories, telling our story
 - Strategy for targeted outreach to grassroots groups – why it matters, how they can take shape and get involved
 - Consider an annual meeting for partners and interested stakeholders
- Forecast 2027 Legislative Session – give MWTP a leadership voice

C) Prioritization Process – MWTP Planning Tool to form basis of prioritization, would like D&I Group to perform majority of analysis and write-up, SDM Lite meeting scheduled for September 15 to make decisions about prioritization process

D) Project Funding Plans

- 1) Phase IV for US-191 Mouth of the Canyon
 - (i) Federal funding/grants -
 - Deb reported on a FHWA WCPP debrief on this previous application. Project received the highest scores in each of three categories. Was a matter of spreading the awards across states, and more applications received than funding available. Recommended to resubmit when NOFO is announced. 2025-2026 NOFO was due out in May 2025 but didn't happen. It is expected to happen at some point, but not imminent.

- **Be ready to submit – Partnership has asked MDT to make this project the only priority for the WCPP grant in 2026.**
 - **Can MDT commit to support? Tom believes so and will get the conversation started.**
- **FHWA indicated good bipartisan support for continuing/expanding WCPP in congress. Hopeful...**

(ii) Non-federal funding

(iii) Any nuggets from the funding whitepaper Brooke Shifrin developed in 2020?

(a) What updates can be made to this document to help in the development of a funding plan as discussed in Helena?

(b) <https://arc-solutions.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/Wildlife-Infrastructure-Funding-Guide.pdf>

E) Confirm Application Cycle direction

- 1) Application will be open all year, but SC review and selection of projects will occur once a year in November.
 - **Committee agreed that keeping application open and receiving submissions all year long was a good idea.**
 - **Committee and staff will only review project applications one time a year. We are going with April (submissions due by April 30), review and selection to occur in May and June.**
 - **Smaller (e.g., no feasibility study needed) projects can be reviewed at any time they received.**

(i) Consider internal review periods (Phase I & II) – Is Nov/Dec/Jan the right time for the SC to provide a review? Is there a better time? **April/May/June**

III) NEW BUSINESS ACTION ITEMS

- **All SC Review Draft 2026-27 Workplan**
- **Deb to communicate with D&I Group – TM concerns, capacity for work on prioritization process**
- **D&I updates to Planning Tool Summary Report and Help Guide pending**
- **ST Make the updates to PT more prominent on the MWTP webpage**
- **September 15 – SDM Lite meeting – Prioritization Process**
- **SC to weight updated NACs at 9/15 SDM meeting**
- **Tom going to initiate conversations at MDT regarding commitment to support US 191-Mouth of the Canyon project – MT only application for next WCPP round**
- **PIT - Going to do a November call for projects**

- **PIT - Need to communicate change in cycle to public**
- **PIT - Need to update application guidance documents to reflect change(s)**
- **Communication Plan can be updated to reflect changes to cycles and also MWTP outreach and engagement**
- **Want to show progress with HB 932 and HB 855 money ahead of 2027 session**
– find something “shovel-ready” to spend it on
 - **Is Cougar Creek ADS an option for this? MDT to consider.**

IV) OLD BUSINESS

V) OLD BUSINESS ACTION ITEMS

- MSWP to develop list of community contacts for targeted outreach on wildlife & transportation issues, MWTP project program, etc. – see 4/29 notes on this topic – **DA/KP/SB**
- Communications Plan and Schedule of Deliverables, 2025 update – **ST**
- Post past meeting minutes and agendas – **ST**
- Website page for current projects and updates – **ST**
 - Active Projects tab with links and short summaries
- MSWP develop short summaries of current projects and status for website, for SC review/approval. – **SB/KP**

VI) UPDATES

- FWP continuing to seek 2nd SC member – **DW, KM**
- Current Active Projects
 - I-90 Sixmile Creek Underpass – Huson
 - US-89 Dome Mountain
 - US-191 Mouth of the Canyon
 - US-191 North of Big Sky

VII) NEXT MEETINGS

- 9/15/25 – Prioritization Plan Structured Decision Making (SDM) Lite
 - 900a-300p – Time and Location TBD (in person)
- 11/5/25 – SC Working Meeting
 - 100-300p – Virtual
- 12/2/25 – SC Working Meeting
 - 100-300p – Virtual
- January (2nd week) – Application Go/No Go (if needed)

- 1) Deb to send out poll
- E) February – Consensus Scoring (if needed)
 - 1) Deb to send out poll