



Montana Department of Transportation  
PO Box 201001  
Helena, MT 59620-1001

## **Memorandum**

To: RRC Members  
Steve Albert/WTI  
Debbie Alke, Administrator/ Aeronautics Division  
Mike Bousliman, Administrator/Information Services Division  
Jeffery M. Ebert, P.E./District Administrator-Butte  
Larry Flynn, Administrator/ Administration Division  
Dwane Kailey, Administrator/Highways and Engineering Division  
Bob Seliskar/FHWA  
Jon Swartz, Administrator/Maintenance Division  
Mike Tooley/Director  
Duane Williams, Administrator/Motor Carrier Services Division  
Pat Wise/Deputy Director  
Lynn Zanto, Administrator/Rail, Transit, and Planning Division

From: Susan C. Sillick, Manager  
Research Programs

Date: April 17, 2017

Subject: March 22, 2017 RRC Meeting Notes

**RRC Members Present:** Dwane Kailey, Sue Sillick, Jon Swartz, Mike Tooley, Duane Williams, and Lynn Zanto.

**Others Present:** Dan Bisom, Wade Cebulski, Kevin Christensen, Kris Christensen, Steve Keller, Dustin Rouse, and Bill Semmens.

1. **Budget Report:** Attached

No discussion.

2. **[Research Projects - current listing](#)**

No discussion.

3. **Reports:** Available on Research [website](#)

- a. Assessment of Montana Road Weather Information System (14-019)- Final, Project Summary, and Implementation Reports

- b. Development of a New Specification for ¾-inch Crushed Base Course, Type A (14-007)- Final and Project Summary Reports
- c. Evaluating Wildlife Mortality Hotspots, Habitat Connectivity and Potential Accommodation Along US 287 and MT 87 in the Madison Valley (11-007) - Final and Project Summary Reports
- d. Evaluation of Effectiveness and Cost-Benefits of Woolen Roadside Reclamation Products (13-008)- Tasks 3, 4, and 5 Reports
- e. Evaluation of Wildlife Crossing Structures on US Highway 93 N Phase 2- Final Presentation, Final Report, and Project Summary Report
- f. Identifying Disparities in Definitions of Heavy Trucks – Final Report and Guidance Booklet
- g. LTAP – October and January Quarterly Progress Report
- h. Monitoring Wildlife Crossings on US 93 South (04.016) – Final Presentation and Recording, Final Report, and Project Summary Report
- i. Montana Airports Economic Impacts Study (14-008)- Final, Project Summary, and Performance Measures Reports
- j. Statewide Rockfall Hazard Rating Process Update- Task 4 Report
- k. Traffic Safety Culture Pooled Fund
  - i. Driving after Cannabis Use – Final Report, Final Presentation Recording, and Project Summary Report
  - ii. Exploring Traffic Safety Citizenship – Final Report, Final Presentation Recording, and Project Summary Report.

No discussion.

#### 4. **Proposed Research Projects (attached)**

- a. Guidelines for Chemically Stabilizing Problematic Soils (15-008) (Jeff Jackson)  
This proposal was presented to the RRC on 10/28/16 and was sent to the RRC on 2/22/17, with a reminder on 3/6/17, for funding approval via an e-mail ballot. Sue informed the RRC that this proposal received five votes approving the proposal, no votes against the proposal, and was one vote short of approval.

Jon Swartz asked if he could change his vote. After reading the proposal more thoroughly, he was concerned that state maintenance resources would be used for the field work portion of this project. Sue stated he could change his vote. Kris clarified that no maintenance resources would be employed for this project.

Both Mike Tooley and Lynn Zanto voted to approve this proposal.

Funding for this proposal was approved.

#### 5. **Implementation/Performance Measures/Technology Transfer:** Final products are available on the Research [website](#).

- a. Montana Airports Economic Impacts Study (14-008)- Final Results Presentation (Wade Cebulski)

- b. Assessment of Montana Road Weather Information System (RWIS) (14-019) - Final Results Presentation (Steve Keller)

Dwane asked if improvements are made to coordinate with construction and provide them with the RWIS information.

- c. Evaluation of Wildlife Crossing Structures on US Highway 93 N Phase 2- Final Results Presentation (Bill Semmens)

Dwane asked if through this research there was better information comparing different culvert configurations. Bill responded that the culvert dimensions, especially width and height, are important, but the research did not look at culvert size. In general, larger culverts will be used by larger animals, but smaller culverts may not be used by larger animals. However, bears and mountain lions do use smaller culverts. Dwane asked for the definition of “smaller culverts”. Bill stated that there is a learning curve for animals to use culverts and this learning curve is longer for smaller culverts, but with time, larger animals will use the smaller culverts. In addition, the fencing associated with culverts plays a large role in animal use. Each site is different based on the characteristics; it’s not a cookie cutter situation. Bill also stated the US 93 S project looked more at culvert size. Dwane also asked about jump-out use. Bill stated there were issues with some of the jump-outs, with some being placed such that animals could/would not use them, such as in front of trees or too high a distance from which to jump. Finally, Bill also indicated there were some construction/design issues with fencing and the overpass.

- d. Monitoring Wildlife Crossings on US 93 South (04.016) – Final Results Presentation (Bill Semmens)
- e. Identifying Disparities in Definitions of Heavy Trucks – Final Results Presentation (Dan Bisom)

Dwane indicated there was a problem with the researcher including opinions in the products. The project took longer because of this. Sue indicated the principal investigator wasn’t the right person for the project.

**6. Research Project Idea Prioritization, Solicitation, Selection, and Development**

- a. Idea Solicitation Update
- b. Final Process Decisions
- c. Review New Forms

See attached

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

Lynn mentioned the *Improved Pedestrian and Bicyclists Safety on Montana Highways* research idea that was pending the identification of a champion. Dwane indicated he didn’t support the idea. He stated the only way to make pedestrians and bicyclists safe on rural highways is to separate them from vehicular traffic and there is not enough money to do so. He also

stated most of the issue is poor decision-making and education. Lynn stated she would like to discuss with her staff before indicating if planning would provide a champion or not.

Lynn also mentioned the draft TranPlanMT is nearly ready for the public, the draft freight plan will be available this summer, and federal funding/gas tax is a hot topic. Lynn stated TranPlanMT goes back to Mike Lang's bill and we should distribute it widely.

Mike Tooley stated that state funding is a hot topic.

Copies: Craig Abernathy/Research Section  
Audrey Allums/Grants Bureau  
Kent M. Barnes, P.E./Bridge Bureau  
Kevin Christensen/Highways and Engineering Division  
Kris Christensen/Research Section  
Ryan Dahlke, P.E./Consultant Design Bureau  
Lisa Durbin/Construction Administration Bureau  
Mike Dyr Dahl/Engineering Operations Bureau  
Ed Ereth/Data and Statistics Bureau  
Dave Hand/District Administrator-Great Falls  
Paul Jagoda, P.E./Construction Engineering Services Bureau  
Tom Martin, P.E./Environmental Services Bureau  
Kraig McLeod/Multimodal Planning Bureau  
Shane Mintz/District Administrator-Glendive  
Roy Peterson, P.E./Traffic & Safety Bureau  
Suzy Price/Contract Plans Bureau  
Dustin Rouse, P.E./Highways and Engineering Division  
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Jerry Stephens, P.E./WTI MSU  
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