

## 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: November 29, 2006

Subject: Summary of Minutes from the October 31, 2006 RRC Meeting

The following RRC members were present: John Blacker, Mike Bousliman, Monte Brown, Bob Burkhardt, Jim Currie, Jeff Ebert, Loran Frazier, Drew Livesay, Jim Lynch and Sue Sillick.

1. **Budget Report** – No comments
2. **Research Project – current listing** – Attached

2a. **Research in Support of Container on Flatcar (COFC) and Trailer on Flatcar (TOFC) in Intermodal Service on Montana's Railway Mainlines** – Attached -Request for Approval-in-Concept

Dick Turner/Transportation Planning met with the RRC to ask for an approval-in-concept for this project so that an RFP can be issued.

The recent reduction in Montana intermodal services presents a major barrier for Montana businesses as they attempt to compete in the U.S. and international marketplace. The absence of these services will affect Montana's economy by increasing transportation costs and keeping Montana businesses out of potential markets. Added value agricultural commodities are especially dependent upon intermodal transportation. Montana does not have a single location where containers can be loaded on rail cars at competitive rates on regularly scheduled trains. For these reasons, the MDT has initiated a phased research project to expose ways to increase COFC/TOFC commerce in order to provide Union Pacific

and BNSF Railways with the incentive to provide additional intermodal services to Montana shippers.

Phase I will include the following tasks: literature review, surveys, and interviews with individuals and organizations at the local, national, and international levels. Based on the results of Phase I, the Technical Panel for this project will determine what, if any, additional research is needed.

Monte Brown made a motion to proceed with an RFP. Mike Bousliman seconded the motion. All present voting in favor of the motion.

3. **Reports:** Available Upon Request

3a. **Comparative Analysis of Coarse Surfacing Aggregate Using Micro-Deval, L.A. Abrasion and Sulfate Soundness Tests** – Progress Report – August 2006

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

3c. **Fish Passage in Montana Culverts Phase II – Passage Goals** – Progress Report – September 2006

3d. **Potential Effects of Highway Mortality and Habitat Fragmentation on a Population of Painted Turtles in Montana** – Final Report – FHWA/MT-06-010-8169

4. **Contract Extensions:** Attached

4a. **Bozeman Pass Wildlife Linkage and Highway Safety Study**

Bonnie Steg/Environmental Services discussed this extension with the RRC.

The purpose of this contract extension is to request additional funding for monitoring efforts to complete a rigorous evaluation of the effect of the wildlife fencing on animal-vehicle collisions and wildlife movements on Bozeman Pass.

Bonnie said she was satisfied with the scope of work as presented; however, she had questions concerning the amount of hours Western Transportation Institute (WTI) needed for reporting. John Blacker said that rather than purchasing a new DMS, these funds should be used to maintain current systems.

Jim Currie made a motion to table this discussion until all issues were settled. John Blacker seconded the motion. All present voted in favor of the motion.

An e-mail ballot may be issued, once all of the questions have been answered.

## **5. Proposals:**

### **5a. Business Marketing Analysis**

Leslie Wooten-Hartung/Civil Rights Bureau discussed the proposal.

The purpose of this project is to determine what opportunities are available for a new or expanding business in Montana highway construction and consulting industries through the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT). The information provided by this effort would help the DBE Supportive Services program within the Department inform subcontractors and subconsultants of these identified opportunities, requirements, and challenges, individually or collectively at workshops.

Developing solutions to overcome current barriers that can prevent participation in government markets can be formidable. Overcoming those barriers requires education, comprehensive business capture methodologies, partnership formation strategies, and performance metrics that can be used to maintain continuous improvements. This proposal contains methods and processes for developing better awareness of opportunities and problem-solving practices that have proven effective for those that may wish to participate, but need assistance.

Jim Currie made a motion to fund \$77,783.00 for this project. Loran Frazier seconded the motion. All present voted in favor of the motion.

### **5b. One-Stop-Shop**

Audrey Allums/Rail, Transit, and Planning Division attended the meeting and spoke in favor of this proposal.

This project will provide MDT and its partners with an implementation plan for a one-stop shop where Montana residents and visitors can find information about transportation options. The PBS&J team will identify the appropriate content and dissemination methods – including 511, 211, Web Sites, other technologies, and printed materials – to ensure that information is available when, where, and how people need it.

Mike Bousliman inquired how this would affect 511; a big effort went into establishing this traveler information system. While it could be included, he did not want it to become just a component of the project, but rather 511 should keep its own identity. Audrey assured him that this would be addressed at the project kickoff meeting.

Jim Currie made a motion to fund this project for \$130,963.00. Monte Brown seconded the motion. All present voted in favor of the motion.

### 5c. **Western Maintenance Partnership** – Pooled Fund Study

John Blacker/Maintenance Division presented this pooled-fund study proposal.

John explained that Montana was one of the original participants in the 80's when this was called the Region 8 Maintenance Tour. This pooled fund involves a 2-day hands-on bus tour each year allowing for constant dialog between participants in the various participating states. John requested \$10,000.00 to cover the expenses of MDT personnel for a three year period.

Monte Brown made a motion to fund this three year project for \$10,000.00. Jeff Ebert seconded the motion. All present voted in favor of the motion.

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

### 7. **Solicitation**

Sue pointed out that MDT has an active research project evaluating the Research Project Solicitation, Prioritization, and Selection Processes. As this project is not completed at this time, Sue recommended using the current process for the upcoming solicitation cycle.

It was the consensus of the RRC to continue with the current process and when the research project is completed, the RRC will take a look at what changes, if any, are recommended, with any changes taking place during the following year.

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

**Drew Livesay** will be retiring as Administrator for Motor Carriers Service at the end of the year and Dennis Sheehy has been named as his replacement. Drew will continue on the RRC through December; Dennis will replace Drew on the RRC effective January 2007.

Drew was thanked for his many years of service to the Department and to the RRC. Drew noted that he was one of the original Research Review Committee members.

**Bob Burkhardt** announced that Janice Brown, FHWA Administrator/Helena has resigned effective December 31, 2006, and has accepted a position in Texas. He expects her replacement to be named soon. Bob also mentioned that funding is tight, delaying the filling of positions and resulting in position sharing in many states.

**Jim Currie** asked if the finished product for the Warm Water Fish Passage project will provide the tools needed for guidance on MDT's design method. Loran Frazier told him that was the goal.

**Monte Brown** wanted to know when the Fuel Tax Evasion project would be completed. Craig Abernathy said that he hoped to have the final report in print by mid-November.

**John Blacker** said that the pilot program to produce salt brine for the Whitefish, Kalispell, and Columbia Falls areas is going very well, and research may result.

**Loran Frazier** told the RRC that the Engineering Division received two National Awards. The AASHTO President's Award was given for the work done on the Absarokee Highway using context sensitive solutions, and a FHWA Award was given for contract administration on the Beartooth Highway reconstruction project.

**Jeff Ebert** explained he was having traffic flow issues on US 191 in the Gallatin River area and was looking for help in resolving these issues. Sue said that research could conduct a literature search. She also said she could send an e-mail to DOT's to see if other Departments had similar problems and how they are addressing them. She asked him to e-mail her language to send to other DOT's. Jim Currie asked if he had used variable message boards. They had; it was suggested that perhaps he could place one in the Four Corner area that would give motorists a choice of rerouting. Night construction and detours/rerouting were also suggested.

cc: Craig L. Abernathy/Research Programs  
Lisa Autio/Research Program  
Kent M. Barnes, P.E./Bridge Bureau  
Bruce H. Barrett/District Administrator-Billings  
Kevin Christensen/ Highways and Engineering Division  
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  
Tom Martin/Consultant Design Bureau  
Ray Mengel/District Administrator-Glendive  
Jeanne Nydegger/Research Programs  
Suzy Price/Contract Plans Bureau  
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