

Montana LTAP Progress Report

By

Matthew Ulberg, PE

Director

Montana Local Technical Assistance Program

Western Transportation Institute

College of Engineering

Montana State University – Bozeman, MT

Quarterly Progress Report

MDT Project No. 02443

July 1, 2020 through September 30, 2020

Prepared for the

MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

in cooperation with the

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION

October 22, 2020

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Safety 2
Infrastructure Management 4
Workforce Development 6
Organizational Excellence 8
Fourth Quarter Summary..... 11

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Safety Area Budget Summary, 1st Quarter SFY 2020-2021..... 2
Table 2: Infrastructure Management Area Budget Summary, 1st Quarter 2020-2021. 4
Table 3: Workforce Development Budget Summary, 1st Quarter 2020-2021. 6
Table 4: Organizational Excellence Budget Summary: 1st h Quarter SFY 2020-2021..... 8
Table 5: SFY 2020-2021 1st Quarter Workshop Evaluation Summary 9
Table 6: Year to Date Budget Summary, July 1, 2019 – October 30, 2020..... 11
Table 7: Budget Summary by Focus Area, July 1, 2020 – October 30, 2020..... 11

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY/MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

This State Fiscal Year (SFY) 1st Quarter Report is submitted to the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) and the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to provide details on the activities and project work of Montana LTAP in support of MDT Project No. 02443, Montana Local Technical Assistance Program, during the period July 1, 2020 through October 30, 2020.

LTAP program delivery continues to be significantly effected by the COVID-19 global pandemic, with numerous training cancellations, a campus-wide slowdown/shut-down, and minimal relief from the Governor's guidelines for personal safety associated with the COVID-19 global Pandemic. Our out-of-State Travel is administratively suspended. Regional and national conferences and trainings have been cancelled and revised to virtual formats, our in-person trainings and outreach has been severely limited and curtailed. We are focusing more on Center Excellence activities and direct delivery of Technical Assistance when possible.

Highlights of Montana LTAP's accomplishments during that period include the following:

- We continue to work to deliver limited in-person trainings while following social distancing, PPE and group size guidelines.
- LTAP-MACRS District trainings were conducted for July and August with limited attendance, venue size considerations and other COVID-19 related considerations. These were well received, though attendance was light.
- LTAP hosted three monthly safety webinars during the first quarter
- Our instructor-led classes included the following:
 - 5 Flagger Certification classes
 - 3 MACRS District Meetings in-person trainings

Reaching our audience has never been more challenging. This quarter we were able to engage with the City of Ennis for the first time in a long time, and provided training and a great technical assist in downtown Ennis. This success and others have shown that even with the COVID-19 challenges, we were able to have a successful program delivery.

Our reach included:

- 149 County employees
- 30 Tribal employees
- 20 City employees
- 4 Private individuals
- 3 Private Road Maintenance Organizations

This progress report is organized following the four LTAP focus areas:

1. Safety
2. Infrastructure Management
3. Workforce Development
4. Organizational Excellence

SAFETY

COVID-19 restrictions will likely dictate what we can plan and deliver in the area of Safety. Our program delivery has been significantly impacted this quarter, and we expect further impacts moving forward.

Past Activities (this quarter)

Proactive safety training initiatives for local governments are key objectives in this focus area. Technology transfer is accomplished through safety-related articles in LTAP's quarterly newsletter, safety training seminars, staff responses to phone and email inquiries, and on-site technical assistance. In the projected LTAP budget, 48 percent of funding is allocated to the Safety focus area. Table 1 shows the safety focus area budget and costs-to-date.

Table 1: Safety Area Budget Summary, 1st Quarter 2020-2021

Cost Categories	Quarterly Budget	Costs-this-Quarter	Annual Budget	Costs-to-Date
Salaries/Benefits	33,099.24	24,753.74	132,396.96	24,753.74
Prof. Services	943.44	-	3,773.76	-
Travel	600.00	(34.04)	2,400.00	(34.04)
Supplies/Comm.	820.20	67.12	3,280.80	67.12
Minor Equipment	-	-	-	-
Totals	35,462.88	24786.82	141,851.52	24,786.82

Nineteen safety-related activities were conducted during this three-month period. A total of 195 participants attended our workshops and trainings . The workshops included:

- Two Safety Webinars were hosted. The webinar recordings can be accessed via the LTAP website link: <http://www.coe.montana.edu/ltapv2/resources/webinars/index.html>. Webinar Topic covered:
 - Chainsaw Safety
 - Confined Spaces
- 5 in-person Flagger Certification classes were conducted during this quarter. Topics included flagging duties and responsibilities, safety, uniformity and liability issues.
- 3 MACRS District Meetings, covering Gravel Roads and Safety Working in Traffic
- LTAP Conducted 1 Forklift training
- A 2-day OSHA-10 training for ND LTAP was provided as an invited instructor
- LTAP Provided a great technical assist for the City of Ennis in cooperation with WTI research staff.
- We participated in the NLTAPA National virtual conference in July.

Newsletter: A draft newsletter is in progress

Challenges

- Fall is our time to hold the Snow Rodeo/Equipment training in Lewis and Clark County. This was ultimately cancelled due to COVID restrictions. This is a huge negative impact to our program delivery this quarter.
- COVID-19 cancellations and social distancing are dramatically changing how we approach program delivery.
- Scheduling any training dates is a challenge due to the COVID-19 restriction on travel and gatherings. Social distancing is causing us to re-work delivery options. We are working to send out online training options that are available and already developed, as we have not had sufficient time to develop online content as we work to struggle through the effects of this global pandemic.
- We have started to deliver in-person trainings while following social distancing, PPE and group size guidelines.

Planned Activities

- Late fall/winter is a difficult time for travel and training. We continue to work to satisfy on-demand training and technical assist requests.
- Flagger Certification workshops are being requested statewide and refreshers are being offered via GoToMeeting.
- We have increased the circulation of online training options outside of our own center, drawing attention to AASHTO TC3, ITE and NHI courses available to our customers.
- LTAP webinars focused primarily on safety will continue in SFY 2021 on a monthly schedule.

INFRASTRUCTURE MANAGEMENT

COVID-19 restrictions will likely dictate what we can plan and deliver in the area of Infrastructure Management. Our program delivery has been impacted this quarter, and we expect further impacts moving forward.

Past Activities

Montana LTAP is promoting more attention on Infrastructure Management through partnerships with the Asphalt Institute, and through delivering relevant training and technical assistance. In the projected LTAP budget, 18 percent of funding is allocated to the infrastructure management focus area. Table 2 shows the infrastructure management focus area budget and costs-to-date.

Table 2: Infrastructure Management Area Budget Summary, 1st Quarter 2020 - 2021

Cost Categories	Quarterly Budget	Costs-this-Quarter	Annual Budget	Costs-to-Date
Salaries/Benefits	12,412.22	9,282.65	49,648.86	9,282.65
Prof. Services	353.79	-	1415.16	-
Travel	225.00	(12.77)	900.00	(12.77)
Supplies/Comm.	307.58	25.17	1230.30	25.17
Minor Equipment	-	-	-	-
Totals	13,298.58	9,295.06	53,194.32	9,295.06

Matt Ulberg conducted an on-site field review and technical assist for the Timberline Creek Road Maintenance Association. This included a presentation to the neighborhood covering Gravel Road basics, roadway maintenance and operations basics and roadway repair topics, and was a follow-up visit from prior efforts.

Matt also provided technical assistance to the CSKT Tribal Roads Supervisor, and a Private Road maintenance group in Missoula County. We also worked with MDT directly to get the new MDT/FHWA Bridge rating and posting program information out to the local/counties via a recorded webinar.

Outreach continues and technical assistance continues in Infrastructure Management throughout the year.

Newsletter: A draft newsletter is in progress

Planned Activities

- LTAP will continue to work toward offering more in-house Motor Grader Operation trainings. This includes instruction on unpaved roadway management.
- LTAP will also continue to offer more topics in this area. Guardrail, cattleguard, sign inventory and pavement management classes are all in our offerings.
- We are planning 2 webinars for this winter in the area of Infrastructure Management.

Challenges

- COVID-19 cancellations and social distancing are dramatically changing how we approach program delivery.
- There is a demand for training in culvert installation, trenching safety, sign management, and MUTCD related trainings that will continue to be a priority.
- Several counties have requested a low-cost inventory management system to help them document and keep a basic Capitol Improvement Plan in-place. Options are provided for inquiring counties, including North Dakota's GRIT program.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

COVID-19 restrictions will likely dictate what we can plan and deliver in the area of Workforce Development. Our program delivery has been impacted this quarter, and we expect further impacts moving forward.

Past Activities

In the projected LTAP budget, 22 percent of funding is allocated to the workforce development focus area. Table 3 shows the workforce development focus area budget and costs-to-date.

Table 3: Workforce Development Budget Summary, 1st Quarter 2020-2021

Cost Categories	Quarterly Budget	Costs-this-Quarter	Annual Budget	Costs-to-Date
Salaries/Benefits	15,170.49	11,345.46	60,681.94	11,345.46
Prof. Services	432.41	-	1,729.64	-
Travel	275	-15.6	1,100.00	-15.6
Supplies/Comm.	375.93	30.76	1,503.70	30.76
Minor Equipment		-	-	-
Totals	16,253.82	11,360.62	65,015.28	11,360.62

3 workforce development related workshops were conducted through the MACRS District meetings during this quarter. 60 students were reached in the 3 classes. The workshops included Gravel Roads Basics and Working in traffic – Safety in the Work Zone.

Our instructor-led workforce development efforts also included the following:

- 1 work Zone Technician class for the City of Missoula
- 1 forklift Certification class for Ravalli County
- 5 Flagger Certification classes
- 1 2-day OSHA 10 class for the ND LTAP program
- 2 City of Missoula Classes: Snowplow Ops/Don't crowd the plow/Equipment Safety, and Walk-arounds

Challenges

- Fall is our time to hold the Snow Rodeo/Equipment training in Lewis and Clark County. This was ultimately cancelled due to COVID restrictions. This is a huge negative impact to our program delivery this quarter.
- COVID-19 cancellations and social distancing are dramatically changing how we approach program delivery.

- We are currently reaching out to some new instructors for equipment classes that may be available through retirements from Montana Counties. COVID-19 restrictions will likely dictate what we can deliver in all cases.
- Turnover continues to challenge local agencies, and WFD is a big area of need for training. We continue to have more demand than ability to deliver program, and we hope that the FHWA new strategic plan for LTAP helps us focus on this area into the future.
- Leadership training continues to be in high demand due to turnover in many communities. We expect that trend to continue. COVID-19 restrictions will likely dictate what we can successfully plan and deliver.

Newsletter: A draft newsletter is in progress

Planned Activities

- We plan to participate in TRB committee meetings (virtual) this winter.
- LTAP will continue to offer in-house Motor Grader Operation in addition to our regular WFD offerings in 2021. We are working to re-tool the Gravel Roads Maintenance class for 2021.

ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE

Past Activities

To provide the best service possible to constituents, LTAP personnel seek training to improve their outreach capabilities. Organizational excellence addresses professional development and leadership training for LTAP personnel, as well as our partnering efforts with sponsoring agencies, and professional support of our staff through activity in Nationally significant organizations and efforts, and support of our partners. In the projected LTAP budget, 22 percent of funding is allocated to the organizational excellence focus area. Table 4 shows the organizational excellence focus area budget and costs-to-date.

Table 4: Organizational Excellence Budget Summary: 1st Quarter SFY 2020-2021

Cost Categories	Quarterly Budget	Costs-this-Quarter	Annual Budget	Costs-to-Date
Salaries/Benefits	8,274.81	6,188.43	33,099.24	6,188.43
Prof. Services	235.86	-	943.44	-
Travel	150.00	-8.51	600.00	-8.51
Supplies/Comm.	205.05	16.78	820.2	16.78
Minor Equipment	-	-	-	-
Total	8,865.72	6,196.70	35,462.88	6,196.70

- We participated in a unique technical assist in Ennis, MT that combined a flagger training with demonstrated traffic control, flagging and assistance with placing temporary crosswalk markings in downtown Ennis. We worked with WTI, the City of Ennis and MDT to accomplish this technical assist.
- LTAP Director Matt Ulberg has been participating as President-elect of the NLTAPA, with monthly Executive Committee meeting participation, and as the Partnerships Work Group co-chair. While a significant time commitment, this has kept Montana LTAP in the loop on national issues, particularly during the COVID travel restrictions.
- Montana LTAP Director Matt attended the Virtual NLTAPA Executive Board and Meeting in July where he was installed as the National President-elect of NLTAPA.
- Other activities included:
 - MT Work Zone Safety Committee participation
 - MDT Safety Research TP Meeting participation
 - Rural Road Safety Audits - incorporating 3-D Scanning (Call)
 - National Rural Safety Summit (virtual)
 - NLTAPA Virtual Conference participation
 - Call to MDT – using Moodle as LMS discussion with Maureen Culpon
 - NLTAPA North Central Zoom mtg
 - NLTAPA EC meeting (virtual)
 - TRB AKD 30 Committee meeting – Virtual
 - NLTAPA Conference Planning meeting (Matt is co-chair)

- NC Regional Virtual meeting participation
- Participation in NACE National BOD meeting
- NLTAPA EC meetings
- MDT Research Kickoff Meeting - Sinusoidal Rumble Strips
- Montana LTAP Director Matt Ulberg was given permission to share the FHWA Every Day Counts (EDC) video that was created with the FHWA Resource center. The location of this video is: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LeI9_rffS34&feature=youtu.be
The second video is completed as well, but has not been fully released.
- Montana LTAP Director Participated in a virtual North Central Regional NLTAPA meeting.

Evaluations are generally collected at the end of LTAP courses to determine whether participants are using workshop information in their jobs. Evaluations were not collected in our Fourth Quarter trainings due to issues with distributing the surveys and COVID concerns.

Table 5: SFY 2020-2021 1st Quarter Workshop Evaluation Summary

Workshop Evaluations	
Topics	Approval Ratings
NA	NA

Newsletter: A draft newsletter is in progress

Challenges

LTAP is also struggling to provide a reasonable level of service to our Road Scholar program. This database is housed in Microsoft Access, which is not well designed or supported. Due to the departure of Genevieve, the database is no longer usable or helpful, and our program is in jeopardy of being obsolete. We are looking into Learning Management System (LMS) packages for continuation of the program.

Planned Activities

- LTAP webinars focused primarily on safety will continue in on a monthly schedule.
- Director Matt Ulberg continues activities to review TRB papers and participate with the Transportation Research Board (TRB) Standing Committee on Low-Volume Roads — AKD30 (was AFB30). TRB is one of seven program units of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, which provides independent, objective analysis and advice to the nation and conducts other activities to solve complex problems and inform public policy decisions. Through their appointment, members agree to actively participate in and support the committee’s activities, including those that will require

volunteer work. This TRB committee provides strategic planning for research and serves as a clearinghouse for information and resources pertaining to all aspects of low-volume roads including planning, design, construction, safety, maintenance operations, environmental, and social issues.

- Montana LTAP Director Matt Ulberg will attend virtual TRB Committee Meetings this winter.
- Planning for 2021 MACRS conference is under way.

State Fiscal Year 2019-2020 Fourth Quarter (SFY) Financial Summary

Table 6: Year to Date Budget Summary, July 1, 2020 – September 30, 2020

Cost Categories	Quarterly Budget	Costs-this-Quarter	Annual Budget	Costs-to-Date
Salaries/Benefits	68,956.75	51,570.29	275,827.00	51,570.29
Prof. Services	1,965.50	-	7,862.00	-
Travel	1,250.00	-70.92	5,000.00	-70.92
Supplies/Comm.	1,708.75	139.83	6,835.00	139.83
Minor Equipment	-	-	-	-
Total	73,881.00	51,639.20	295,524.00	51,639.20
IDC's	21,119.00	14,691.66	84,476.00	14,691.66
Total	95,000.00	66,330.86	380,000.00	66,330.86

Table 7: Budget Summary by Focus Area, July 1, 2020 – September 30, 2020

Focus Areas	Salary/ Benefits	Prof. Services	Travel	Supplies/ Com	Minor Equip	Subtotal	IDC's	Total
Safety - 48%	24,753.74	-	-34.04	67.12	-	24,786.82	7,052.00	31,838.81
Infrastructure Management - 18%	9,282.65	-	-12.77	25.17	-	9,295.06	2,644.50	11,939.55
Workforce Development 22%	11,345.46	-	-15.6	30.76	-	11,360.62	3,232.17	14,592.79
Organizational Excellence - 12%	6,188.43	-	-8.51	16.78	-	6,196.70	1,763.00	7,959.70
TOTAL COSTS	\$51,570.29	\$0	\$(70.92)	\$139.83	-	\$51,639.20	\$ 14,691.66	\$66,330.86