

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: April 10, 2006

Subject: Summary of Minutes from March 28, 2006 RRC Meeting.

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

1. **Budget Report** – No comments
2. **Research Project – current listing** - Attached
 - 2a. **Business Market Analysis** – Attached – Request for Approval-in-Concept

Rebecca Johnson/Civil Rights Bureau met with the RRC to ask for an approval-in-concept so that an RFP can be issued.

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.

Monte Brown made a motion to proceed with this project. Drew Livesay seconded the motion. The motion passed with all RRC members present voting in favor.

3. **Reports:** Available Upon Request

3a. **Preventative Maintenance Treatments: A Synthesis of Highway Practice** – Progress Report – January 2006

3b. **Animal-Vehicle Collisions and Habitat Connectivity Along Montana Highway 83 in the Seeley-Swan Valley, Montana: A Reconnaissance** - Final Report – FHWA/MT-06-002/8177

4. **Contract Extensions:** None

5. **Proposals:**

5a. **Passing Lanes on Two-Lane Highways: A Synthesis of Practice**

Stan Brelin and Duane Williams/Traffic Safety Bureau attended the meeting to discuss this MPART research proposal.

The objective of this synthesis research is to investigate the state of the art concerning the use of passing lanes on two-lane rural highways.

There was some concern expressed that much of this information already exists.

Jim Currie made a motion to postpone consideration of this proposal until Duane Williams can contact other states regarding passing lane operations. John Blacker seconded the motion. The motion passed with all RRC members voting in favor.

5b. **A High Fidelity Driving Simulator as a Tool for Design and Evaluation of Highway Infrastructure Upgrades**

Duane Williams/Traffic Safety Bureau and Mike Kelly/WTI presented this proposal.

High fidelity driving simulators provide an opportunity to simulate and test drivers' responses to improvements in infrastructure, information and warning messages, and other deployments. The planned deployments on U.S. 191 in the vicinity of Big Sky, Montana are an excellent opportunity for using a simulator for rapid prototyping. For many of the scheduled deployments of curve, ice, and excessive speed warnings, driving simulation would provide a tool to refine the plan for locations, visibility, and message sets. WTI proposes to create and test a simulation capability, using their existing simulator, to quickly and inexpensively evaluate these proposed deployments.

Sue indicated that WTI is matching 50% of the direct costs for this project.

Jim Currie made a motion to fund this project at \$26,202.00 (MDT cost). Loran Frazier seconded the motion. All present voted in favor of the motion.

6. Implementation/Technology Transfer: None

6a. **Technology Transfer Projects:** At a previous RRC meeting, \$20,000.00 was set aside for technology transfer projects. The RRC decided that funds for small technology transfer projects would be approved by the Research Programs Manager.

Larry Sickerson requested \$300.00 to fund a visit by a Wyoming researcher. This request was approved.

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

John Blacker – On a trip to California, John was able to view centerline rumble strips. He said that he was impressed with what he had seen. Jeff Ebert and Loran Frazier requested a literature on centerline rumble strips, with the results being sent to Loran, Jeff, Duane Williams, and the District Administrators.

Monte Brown – Is concerned with indirect costs. Monte will send Sue an e-mail to send out to other states requesting information as to how they are dealing with this issue. Monte also indicated it would be helpful to know how far to carry indebtedness; some states are bonding up to their ears.

Jim Currie – The Civil Engineering Department Head, Brett Gunnick, questioned whether the MDT/WTI partnership working groups had to follow research process. Jim told him the process must be followed. There is also some confusion about match for these projects. MDT was under the impression that WTI needed assistance matching their program and MDT would match these projects 50%. WTI was under the impression no match agreement had been made and wanted to match projects on a project-by-project basis. Vickie Murphy will set up a meeting to discuss this issue.

cc: Craig L.Abernathy/Research Programs
Suzy Althof/Contract Plans Bureau
Lisa Autio/Research Programs
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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