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Issue Number 77, September 2016

State Aid E-Scene

BWSR - Wetland Credits for Road Replacement Program

By: Gary Reihl, Federal Aid Project Development

On September 9, 2016 the Board of Water and Soils Resources sent a letter to Commissioner Zelle. This letter described the shortage of wetland credits in the Local Road Wetland Replacement Program. This letter was copied and sent to: MnDOT's State Aid and Environmental Services Divisions, the Association of Minnesota Counties, Minnesota Inter-County Association, League of Minnesota Cities and Minnesota Association of Townships.

The following is a portion of the letter sent from John Jaschke, Executive Director at BWSR.

Dear Commissioner Zelle:

As you are aware, the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) is responsible for providing wetland mitigation for certain local government road projects exempt from the replacement requirements of the Wetland Conservation Act (WCA). Since 1996 we have managed the Local Road Wetland Replacement

Program (LRWRP) and have successfully provided approximately 4,200 compensatory mitigation credits to offset 2,800 acres of wetlands impacted by eligible public road projects at a cost of \$27.7 million dollars. Unfortunately, as a result of repeated cycles of underfunding we are now facing a shortage of credits in many band service areas that will affect our ability to provide wetland replacement in the future. I am writing you today to provide you with specifics on the status of the LRWRP and outline the measures we are considering in response to the wetland credit shortfall...

...As the state agency charged with working with local road authorities and in light of our longstanding partnership agreement, I felt it was necessary to inform you of the status of the (LRWRP) before a formal announcement is made and to provide you with an opportunity to discuss this matter in greater detail. We believe that steps need to be taken prior to the end of this year to address

these issues and chart a path forward. I would appreciate any suggestions you might have regarding options for addressing the credit shortage as well as the most effective methods for coordination and outreach with the local road authorities across the state.

BWSR has addressed the issue with MnDOT and State Aid, and has made a presentation at the September Association of Minnesota Counties conference. BWSR hopes to have more details and some possible solutions in late September, early October.



Summary on “Evaluation of Pavement Markings on Challenging Surfaces”

By: Sulmaan Khan, Program Support Engineer

MnDOT has recently completed a research project which conducted field trials to evaluate the marking performance of different combinations of pavement marking materials and installation practices on challenging surfaces. The challenging surfaces that are mentioned refer to “non-smooth” roadway surfaces, such as seal coat and micro surface treated roadways which often times experience poor pavement marking performance.

One part of the research involved documenting pavement marking performance on several municipal roadways within the City of Eden Prairie. There were seven different locations measured which provide information on pavement marking performance over different conditions of traffic levels and line types. All locations were on seal-coated roadways. Based on field measurements taken, the following conclusions were made:

- For yellow centerlines, roadway sections initially painted with latex and epoxy the following year performed (using 100mcd as a performance threshold) over at least two years and possibly three years, based on traffic and winter maintenance conditions.
- For white edgelines and white skip lines, the data show a difference in performance due to traffic. A section with more than 19,000 vehicles per day measured 132 mcd after one winter compared to another section with 4,400 vehicles per day which measured 226 mcd.

Even though the data are limited, epoxy (applied one year after latex) appears to perform for at least two years and possibly three, depending on traffic and winter maintenance.

- Starting in 2013, the City of Eden Prairie changed its striping practices so that it initially stripes seal-coated roadways with latex paint and then restripes a year later with epoxy. These findings support this practice and show that this can extend the performance of the epoxy stripe up to three years. In discussions with the city, it was found that they were replacing epoxy striping after one year on this type of challenging surface before they had switched to their new practice.

The other part of the research involved installing test decks along MnDOT roadways in order to assess the performance of different marking materials over different challenging surfaces by product, thickness, bead package, and whether or not a primer was applied. The test decks were installed on US 61 and US 52. The test deck on US 61 failed due to pavement material issues and was not included in the final analysis. The following are conclusions gathered from the US 52 test deck:

- Latex (12 mil thickness) – The two latex sections installed (with and without primer) did not perform and had to be repainted after less than one year of performance
- High build paint – For the 25 mil thickness, the latex primer

improved the performance of the pavement marking material. The average for white skip/edgelines was 98mcd with a primer compared to 83 mcd without. When the material thickness was increased to 35 mil, the primer was not found to have an impact.

- Epoxy – The two epoxy materials used, HPS4 and MFUA-10 (both at 12 mil thickness), provided good performance after two winters regardless of whether a primer was used or not.
- Material thickness – Without the seal-coat test results for US 61, it is not possible to contrast the impact of marking material thicknesses based solely on the micro surface on US 52. However, there is evidence that an increased material thickness improves performance given the results of the 12 mil latex and 25 mil high build. When the material thickness increases above 25 mil, there appears to be enough material to cover the surface voids (resulting from a challenging surface) and still have good performance without a primer.

The full report on [Evaluation of Pavement Markings on Challenging Surfaces](#) (PDF) can be found on the LRRB website. Questions on pavement markings can be directed to Sulmaan Khan at sulmaan.m.khan@state.mn.us or 651-366-3829.

Alexandria Complete Streets Demo Project

By: Tim Schoonhoven, Alexandria City Engineer

Project Overview

In July and August of 2016, the City of Alexandria and Horizon Public Health partnered to implement a complete streets demonstration project in downtown Alexandria. This project was constructed entirely of temporary materials and created entirely by city crews in less than a week. It was designed to be in-place for six weeks through the heart of the summer tourist season. It featured a number of complete street elements including a road diet, protected bicycle lanes, trees, bump-outs and other aesthetic features that resulted in a safer and more welcoming street for all users. The demonstration project was erected on a 1.5 block stretch in downtown Alexandria that provides a critical link between users of the Central Lakes Trail and the newly reconstructed downtown. The project was intended as both a means of engaging the public in the design of the project and as an evaluation tool to better understand the interaction between the various vehicle, pedestrian and bicycle features. The evaluation piece of the project included before, and after pedestrian counts, vehicle speed comparisons, personal interviews, and solicited comments from website, Facebook and direct phone calls. Communications elements included presentations at various public meetings including City Council, Planning Commission, and Downtown Merchants Association meetings, newspaper articles, radio presentations, and social media postings.



Project Background

In 2014 the city undertook a major reconstruction of their downtown to incorporate complete streets features into the historical downtown retail district. This road (Broadway Avenue) is also a trunk highway serving approximately 18,000 vehicles a day. The completed project includes trees, benches, planters, bump-outs, accessibility improvements, enhanced traffic signals and a host of other features which were intended to make the area more bicycle and pedestrian friendly. The project was a great success but from the earliest planning stages, it was recognized that the far north end of Broadway was a missing element. This stretch, the "Missing Link" is a critical connection between the Central Lakes Trail and the downtown area. The completion of this link as a pedestrian and bicycle connection is recognized as a necessary part of the overall downtown revitalization if the project is to meet its full potential.

Ultimately the lessons learned will be incorporated into a permanent

reconstruction of this section of road which will incorporate many of the multimodal complete streets elements from the demonstration project. The demonstration project offers a unique opportunity for the public to engage directly with the design of a project at its earliest stages. The information learned will help the City of Alexandria, and potentially other communities deal with the policy implications inherent with the simultaneous interplay of the various modes of transportation.



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continued...Alexandria Complete Streets Demo Project

Statewide Implications

The “Missing Link” complete streets demonstration project has implications that affect many aspects of the transportation industry. The project is situated in a greater Minnesota micropolitan area which has a different character than a typical urban complete streets environment.

At its surface it is intended to present and showcase a large number of complete streets elements into an area that was previously entirely dedicated to vehicular transportation. The temporary nature of

the project is intended to allow fast track changes that allow the city to learn from the project and try out different designs. This is a unique approach that allows real time changes without significant investment of time or money.

Secondarily, the project is an opportunity to engage the public directly into the design of a transportation project in a way that is much more tangible than ordinary methods. The project is in effect a full-size temporary 3D model that the public can touch, feel and engage in. The lessons learned,

both good and bad, can be applied to future projects and incorporated into the way designs are presented to the public. The effectiveness of the communications is itself an important aspect of this project and can be applied to other disciplines throughout the transportation industry.

To learn more, watch the [Missing Link Pilot Project video](#).

SAF Roles and Responsibilities

By: Ann McLellan, State Aid Finance Supervisor

State Aid Finance has an updated [Roles and Responsibilities document](#) (PDF) outlining who is responsible for what. Each person in the unit has their “expert area” and they work on that activity from beginning to end. Please refer to the document when sending information to the SAF unit to ensure the correct person is informed.

In addition, a few changes have been made to the SAF unit.

- Cindy Degener is now the contact person for both the Disaster Account and Emergency Relief (mirroring the State Aid Disaster Coordinator Mark Vizecky’s role working with Disaster and Emergency Relief).
- Turnback and Local Transportation Bonding will be done entirely by Sandra Martinez.

- Mike Kilanowski will no longer be updating the State Aid Finance website and Alyssa Klossner from SALT has taken over.

Lastly, other projects we are working on: redesigning the SAF website, working with a technical writer to update the Accounting Manual, training for a variety of our customers, cleaning up the SAAS and Federal County Road and Bridge (aka FCRB) system reports, and automation of the updating of the Bond Funding Report.



Signal and Lighting Certification and Recertification

Courses for the Signal and Lighting Certification and Signal and Lighting Recertification are available for select dates in January, February and April. To view further details or to register visit our [Trainings & Workshops webpage](#).



FLAP Round 3 to December 16, 2016

By: Lynnette Roshell, Federal Aid Agreement & Special Programs Engineer

Applications will be open for round three of the Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP) applications on September 15, 2016. Applications are due December 16, 2016. Qualified projects are those which improve access, mobility, and promote economic development in and around federally owned properties. Applications are being taken for about \$1.2 million in funding in each of federal fiscal years 2019 and 2020. We suggest projects of at least \$700,000 in size for construction costs.

The goal of FLAP is to improve transportation facilities that provide access to, are adjacent to, or are located within Federal lands. The program is managed through the FHWA's Federal Lands Highway Divisions. Please note that this is a Title 23 Federal Aid Highway Reimbursable Program and not a lump-sum grant program.

Please explore the [Eastern Federal Lands \(EFL\) FLAP website](#) and follow the links to Minnesota's FLAP website to download the application, review the state's program goals and view the call for projects standard operating procedure and associated scoring criteria.

Applications should be submitted via email to EFL.planning@dot.gov by the end of the day (11:59 PM) on December 16, 2016 to be considered. If required, applications via mail, FedEx, UPS or fax will also be accepted. Applications for Minnesota may be submitted to Lynnette Roshell at lynnette.roshell@state.mn.us for

a preliminary review prior to December 1, 2016. This is highly suggested, but not required.

What is the purpose of FLAP?

The purpose of the FLAP is to provide safe and adequate transportation access to and through Federal Lands for visitors, recreationists, and resource users. The FLAP supplements state and local resources for public roads, transit systems, and other transportation facilities, with an emphasis on high-use recreation sites and economic generators.

Where can projects be located?

Proposed projects or studies must be associated with a public highway, road, bridge, trail or transit system that is located on, is adjacent to, or provides access to Federal Lands for which the transportation facility's title or maintenance responsibility is vested with a state, county, city, township, tribal, municipal or other local government entity.

Who is eligible to apply?

Eligible applicants include county, tribal or city government agencies that own or maintain the transportation facility. The term "Transportation Facility" means a public highway, road, bridge, trail or transit system that is located on, is adjacent to, or provides access to Federal Lands for which title or maintenance responsibility is vested in a county, town, township, tribal, municipal, or local government. Maintenance means the preservation of the entire roadway surface, shoulders, roadside

ditches, drainage structures, bridges, and traffic control devices necessary for safe and efficient operations. Vested maintenance responsibility means that the majority of the cost for these activities is borne by the county, town, township, tribal, municipal, or local government.

The FLAP program applicant must be the facility owner, have maintenance responsibility or must supply a letter from the facility owner/maintainer indicating that the application is being submitted on their behalf. Early coordination between the appropriate Federal Land Management Agency whose access would be improved by the proposed action and the applicant state/county/local/tribal government is encouraged to ensure adequate time for input and signature of concurrence before the submittal due date.

What types of projects will be considered?

FLAP supplements state and local resources for public roads, transit systems, and other transportation facilities, with an emphasis on the improvement of access to federally owned high-use recreation sites and federal economic generators. FLAP funds are intended for: Capital Improvement, Enhancements, Surface Preservation, transit, research or safety.

Are matching funds required?

The program requires matching funds of approximately 20 percent of the estimated project construction costs. Applicants may also

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continued...FLAP Round 3 to December 16, 2016

provide additional funds beyond the minimum required matching funds to contribute to the project. Because of limited FLAP funding available in each state in any given federal fiscal year, proposals will receive additional consideration when funding is leveraged from other sources.

How would the projects be delivered?

FLAP will be administered through MnDOT's SALT Division and the EFL's Highway Division rather than the FHWA's Minnesota Division, but the rules are pretty much the same. From the guidance we have received from FHWA, it can be any federally owned property, although the scoring is more targeted to federal recreational land and economic generators. Eligible applicants are

the owners of the access facilities such as cities, counties and tribal governments. Applicants must be state aid agencies, be tribal governments or have a state aid agency to act as a sponsor. Projects must have the support of the federal landowner that the project will provide access to. If more than one project is submitted related to a federal landowner, the owner will be asked to prioritize the projects.

What if I have questions?

Visit the [Minnesota FLAP website](#) for further information and resources, including: FAQs, scoring criteria, state goals, tip sheet and more. If you have any additional questions contact Lynnette Roshell, Lewis Grimm or Richelle Ellis.

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Master Partnerships

By: Lynnette Roshell, Federal Aid Agreement & Special Programs Engineer

Time flies when you're having fun! The Master Partnership agreements written with many of you are set to expire on July 1, 2017. If you have any comments or concerns on how this process can be made better please contact Patti Loken at patti.loken@state.mn.us or 651-366-3803. Look for updated agreements this spring to take to your board or council. This is not your DCP agreement which instructs you on the rules of the federal funding process. These were written in 2012 and have no expiration date until we update them. Issues are being studied that may mean these agreements will need to be updated as well.

Questions on the DCP agreement should be directed to Lynnette Roshell at lynette.roshell@state.mn.us or 651-366-3822.



Changes coming to the Right of Way Certificates

By: Gary Reihl, Federal Aid Project Development

In the last project Compliance Assessment Program (CAP) reviews done by the FHWA, the biggest red flag in the project documentation was the Right of Way Certificates #1 and #1A. The current State Aid Right of Way Certificates #1 and #1A do not mention the status of utilities and railroads within the limits of the project right of way. State Aid is currently in the process of updating the document and will have the revisions up on the SALT website soon. You may be asked to update the Right of Way Certificates #1 and #1A for your project to make sure it clears the next FHWA CAP.

Contract Payment Reminder

By: Ann McLellan, State Aid Finance Supervisor

State Aid Finance will process contract payments for 2016 for pay requests received in our office by 4 p.m. Thursday, December 15th. Payments received after this time and date will be processed as the process time permits. Please remember you do not have to wait until the final week to send your payments in; the earlier the better.

State Aid Finance, we process it and then enter into SWIFT in a nightly batch to Minnesota Management and Budget. MMB reviews the payments before they are released. The entire process can take two to three days, so any payment received after 4 p.m., Thursday December 15th may not be fully processed in SWIFT.



Changes Proposed to RGP-4

By: Gary Reihl, Federal Aid Project Development

There has been discussion about the potential for modifying GP-4.

- That federal applicants (or applicants with federal funding) are not subject to the reporting requirement for the Endangered Species Act, since this is a change that was proposed by Corps HQ at the national level for the Nationwide Permit program. Minnesota Division has decided to move forward with this change. This should result in less reporting projects.

- Modification of the Pre-Construction Notification (PCN) requirement for Northern Long-Eared Bat (NLEB) in light of the final 4(d) rule (which became official in Feb 2016, after GP-4 was issued), this is just updating the GP-4 to meet the requirements of the final (4d) Rule.
- The reporting requirement for temporary impacts that exceed 180 days. Right now, in the temporary impact general condition, GP-4 requires applicants to receive written approval if temporary impacts go over 90 days. We are proposing to add this as a reporting requirement for clarity, but increase the timeframe to 180 days. We talked about the changes to the NLEB PCN requirement and the temporary impact reporting requirement at a conference call with MnDOT District staff several months ago, so these have been in operation, but just have not made the actual changes to the permit yet.



Historical Reviews for USACE 404 Permits

By: Gary Reihl, Federal Aid Project Development

There is some government contracting issues going on with the MnDOT /USACE historical review position, Linda Pate. Because of the contract lapse she will not have access to USACE electronic files nor will she have a phone at the USACE office. Linda will continue to go to the Corps each week, but will be conducting Section 106 Reviews using only paper files. There are no changes for the cities and the counties, just a minor inconvenience. Her contact information is:

Mailing Address:
MnDOT Culture Resources Unit
395 John Ireland Blvd., MS 620
St. Paul, MN 55155

Email: linda.pate@state.mn.us
Office: 651-366-3624
Cell: 651-245-8279
Fax: 651-366-3603

Employee News

New Hires

Pat Enderson is now Mitch's Administrative Assistant. Pat will be splitting her duties between State Aid and the Modal Planning and Program Management Divisions. Pat started at MnDOT in October 2015 and worked as the Commissioner's Office receptionist. Prior to MnDOT she worked in the private sector.

Olga Kruglova is a new Administrative Assistant for the federal aid and state aid program areas. She

will be doing most of the administrative tasks for the office and also the one coordinating screening board meeting arrangements and other tasks similar to that. She started on July 27 but has been working with the office since March as a student worker.

Mobility

Greg Coughlin has taken a mobility in our central office. Greg's primary task will be to tackle some special projects, including: working to develop a master maintenance

agreement between MnDOT and local agencies, streamlining Co-operative Agreement project review and approval, ADA items, training development, federal fund exchange process, and any other pressing, statewide issues that come up. Most recently Greg was the assistant director of metro district maintenance and operations and previous to this he was the metro district state aid engineer.



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<http://www.dot.state.mn.us/stateaid/>