

MEMORANDUM

To: RRC Members
D. John Blacker, Administrator/Maintenance Division
Monte N. Brown, Administrator/Administration Division
Jim Currie, Deputy Director/Department of Transportation
Dave Galt, Director/ Department of Transportation
Joel M. Marshik, P.E., Administrator/Highway and Engineering Division
Drew F. Livesay, Administrator/Motor Carrier Services Division
Patricia Saindon, Administrator/Transportation Planning Division
Robert Burkhardt/Federal Highway Administration

From: Susan C. Sillick
Chief, Research Bureau

Date: December 18, 2002

SUMMARY OF MINUTES FROM THE DECEMBER RRC MEETING HELD 12/17/02

1. **Budget Report:** Distributed at Meeting

Sue reported that Research may not have enough budget authority for FY 2004 to use the available federal dollars. Project expenditures are based on estimates from Principal Investigators, which are usually over optimistic.

The RRC agreed that research projects should continue to be approved as appropriate and that we should not stop spending as long as federal dollars are available.

Jim Currie wants Sue to give Sally Russell an estimate of projected expenditures, including potential new projects, so this estimate can be included in Engineering's next quarterly report.

2. **Research Project – current listing:** Attached

3. **Reports:** Available Upon Request

3a. *The Effects of Highways on Fragmentation of Small Mammal Populations and Modifications of Crossing Structures (Culverts) to Mitigate Such Impacts* – Progress Report – November 1, 2002

3b. *Field Evaluation of the Performance of Three Concrete Bridge Decks on Montana Route 243(High Performance Concrete – Phase II)* - Quarterly Progress Report – 7/1/2002 – 9/30/2002

3c. *A Study for the Economic Effects of Reconfiguring Montana's Two-Lane Highway* – September 2002 Progress Report

3d. *A Study for the Economic Effects of Reconfiguring Montana's Two-Lane Highway* – October 2002 Progress Report

3e. *High Performance Concrete – Phase III* – November 2002 Progress Report

4. **Contract Extensions:**

4b. *High Performance Concrete Phase III* – Attached

Kent Barnes/Materials Bureau attended the meeting representing the Technical Panel requesting a contract extension. Kent indicated that this project is yielding valuable and implementable results that will change and improve operations.

Preliminary Alkali-Silica Reaction (ASR) tests indicated the potential for ASR in the aggregates being tested. These additional funds will provide for more rigorous and definitive ASR testing and results.

Jim Currie made a motion for a two-year extension of this project as recommended by the Technical Panel for \$36,800.00. Pat Saindon seconded the motion. The motion passed.

5. **Proposals:**

5a. *Falling Weight Deflectometer Calibrations Centers and Operational Improvements* – Pooled-Fund Study – Attached

Jon Watson/Pavement Analysis Section and John Amestoy/Non-destructive Testing Unit attended the meeting in support of this project and to answer any questions.

The objectives of this proposed pooled-fund study are to 1) develop and implement long-term plans for FWD calibration and 2) minimize the variability in pavement deflection data obtained with falling weight deflectometers.

John Blacker made a motion to join this pooled-fund study and commit \$20,000.00 per year for this two-year study. Jim Currie seconded the motion. The motion passed. Pat Saindon abstained from voting.

6. **Implementation:**

6a. *Unknown Benefits of Fog Seal on Chip Seal Project* (02.007) – Attached

Craig Abernathy/Research Bureau presented and requested comments on the panel's implementation recommendation, and requested the removal of this project from the research project listing.

The question posed by this research problem statement is should MDT fog seal all chip seals?

Based upon a survey of other states and a literature review, the Technical Panel's consensus is that fog sealing should not be considered a necessity to insure the effectiveness of a chip seal. It can be used as "insurance" over a poor chip seal to protect the state's investment, but should not be placed over every chip seal. In addition, the panel recommends project managers review MDT's chip seal manual, it is an excellent resource.

This recommendation will be sent to the Districts for comment and will then be distributed as a formal implementation recommendation.

John Blacker made a motion to accept the implementation recommendations and to remove this project from the research project listing. Pat Saindon seconded the motion. The motion passed.

7. **Solicitations for Research Ideas:**

7a. NCHRP Synthesis Solicitation

Sue announced that the Transportation Research Board (TRB) is currently selecting new topics for the FY 2003 Synthesis Program. A brief statement of scope of your project needs to be submitted by January 31, 2003.

7b. MDT Research Solicitation

Sue reminded everyone that research ideas for the current MDT Research solicitation are due by December 31, 2002. Champions for each project will make presentations at the January 28, 2003 RRC meeting. The RRC and District Administrators will be given ranking forms at that time to aid in the selection of new research projects.

8. **FHWA Technology Transfer Nominations**

Bob Burkhardt/FHWA sent Sue an e-mail with MDT's T² national nomination rankings: 169 - Roundabout Design Training, 215 – Safety Training Materials for TAP, 231 – Integrated Financial Systems. None of these projects will receive funding from this national competition.

As previously agreed, Monte Brown's T² proposal will be receiving the \$5,000.00 dedicated to FHWA-Montana Division.

cc: Craig Abernathy/Research Bureau w/attachments
Debbie Alke, Administrator/Aeronautics Division
Kent M. Barnes, P.E./Materials Bureau
Bruce H. Barrett/District Administrator-Billings
Jeffery M. Ebert, P.E./District Administrator-Butte
Linda Francis/Business Plan Administrator
Loran Frazier, P.E./District Administrator-Missoula
Dave Hill/Environmental Services
John Horton/Right-of-Way Bureau
Michael P. Johnson/District Administrator-Great Falls
Joseph P. Kolman, P.E./Bridge Bureau
William L. McChesney/District Administrator-Glendive
Russell G. McDonald/Human Resources Division
Robert D. Morgan, P.E./Traffic & Safety Bureau
Kenneth H. Neumiller/Engineering Oversight Bureau
Jeanne Nydegger/Research Bureau w/attachments
Brooke Page/Research Bureau w/attachments
Carl S. Peil, P.E./Preconstruction Bureau
Timothy W. Reardon/Legal Services
James A. Walther, P.E./Highway and Engineering Division
Mark A. Wissinger, P.E./Construction Bureau
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