

## MEMORANDUM

To: RRC Members  
Debbie Alke, Administrator/Aeronautics Division  
D. John Blacker, Administrator/Maintenance Division  
Mike Bousliman, Administrator/Information Services Division  
Monte N. Brown, Administrator/Administration Division  
Robert E. Burkhardt/Federal Highway Administration  
Jim Currie, Deputy Director/Department of Transportation  
Jeffery M. Ebert, P.E./District Administrator-Butte  
Loran Frazier, P.E., Administrator/Highway and Engineering Division  
Drew F. Livesay, Administrator/Motor Carrier Services Division  
Jim Lynch, Director/Department of Transportation  
Priscilla Sinclair/Traffic Safety  
Sandra S. Straehl, Administrator/Rail, Transit, and Planning Division

From: Susan C. Sillick, Manager  
Research Programs

Date: September 7, 2006

Subject: Summary of Minutes from the August 29, 2006 RRC Meeting

The following RRC members were present: Debbie Alke, John Blacker, Monte Brown, Bill Cloud (for Sandy Straehl), Jeff Ebert (via Polycom from Butte), Drew Livesay, Jeff Sillick (for Mike Bousliman) and Sue Sillick.

1. **Budget Report** – The budget was distributed. It was noted that the final SFY 2006 budget was attached, as well as the first SFY 2007 budget.
2. **Research Project – current listing** - Attached

### 2a. **Disparity/Availability Study Scope of Work**

Sue stated the RRC gave this project approval-in-concept via e-mail ballot. Therefore, an RFP will be issued.

### 2b. **Evaluation of MDT's Research Project Solicitation, Prioritization, and Selection Processes**

This project is divided into two parts: Review of other states' research project solicitation, prioritization, and selection processes, and obtaining staff input for improving MDT's processes. Please let Sue know by October 2, 2006, if you have suggestions for improvement.

3. **Reports:** Available Upon Request

3a. **Warm Water Species Fish Passage in Eastern Montana Culverts** – Progress Report – June 2006

3b. **Fish Passage in Montana Culverts Phase II – Passage Goals** – Progress Report – June 2006

3c. **Habitat Connectivity and Rural Context Sensitive Design: A Synthesis of Practice** – Progress Report – July 2006

3d. **Experimental Assessment of Aggregate Surfacing Materials** – Progress Report – June 2006

3e. **Evaluation of Organic Matter Addition and Incorporation on Steep Cut Slopes: Phase II (98.019)** – Progress Report – June 2006

3f. **LTAP** – Progress Report – June 2006

3g. **Bozeman Pass Wildlife Channelization ITS Project** – Progress Report – May and June 2006 – Final Report, June 2006

3h. **Ride Specification Review for the Montana Department of Transportation** – Final Report and Project Summary – FHWA/MT-06-004/8179

4. **Contract Extensions: None**

5. **Proposals:**

5a. **Wildlife-Highway Crossing Mitigation Measures and Associated Cost/Benefits: a Toolbox for Montana Department of Transportation**

Dwane Kailey/Missoula District Administrator discussed this MPART project via Polycom from Missoula.

MDT staff asked WTI to submit a proposal to provide MDT with a synthesis of large mammal wildlife-highway crossing mitigation best practices that could reduce animal-vehicle collisions, while allowing animal's safe passage across Montana's roads.

The synthesis is restricted to mitigation measures aimed at large terrestrial mammals (deer or larger). Furthermore, each mitigation measure should not only be described in general terms, but each measure should be evaluated for its pros and cons regarding its effectiveness in increasing safety and habitat connectivity, its appropriate use and restrictions, construction costs, and maintenance costs.

The results of this research can benefit the Districts, designers, planners, and biologists.

John Blacker asked about fish passage. Dwane indicated the focus of this project is larger mammals; it may be the need exists for a similar project relating to fish passage.

John Blacker made a motion to contribute \$15,942.58 to this project providing MDT's Legal Services signs off on the proposal. Monte Brown seconded the motion. All present voted in favor of the motion.

Dwane will discuss this proposal with MDT's Legal Services and inform Sue of the ruling.

### **5b. Transportation Security and Emergency Preparedness Professional Capacity Building**

Jim Hyatt/Maintenance Division attended this meeting to present this proposal.

FHWA is currently seeking a partnership with states to scope and oversee the development of training resources in a number of critical areas, which emerged following various security and emergency preparedness plans underway throughout the USA.

The objective of this study is to develop a suite of training materials, depending on the level of commitments to the pooled fund study; the study will develop training materials for some or all of the following:

- 1) Guide for Emergency Transportation Operations
- 2) Guide to Risk Management of Multimodal Transportation Infrastructures
- 3) The Evacuation Planning Primer Series
- 4) FHWA Bridge and Tunnel Security Workshop

For up to each of four courses, participating states will receive instructor manuals, student workbooks, and a train-the-trainer session (web enabled audio conference) for their agency staff.

Debbie asked if airports would be included. Jim wasn't sure, but will do what he can to include airports. A \$50,000.00 - \$100,000.00 commitment is recommended from each participating state; Sue will check to see if a lower participation level means decreased involvement in panel activities.

Debbie Alke made a motion to fund the project for \$10,000.00. John Blacker seconded the motion. All present voted in favor of the motion.

### **5c. Long-Term Maintenance of Load and Resistance Factor Design Specifications – Pooled Fund Study**

Kent Barnes/Bridge Bureau presented this proposal.

The objective of this proposal is to provide timely assistance to the AASHTO Highway Subcommittee on Bridges and Structures in interpreting, implementing, revising, and refining the ASSHTO Load and Resistance Factor Design documents.

Kent stated that MDT has been a part of this on-going study for several years and would like to continue to participate for the years 2007 and 2009.

MDT along with other states are still struggling with their specification guidelines; however, at the end of this project MDT should have enough information that they could internalize Load and Resistance Factor Design Specifications.

Debbie Alke made a motion to contribute \$20,000.00 a year for 2007 and 2009. Jeff Ebert seconded the motion. All present voted in favor of the motion.

### **5d. Automated Cost Recovery A Feasibility Study**

Audrey Allums/Transportation Planning Division attended the meeting to discuss this proposal.

This is the first proposal from MDT/WTI's working groups and, if funded, will be funded 50/50 (MDT/WTI).

The purpose of this project is to identify technologies such as smart card technology or other cost recovery methods that could be feasibility initiated in transit systems in Montana to make the process of collecting fares and reporting information to various agencies more effective and efficient.

The objectives of this research project are to:

- 1) Review the state-of-the-practice in the transit industry of automated cost recovery and their applicability in Montana;
- 2) Review current technologies in Montana, such as Montana Access, to see if these systems/technologies could be expanded to include automated cost recovery in Montana's transit systems;
- 3) Complete a requirements analysis that reviews the business practice of transit systems to determine that issues might affect implementing an automated cost recovery system;
- 4) Develop a cost/benefit ratio to determine if implementing an automated cost recovery system in Montana is feasible; and
- 5) Provide an implementation document that will highlight any key barriers, hurdles or issues that would need to be addressed, should a decision be made to implement and automated cost recovery system.

Monte Brown made a motion to contribute \$53,050.00 to this project. Drew Livesay seconded the motion. All present voted in favor of the motion.

6. **Implementation/Technology Transfer:** None

7. **Department/Division Hot Topics – RRC Members Roundtable Discussion**

Sue updated the committee on the project to investigate the effects of rising fuel costs on gas tax collections. Currently, we are waiting to hear if researchers at UM are interested in conducting this research. Bill Cloud said that planning was currently tracking Vehicle Miles of Travel (VMT), which could feed into this research project.

John Blacker wanted to give a heads-up that many EPP requests were denied and we will be looking at innovative ways to get the work done, some of which may involve research.

cc: Craig L. Abernathy/Research Programs  
Suzy Price/Contract Plans Bureau  
Lisa Autio/Research Program  
Kent M. Barnes, P.E./Bridge Bureau  
Bruce H. Barrett/District Administrator-Billings  
Lisa Durbin/Construction Administration-Bureau  
Paul R. Ferry, P.E./Highways Bureau  
John Horton/Right-of-Way Bureau  
Paul Jagoda, P.E./Construction Engineering Bureau  
Jennifer Jensen/Human Resources Division  
Michael P. Johnson/District Administrator-Great Falls  
Dwane Kailey, P.E./District Administrator-Missoula  
Ray Mengel/District Administrator-Glendive  
Victoria A. Murphy, CPA, CFE/Highway and Engineering Division  
Jeanne Nydegger/Research Programs  
Timothy W. Reardon/Legal Services  
Jean A. Riley, P.E./Environmental Services Bureau  
Matt Strizich, P.E./Materials Bureau  
James A. Walther, P.E./Highways and Engineering Division  
Duane E. Williams, P.E./Traffic & Safety Bureau  
Mark A. Wissinger, P.E./Highways and Engineering Division  
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