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Monthly Publication · Washington, DC

October 2015

President's Report

By Duane Ratermann, PE
Knox County, Illinois

Time flies when you're having fun! It has been 6 months since I was installed President of the National Association of County Engineers in Daytona Beach, Fla. During that time, I've had the pleasure of visiting 4 state affiliates and attending the National Association of Counties (NACo) Annual Conference in Charlotte, N.C.

I look forward to the remaining 6 months of my Presidency and visiting 4 more state affiliates.

The Illinois Association of County Engineers (IACE) met October 8-9 for our 101st Annual Fall Meeting in Moline. The meeting was very well attended, including IACE members, personnel from the Illinois DOT and consulting engineers. This is the first time that I can remember an IACE meeting in the Moline area. I always enjoy visiting new parts of our state to try new restaurants and visit new attractions.

A variety of topics were covered. The FHWA gave an update the status of the new Federal Highway Bill; and IDOT, on the continuing budget issues and its impact on our local agencies. You might remember last month I noted, the Motor Fuel Tax in our state continues to be collected at the gas pump but not distributed to local agencies. Many believe this will continue through the end of the year and possibly into 2016. One presentation reported on the new proposed Mississippi River bridge that will replace the existing Interstate 74 bridge connecting Moline to Davenport, Iowa.

Moline happens to be the corporate headquarters for John Deere. The featured speaker was a representative of the Construction and Forestry Division for John Deere. He explained how the founder of Deere Corporation, John Deere, developed the first steel moldboard plow in 1837 out of a broken steel saw mill blade in Grand Detour, Ill., 75 miles northeast of Moline. In 1873, John Deere was elected Mayor of Moline and served for two years. In 1874, despite economic problems among farmers, the Deere business continued to grow and sold more than 50,000 plows.

John Deere passed away in 1886 at 82 in Moline. In 1918, after years of investigating tractor production, Deere & Company bought the maker of Waterloo Boy tractors and sold 5,634 tractors that year. In 1949, in northeast Iowa, John Deere Dubuque Works built their first crawler tractor marking the beginning of the Worldwide Construction Equipment Division. A front blade was added and it became the "M" bulldozer. Today Deere & Company manufactures and sells construction, agriculture and forestry equipment worldwide. They are a NACE Corporate Gold Member and a great supporter of NACE. The next time you see your John Deere sales representative thank them for their loyal support of NACE.

So 6 months remaining in my Presidency. That means in a short time we'll all be together for NACE 2016 in Tacoma, Washington. When you're developing your budget for the upcoming fiscal year, be sure to include this! The Washington State Association of County Engineers (WSACE) are working very hard with NACE staff to develop a conference that will be second to none.

I hope to see you there!

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NACE Welcomes D.J. Buthe as Vice President for the North Central Region

We're pleased to announce that D.J. Buthe, PE, is the new NACE Vice President for the North Central Region! He is replacing Chris Isbell, PE. NACE extends our sincere gratitude and appreciation to Chris and wish him all the best in his next endeavor.

"NACE is such a great organization that brings progressive ideas to the forefront and promotes professional camaraderie," said D.J. "I am excited for the opportunity to represent our members as NACE continues to advance local transportation issues."

In 2011 DJ became the Highway Superintendent in Minnehaha County, S.D. He has enjoyed 11 years as a public servant, including 7 years as an engineering project manager for the City of Sioux Falls. Minnehaha County is the state's most populated county at approximately 180,000 and has 365 miles of paved roads and 200 bridges. Under D.J.'s leadership, the county has established an Engineering Division, a comprehensive pavement management system, and a bridge maintenance program.

He has served on several committees and boards, including the NACE Member Services Committee, Secretary/Treasurer of the S.D. Association of County Highway Superintendents. He's an active member of the American Society of Civil Engineers since 1999, and of the S.D. Engineering Society since 2004. D.J. earned his BS in Civil and Environmental Engineering from S.D. State University.

D.J. and his wife, Jessica, have enjoyed meeting other NACE members and spouses while attending each of the NACE Annual Conferences since his appointment to Highway Superintendent.

For fun, DJ enjoys spending time with his wife and four kids (Madison, Brayden, Grant, Taylor) at their lake cabin or on a golf course. The whole family enjoys making lattés and smoothies while serving in their church's coffee shop.

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Reserve Your NACE 2016 Hotel Room

NACE 2016
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We invite you to check out the **NACE 2016** site if you haven't yet.

The Washington State Association of County Engineers (WSACE) promises you'll experience the best of Tacoma and Pierce County!

On the site, you'll find about everything you need: the preliminary schedule, hotel and travel information, session topics, networking opportunities, things to do in Tacoma and more.

Act now to reserve a room at the host hotel, The Murano, as space is limited. The Courtyard also has a NACE block. Registration will open around the first of November.

Feel free to contact us if you have any questions: nace@naco.org or 202-393-5041.

In Tacoma you're invited to **Step Out of Your Comfort Zone!**

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Capitol Hill Update

House Passes Short Term Extension of MAP-21

The House of Representatives approved bipartisan legislation that funds and extends the authorization for federal highway and transit programs through November 20, and that prevents a shutdown of the US rail transportation system by extending the deadline for implementation of Positive Train Control technology.

The current extension of MAP-21 is set to expire October 29, which makes another short-term extension necessary to complete work on a final long-term package. The Surface Transportation Extension Act of 2015 (HR 3819) was introduced by Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman Bill Shuster (R-PA), Ways and Means Committee Chairman Paul Ryan (R-WI), and Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Ranking Member Peter DeFazio (D-OR).

"Last week, the Transportation Committee unanimously approved bipartisan, multi-year surface transportation legislation, and the Surface Transportation Extension Act will ensure that states can continue to fund transportation projects while Congress continues to make progress on the multi-year bill," Shuster said.

The legislation will now move to conference with the Senate's six-year reauthorization bill, the DRIVE Act. Members from the House and Senate will work to resolve the differences between the two bills.

Shortly NACE will be asking you to contact your Senators and Representatives to communicate the need to fully-fund the six-year proposal, which is critical to you and your county.

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Washed Out: Heavy Rains Impact 16 S.C. Counties

By NACo's Bev Schlotterbeck, Charles Taylor, Charlie Ban

Mother Nature can sometimes play the nastiest practical jokes. Take for example South Carolina at the end of September. The National Drought Mitigation Center said three-quarters of the state was facing drought conditions.

Less than a week later, flood-bearing rain pelted parts of the state with 24-hour totals in the 15- to 19-inch range. If it had been snow, the 24-hour totals would have ranged from 12 feet to 15 feet.Gov. Nikki Haley (R) called it a "1,000 year event," and it devastated parts of 16 counties: Berkeley, Charleston, Clarendon, Dorchester, Georgetown, Horry, Lexington, Orangeburg, Richland, Sumter, Williamsburg, Calhoun, Darlington, Florence, Kershaw and Lee — all declared federal disaster areas.

"I've been doing this for 33 years, and I've never seen any kind of incident like this in South Carolina ever before," said Cathy Haynes, chief of operations for the Charleston County Emergency Management Department. "Things evolved so quickly with this incident." Coastal Charleston was hit early on before the rains moved inland.

In Richland County, home to the state capital of Columbia, nine people drowned. Richland County Coroner Gary Watts said that while he's been in the business for a long time, he didn't remember that many deaths from flash floods.Indeed, Richland registered the bulk of the deaths from the storm, reported by various media to stand at 19 throughout the state for the period of Oct. 2–6. Many deaths occured on washed out roads. A South Carolina Department of Transportation spokesperson said 500 miles of state roads and bridges were washed away. That included 35 bridges and more than 110 state roads in Richland County, according to County Council Chairman Torrey Rush.

Flood waters near downtown Columbia. Photo courtesy of Richland County, S.C.

Many roads remained closed two days after the sun reappeared Oct. 6, added Joyce Dickerson, his council colleague. Even though her district escaped serious damage and was "100 percent intact," she remained uneasy about travelling the roads in the county. "I'm scared to go on a road, afraid it might fall through because the roads are bad anyway." Rush said the state and county are working to get infrastructure back in place as soon as possible.He had nothing but praise for the cooperation between state and county government, and "kudos" for county first responders — and others.

"The private community has definitely stepped up," he said. "You talk about neighbors helping neighbors, just seeing the way businesses and people from all over the country — just chipping in — it was just tremendous…. We're moving forward now and I think we're in a good place." Bev Harris, Richland County public information officer, said,"There was a lot of destruction,

but we're doing really well." They had to, she explained. In addition to being home to the state capital, the county is also hosting the State Fair, which began Oct. 14.

Upbeat assessments of county resiliency were also on tap from another Midlands county official, Lexington County Administrator Joe Mergo. "Our heart really shined at this event," he said. Volunteers poured into neighborhoods, some of which were completely underwater, to help in the clean-up. Already, the county has collected eight and a half tons of debris, Mergo said. Meanwhile, Department of Public Works crews have been working 14-hour shifts, seven days a week, to reopen county roads.

He strongly praised the collaboration that occurred between all jurisdictions in facing the storm's challenges. "I completely attribute our success to those relationships we made prior to the event." State police deployed swift-water rescue teams to rescue residents in deluged subdivisions, he related. School systems shared their bus routes with the county, so the public works crew could prioritize road repair efforts and get "the kids back to school."

Heavy rains, totaling 23 inches, caused flash flooding throughout Horry County, a destination spot for persons vacationing in Myrtle Beach. Days later, the Waccamaw River flooded, giving the county's military surplus vehicle, dubbed Rescue 1, its debut in a disaster. County spokeswoman Lisa Bourcier said the rescue of six people was made possible by Rescue 1, which is 10 feet high and 8 feet wide and capable of traveling through three feet of water. Not all rescues, though, came via special equipment. Three off-duty Horry County corrections officers saved a drowning woman who had been pulled through a drainage pipe by fast-moving water. Two were on their way to work and another saw and joined in the effort.

The woman, Amber Lloyd, and her boyfriend had been walking and taking pictures of the flooding, when the boyfriend slipped and fell in the ditch. Lloyd, attempted to help him, but was sucked underneath the roadway through the drainage pipe and was stuck underwater for up to three minutes. The officers, who saw Lloyd fall in the water went over to the other side of the drainage pipe and found her submerged, facing down in the water, bluish-purple with no sign of life. Officers immediately began administering CPR and continued until she showed a slight sign of life. They carried her to one of the officer's trucks and drove her to meet the ambulance, which couldn't reach the scene. Lloyd was treated at a hospital and released.

More than a week after the Waccamaw River peaked at 16.1 feet, waters were still at 11 feet. Bourcier said measures put in place by the county's stormwater management department, formed in 1999, likely kept the river from cresting over the September 1999 mark set after Hurricane Floyd, which pushed the river to 17 feet.

Damage to both private and public property in neighboring Georgetown County is, for now, around $48 million, though county spokeswoman Jackie Broach said there were western parts of the county that could not be reached and that estimate was sure to increase. State DOT workers cannot reach some bridges to assess their damage.

The county's secondary emergency operations center suffered severe damage, including mold issues resulting from a few feet of water that flooded the building. Rain caused a ceiling to collapse in an administrative office, and that same building had a flooded basement.

Reprinted from NACo County News, October 19 issue.

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Driver-Assist Systems Seen Saving About 10,000 U.S. Lives a Year

By Keith Naughton, Bloomberg Business

Advanced features could prevent 30% of crashes, study says
Cost hinders car buyers' adoption, Boston Consulting finds

New auto safety technologies such as automatic braking and sensors that keep a car in its lane could prevent almost 10,000 U.S. road deaths a year and save $251 billion if they were more widely available, according to a Boston Consulting Group study.

More than a quarter of all car crashes in the U.S. could be avoided if automakers and new-vehicle buyers adopted advanced driver-assistance systems now available on relatively few models, the consulting firm said in a statement Tuesday. The technologies still cost more than consumers are willing to pay, according to the study.

“Because the vast majority of crashes in the United States are caused by driver error, the lack of adoption of these technologies within the U.S. fleet is a significant missed opportunity,” Xavier Mosquet, North American leader of the firm’s automotive practice, said in the statement.

The driver-assist technologies also are helping pave the way for autonomous cars, which are capable of eliminating 90 percent of auto crashes, Boston Consulting said. Automakers are pouring billions of dollars into developing such cars as mobility is being redefined amid a shift of most of the global population into large megacities over the next two decades. Driverless cars, operating in harmony, may be essential to the safe and efficient movement of people and goods.

The advanced safety systems could avert about 9,900 of the approximately 33,000 annual U.S. deaths from auto accidents, according to the Boston Consulting study, which was conducted for the Motor & Equipment Manufacturers Association, a vehicle-parts trade group. The consulting firm in another study earlier this year forecast that by 2017, partially autonomous vehicles will arrive in “large numbers.”

‘Less Progress’

Yet the driver-assistance safety technologies that enable self-driving cars are rolling into the U.S. more slowly than elsewhere in the world. Those systems include forward collision warning and automatic braking, adaptive cruise control that keeps a set distance from cars ahead, blind-spot detection sensors, night vision, lane-departure warnings and technology that steers a vehicle back into its lane.

“Compared to Europe and Japan, the U.S. market has made less progress on the adoption front, and much work remains to be done,” said Michelle Andersen, a Boston Consulting partner who co-authored the new study with Mosquet. U.S. consumers are balking at the costs for the new technologies, according to the study. Boston Consulting cited a recent survey that found that car buyers are willing to pay $100 to $400 for blind-spot detection sensors, which are priced at $595.

“The adoption of these technologies is where the challenge is,” Steve Handschuh, president of the supplier trade group, told reporters at a briefing in Troy, Michigan. “When it comes to consumers’ willingness to pay, it’s been quite a row to hoe.” The cost of the safety features will drop as they are more widely adopted, Mosquet said. Buyers also don’t fully understand the benefits of the new safety features because they aren’t adequately explained at dealerships, Boston Consulting said.

Limited Installation

Surround-view camera systems, introduced five years ago, are installed in just 1 percent of new cars this year and will reach only 3 percent by 2020, the firm said. Overall, installation of automated driving technologies is growing by just 2 percent to 5 percent annually, Boston Consulting said.

The firm calculated that the driver-assist safety technology would provide a $16,307-a-car benefit to society in accidents avoided and injuries and deaths prevented. The total cost to a consumer of all the driver-assist features the study focused on is $8,240, Boston Consulting said.

Reprinted from Bloomberg Business, September 29.

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US Court Of Appeals Delays WOTUS Rule Nationwide

By Julie Ufner

NACo Associate Legislative Director, Environment, Energy & Land Use

On October 9, a federal court ordered the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) to temporarily delay nationwide adoption of the "Waters of the US" (WOTUS) rule. The order was in response to challenges brought by 18 states (Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, Mississippi, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, West Virginia and Wisconsin).

Two of the three 6th Circuit Court of Appeals judges held that the states bringing the challenges "have demonstrated a substantial possibility of success on the merits of their claims" and ordered the rule to be "STAYED, nationwide, pending further order of the court." However, in the coming weeks, this same Court must determine whether it has the authority to hear the case.

This comes only after a separate decision on August 27 by the US District Court of North Dakota to delay the rule in 13 states (Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Idaho, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, South Dakota and Wyoming). Prior to last week's Court of Appeals' ruling, however, the EPA and the Corps were still legally allowed to implement the final rule in the remaining 37 states.

While numerous WOTUS cases have been filed by 31 states and other private parties in separate circuit courts, the US Judicial Panel on Multidistrict Litigation decided that the cases would be merged in the 6th Circuit Court of Appeals because they are similar in nature. In a separate development, the same panel denied the Department of Justice's request to consolidate other WOTUS lawsuits filed separately in district court against EPA and the Corps.

This development only increases the complexity because it remains undetermined whether challenges will ultimately be heard in circuit or district courts. This will likely lengthen the timeframe of the rule's judicial proceedings.

State of Play in Congress

On May 12, the US House of Representatives passed the Regulatory Integrity Protection Act of 2015 (HR 1732) by a vote of 261-155. This would withdraw the final rule and require the agencies to restart the rule-making process, inclusive of state and local governments. While the measure passed with a majority of votes, there were not enough to override a presidential veto.

The US Senate has a similar bill, the Federal Water Quality Protection Act (S 1140), that would also require the agencies to redo the "Waters of the US" rule-making process. Additionally, the bill includes a set of principles the agencies should consider when rewriting the rule, including the types of ditches that should be exempt. S 1140 is awaiting floor consideration.

The Senate could also take up SJRes 22, a joint resolution expressing Congressional disapproval for the rule. Both the House of Representatives and Senate FY 2016 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies appropriations bills include language to stop the final "Waters of the US." rule from being implemented.

If you have any questions, contact Julie Ufner, NACo Associate Legislative Director, Environment, Energy & Land Use at 202.942.4269 or jufner@naco.org.

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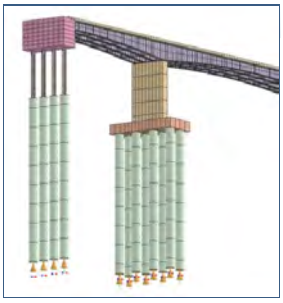
LTAP/TTAP Technology Transfer Group Seeks Your Feedback



Successful deployment of innovation and technologies is a primary theme of the surface transportation program. Effective technology transfer (T2) benefits all transportation stakeholders, including local and tribal transportation agencies. This FHWA-led national effort assists LTAP/TTAP Centers in fulfilling their mission-critical technology transfer role by seeking out important and significant technologies that can benefit the local/tribal transportation community.

Because identifying, assessing, and exchanging information about the most locally relevant technologies is a resource-intensive activity, FHWA has enlisted a cadre of T2 champions from the LTAP/TTAP community to support this effort. We—the members of this T2 champions group—need you to identify technologies from across the transportation community which can be easily adapted, easily implemented, and creative or innovative.

Give us the name of the technology and a contact person and we'll do the leg work. The T2 champions group will collect a list of technologies, evaluate the implementation impact, and select a few to promote using the most appropriate method and media delivery. In nine months we will then evaluate how the technology information exchange has impacted the adoption and application of the technology by local/tribal agencies.

If you have any technologies, please forward your suggestions to Mark Sandifer at mark.sandifer@dot.gov.

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Free Webinar!

Presented by the ABC-UTC at Florida International University (FIU).

Update on the latest happenings related to ABC in the US and abroad.

Speakers
Brian Keierleber, PE, County Engineer, Buchanan County, Iowa
Alex Davis, PE, Assistant County Engineer, Buchanan County, Iowa
Hosin "David" Lee, PhD, PE, Professor, University of Iowa

Presentation
Iowa's Buchanan County is leading the US's implementation of a new ultra-high-performance concrete for extended bridge service life. The concrete, termed K-UHPC, was used in the 6 52-ft-long precast post-tensioned pi-girders and longitudinal closure joints of the single-span Deacon Avenue Bridge in Buchanan County, constructed in September.

The project was a collaborative effort between Buchanan County, the Iowa DOT, the University of Iowa's Laboratory for Advanced Construction Technology (LACT), and the Korea Institute of Civil Engineering and Building Technology (KICT) in South Korea. This presentation describes the planning, design, and construction of this innovative ABC project.

Q&A
Submit your questions when you register for the webinar and also in the question box during the webinar.

November 30

1:00-2:00 pm EDT

Iowa County Bridge Constructed of K-UHPC

Register HERE

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Road Transport Automation : Free Webinar

You know driverless cars, but do you know the distinction between automated, autonomous, and connected vehicles? And why you as a planner should care about automation?

Free Webinar

Thursday, November 19
2:00 PM–3:30 PM EST
PDH: 1.5 PDHs offered

Hosted by US DOT

Register **HERE**

Road Transport Automation and Transportation Planning is the 2nd in this series of webinars produced from the 2015 Automated Vehicles Symposium. This 90 minute webinar will explore what transportation planners need to know to adequately consider automation in the long range planning process.

Agenda

Scott Smith will present the basics of vehicle automation, including the levels of automation, the distinction between automated, autonomous and connected vehicles, and some specific applications. He will discuss possible timelines and the major sources of uncertainty in both the timing and form that automation will take.

John Orr will address the question of “Why should planners care about automation?”

Jeremy Raw will present some approaches to planning for automated vehicles in the context of performance-based planning, making use of scenarios to envision possible futures.

Max Azizi will present preliminary findings from a recent FHWA-sponsored project on incorporating connected and automated vehicles into the planning process.

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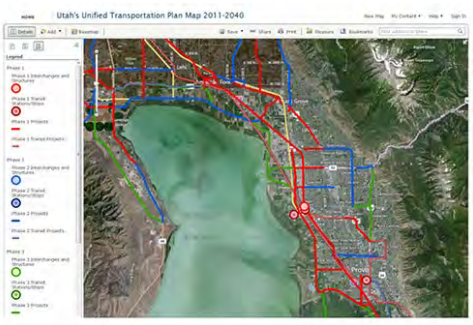
Using GIS Tools to Improve Project Delivery



State Departments of Transportation (DOTs) and other transportation agencies are increasingly exploring and utilizing tools that link technology with planning. As spatial data becomes more widely available, practitioners are capitalizing on the intersections between Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and required environmental review processes, to accelerate and improve the quality of environmental impact evaluations.

GIS is a collection of software, hardware, and data used to store, manipulate, analyze, and present geographically referenced information. The ability to consider a range of environmental impacts holistically is a valuable tool for expediting project delivery. GIS tools provide access to data that allows practitioners to consider important variables early in the planning process, ensuring that transportation decisions and discussions are driven by data. The Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) Geospatial Data Collaboration effort supports these practices and encourages the sharing of geospatial tools and technologies.

Data-Driven Decisionmaking Expedites Planning and Review Processes

Once GIS capabilities are in place, they significantly reduce the time agencies spend collecting, assembling, and managing data. To develop and utilize GIS tools, planners must first standardize geospatial data collection, integrate or consolidate the data into a common framework, and develop standards and common formats. Many agencies choose to build custom tools (e.g., screening tools, data libraries, or multi-agency decision support systems), but they may also emulate existing platforms, such as the Utah Department of Transportation's (UDOT) UPlan.

UDOT's UPlan Combines Data Sources for Improved Environmental Planning

UPlan is an interactive planning and analysis web application that contains a wide range of datasets, including environmental, natural resource, and planning data. Data in UPlan is compiled from a variety of sources and displayed spatially on an interactive map. Reports, websites, and public comments can be spatially linked, so all data associated with a project or study is visible in one place.

Local businesses, UDOT partners, and the public may also access the data used to create the dynamic maps and analytical tools found in UPlan. Users can download and access data within other applications, through UPlan's robust data repository —UGate. Both UPlan and UGate are accessible via mobile device, making the tools even more practical and user-friendly.

UDOT utilizes UPlan to streamline its environmental decisionmaking through the Utah Planning and Environment Linkage (uPEL) Application, an approach developed by FHWA and modified for Utah. uPEL is a geographic planning tool that uses natural resource and demographic data to assess the impacts that a proposed transportation project may have on environmental and community resources. Potential impacts are assigned to one of three tiers and ranked in terms of resource sensitivity, indicating issues that would lengthen project and regulation time or require potential mitigation or extensive public engagement. Using a tiered system helps to determine which projects are most likely to lead to conflicts with stakeholders, time, and costs.

GIS-Based Streamlining Spreads to Other States

Many States have adopted UPlan's framework, adding their own data and customizing it to meet their specific needs. The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) has also endorsed UPlan, championing its technology and encouraging State DOTs to adopt the UPlan framework through its AASHTO Innovation Initiative (AII).

The AII launched the Geospatial Online Transportation User Group, which provides ongoing support and development of comprehensive web-based GIS for transportation agencies. AASHTO also hosts an annual GIS conference where streamlining the National Environmental Policy Act review processes is a frequent topic.

Many States are now utilizing GIS to streamline environmental reviews and accelerate project delivery. Below are several examples of custom GIS initiatives and tactics that State DOTs have implemented:

Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT): FDOT works with the University of Florida to provide and use data in the

University's Florida Geographic Data Library, which includes important environmental and cultural information such as wetlands locations, archaeological sites, and endangered species habitat data.

Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT): The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission partnered with PennDOT to make archaeological and historic resource data from several decades more accessible. Through the creation of the Cultural Resources Geographic Information System, a map-based inventory of the historic and archaeological sites and surveys, users can instantly view records and data that previously required travel to the physical archives in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

Washington Department of Transportation (WSDOT): WSDOT's Environmental GIS Workbench is a custom GIS application with over 700 layers of various types of environmental and natural resource data. Using Workbench, WSDOT staff can locate transportation projects and display environmental data for that location. This helps planners to flag potential environmental issues that will affect project planning.

Better Interagency Relationships, an Ancillary Benefit of Using GIS Tools

GIS tools enable more effective projects by facilitating highly efficient planning and documentation, and saving time and money through reliable, pre-established datasets and analyses. As web-based tools continue to grow in popularity, agency collaboration will also likely increase, reducing industry silos and encouraging shared data pools. This move towards open data also promotes open government, inviting the public to understand and view the data behind decisionmaking processes. The relationships built through these projects—both interagency and with the public—can ultimately lead to project benefits across departments, agencies, and States.

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DOT Releases New Freight Transportation Data

US Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS) released the first product from the newest version of the "Freight Analysis Framework," the most comprehensive publicly available data set of freight movement. The new data show an increase in the dollar value of goods moved on the transportation network.

"A transportation network that can support the freight needs of this country is essential to a healthy economy," U.S. Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx said. "The need for infrastructure investment is growing more urgent every day." Secretary Foxx emphasized the importance of freight to the economy in the Department's study of transportation trends, "Beyond Traffic", conducted earlier this year. The study pointed to a 45 percent growth in freight in the United States by 2040.

The newly baselined Freight Analysis Framework estimates show that in 2012, nearly 17.0 billion tons of goods worth about $17.9 trillion were moved on the transportation network, which equates to 47 million tons of goods valued at more than $49 billion a day moved throughout the country on all transportation modes – compared to $45 billion per day in 2007. Trucks remain the most commonly used mode to move freight, transporting 64 percent of the weight and 71 percent of the value in 2012 – compared to 65 percent of the value in 2007.

"Once again the importance of highways to the economy is underscored even as the passage of a long-term reauthorization bill continues to be uncertain," Federal Highway Administrator Gregory Nadeau said. "Efficient freight movement will be at the core of business success for decades to come."

"BTS' Transportation Services Index issued last week shows that freight on the nation's transportation system has grown by almost a third since the low point during the recession in April 2009," Bureau of Transportation Statistics Director Patricia Hu said. "Today's release of the new Freight Analysis Framework, built on BTS' Commodity Flow Survey, is the first in a series of tools that will help officials at all levels of government plan for continued freight growth."

The "Freight Analysis Framework" includes data on the amount and types of goods that move by land, sea and air between large metropolitan areas, states and regions. It is designed to provide information on national level freight flows across the nation's transportation network. This information helps the public and private sectors at all levels better understand freight movement; transportation planners use it to target resources to improve operations or increase capacity. Today's product focuses on the origin and destination component of FAF. Additional elements are planned for future release.

View the Freight Analysis Framework.
http://ops.fhwa.dot.gov/freight/freight_analysis/faf/index.htm

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Questionnaire - Advantages / Disadvantages of In / Outsourcing Practices of Traffic Monitoring Activities

Complete the Questionnaire

Introduction and Background

Under a contract with the US DOT (FHWA) - Office of Highway Policy Information), Battelle Memorial Institute is conducting research to assess the benefits and disadvantages of traffic data collection practices.

Research Objective

The primary objective is to gather traffic monitoring system (TMS) data collection information on motorized vehicles from state DOTs, MPOs, and local agencies, and to document the advantages and disadvantages of in/outsourcing practices of traffic monitoring activities (fully, partially, or hybrid of the two).

The end product will be a guideline document that summarizes findings and provides a systematic approach for the decision-making process involving the in/outsourcing of traffic monitoring activities. For the purposes of this assessment, 'outsourcing' is used to describe activities that are fully or partially contracted to entities that are not affiliated with your agency and 'insourcing' is used to describe activities that are fully or partially performed by using your agency's in-house financial, human, and capital resources.

Process

There are 2 sets of questions in the web-based assessment. The initial Qualification Questions will assess if a particular agency meets certain criteria aligned with the objectives of this research. The Detailed Questions will assess the details of your agency's traffic data collection practices such as equipment installation, traffic counts, contracting, agreements, etc.

Following the questionnaire period and if your agency is determined to be included in further research, we will conduct phone interviews to understand the details of the operations and decision-making processes.

Project Managers

FHWA
Steven Jessberger 202-366-5052 / Steven.Jessberger@dot.gov

Battelle
Murat Omay 703-413-7823 / omay@battelle.org

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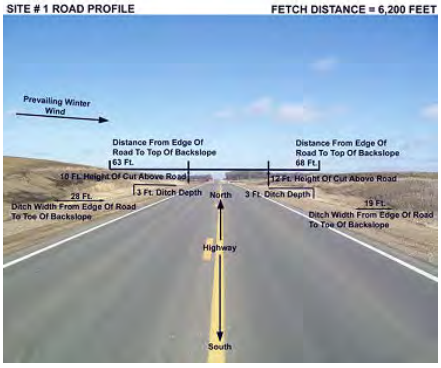
Monthly Publication · Washington, DC

October 2015

Drift-Free Roads Design Tool Now Online



An online tool is available to help transportation agencies design drift-free roads. The Minnesota Drift-Free Roads Design Module allows user to create two types of mitigation strategies: a proper road design and a snow fence design.

A suitably designed roadway will deposit snow in ditches rather than on the roadway, and blowing snow that does reach the road will move across without drifting. Snow fences capture blowing snow upwind of a problem area and store that snow over the winter season.

With the tool, users are able to enter a site-specific blowing snow problem and examine solutions. For designing a snow fence, users will need roadway compass orientation and fetch distance. For road design, users need the following parameters: distance from edge of pavement to toe of backslope, depth of the ditches, height of the cut above the road surface, and compass orientation of the roadway.

The tool was created by partnering staff at the Minnesota Department of Transportation and the Minnesota State Climatology Office, with technical support from the University of Minnesota College of Food, Agricultural and Natural Resource Sciences.

The design tool is one of the components of the Blowing Snow Control Tools website:

- Cost-Benefit Web tool: This tool allows transportation agencies to estimate the return on investment of implementing blowing snow control practices such as living snow fences or standing corn rows on private lands.
- Webinars demonstrating how to use both tools.
- Videos, including Fences that Save: Cost-Effective Snow Control Tools. This video describes the standing corn row program. It was produced by MnDOT Video Services.