

TRANSPORTATION POOLED FUND PROGRAM

QUARTERLY PROGRESS REPORT

Lead Agency (FHWA or State DOT): Maine Department of Transportation

INSTRUCTIONS:

Lead Agency contacts should complete a quarterly progress report for each calendar quarter during which the projects are active. Please provide a project schedule status of the research activities tied to each task that is defined in the proposal; a percentage completion of each task; a concise discussion (2 or 3 sentences) of the current status, including accomplishments and problems encountered, if any. List all tasks, even if no work was done during this period.

Transportation Pooled Fund Program Project # <i>(i.e., SPR-2(XXX), SPR-3(XXX) or TPF-5(XXX))</i> TPF-5(373)	Transportation Pooled Fund Program - Report Period: ☐ Quarter 1 (January 1 – March 31) ☐ Quarter 2 (April 1 – June 30) ☐ Quarter 3 (July 1 – September 30) ☒ Quarter 4 (October 1 – December 31)	
TPF Study Number and Title: TPF-5(373) New England Transportation Consortium VII		
Lead Agency Contact: Jeffrey Pulver	Lead Agency Phone Number: 207-446-1009	Lead Agency E-Mail jeffrey.pulver@maine.gov
Lead Agency Project ID: 23430.18	Other Project ID (i.e., contract #): Click or tap here to enter text.	Project Start Date: 1/4/2018
Original Project Start Date: 1/4/2018	Original Project End Date: 6/30/2022	If Extension has been requested, updated project End Date: 9/30/2025

Project schedule status:

☐ On schedule	☒ On revised schedule	☐ Ahead of schedule	☐ Behind schedule
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Overall Project Statistics:

Total Project Budget	Total Funds Expended This Quarter	Percentage of Work Completed to Date
\$2,734,259.00	\$40,941.71	90%

Project Description:

A transportation research program, where research projects are conducted primarily by the Land Grant Universities of the New England states. This study was preceded by TPF-5(222), TPF-5(201), TPF-5(168), SPR-3(089), SPR-3(029), and SPR-3(009). Other State DOTs may participate in individual research projects by providing funds and a project technical committee member to represent their agency.

The New England Transportation Consortium (NETC) is a research cooperative between the state transportation agencies of Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Vermont. NETC is a valuable regional partnership for the identification, prosecution and dissemination of shared transportation research initiatives. NETC represents:

- Financial leveraging opportunities and regional partnerships.
- Stronger partnerships between university faculty and state transportation agencies.
- User-defined, diverse research topics.
- Opportunities for research dissemination and training to practitioners in the field.

Now in its third decade, NETC was developed to help New England states meet their special research needs by pooling resources and expertise. NETC is now a well-established successful multi-state partnership.

The objective of the pooled fund is to pool the financial, professional and academic resources of the region and to use them to research and develop improved methods of dealing with common problems in the planning, design, construction, maintenance, rehabilitation, reconstruction, and operation of transportation systems in the participating states. The program is intended to supplement, not to replace, ongoing state and federal research activities and other national programs such as the Cooperative Research Programs of the National Academies.

Progress this Quarter

(includes meetings, work plan status, contract status, significant progress, etc.):

Monthly Advisory Committee meetings held on 10/29/24 and 12/4/24.

21-3: Initiating Seed Production for Effective Establishment of Native Plants on Roadsides in New England - \$200,00

- Project timeline: 5/18/22 - 8/20/24. Project budget: \$200,000
- Task 4/5: Draft Final Report and Final Report – Complete
- CTC remediated the final report. All project materials posted on the project page.

Remediation of NETC final reports

- All final reports have been remediated.

NETC Research Peer Exchange

- CTC completed the final report, sent it to attendees, posted it on the NETC website and sent it to TRB for inclusion in the R&I/RAC database.

Using remaining CTC funds

- The Advisory Committee identified several efforts (success videos contact, SME recognition synthesis and a NETC At-A-Glance) to use remaining CTC contract funds.

Administration Contract

- CTC & Associates scheduled, facilitated and distributed minutes for the 10/29/24 and 12/4/24 Advisory Committee meetings.
- CTC & Associates wrapped up the final research project.
- CTC & Associates tracked the implementation of research projects.
- CTC & Associates updated the NETC website as needed.

Anticipated work next quarter:

Monthly Advisory Committee meetings to be held on 1/28/25, 2/25/25 and 3/25/25.

2024 Topical Discussion Symposiums

- CTC will finish posting the materials for all Topical Discussions on the NETC website.

Using remaining CTC funds

- CTC will begin work on the selected projects/efforts.
- Funds may be affected by funds needed to transfer the NETC website to MassDOT.

Administration Contract

- CTC & Associates will facilitate and distribute minutes for the 1/28/25, 2/25/25 and 3/25/25.
- CTC & Associates will continue to track implementation of research projects.
- CTC & Associates will work with MA DOT on the details of transferring portions of the NETC website.
- CTC & Associates will begin the final report for the pooled fund, if required.

Significant Results:

See Progress This Quarter section.

Circumstance affecting project or budget. (Please describe any challenges encountered or anticipated that might affect the completion of the project within the time, scope and fiscal constraints set forth in the agreement, along with recommended solutions to those problems).

None.

Potential Implementation:

18-1: Development of MASH Computer Simulated Steel Bridge Rail and Transition Details

- ME is implementing 18-1 results, confirming NETC steel bridge rail is MASH crashworthy and adjusting our standard details to reflect recommended changes (for improved performance). ME does not plan on having MASH crash tests done.
- VTrans S-360 series standards for the NETC 2-Rail bridge rail and approach rail are being updated to reflect the findings in the study by VTrans. S-361 series NETC 3-Rail bridge rail and approach rail are being developed. NETC 20-1: In-Service Performance Evaluation of NETC Bridge Railings is a follow up to this project.
- ME submitted this project as a High Value Research project and it was selected as a Sweet Sixteen project.

18-2: Framework of Asphalt Balanced Mix Design for New England Agencies

- VTrans will implement aspects of this project. VTrans will base their pass/fail criteria for performance test results during mix design review/approval on the anticipated traffic loads, at least for Hamburg results.
- NHDOT feels the lowest level of BMD may be realistic and beneficial to implement at some point in the future.
- The Connecticut Advanced Pavement Lab is building a library of BMD test results, which will be implemented once the library is complete.

18-3: Integration of Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) into Operations Conducted by State Departments of Transportation

- A UAS New England peer group formed as a result of this project.
- NH is pursuing a UAS implementation plan that will build off the NETC project. The NETC project provided a broad base while the NHDOT plan will be specific to New Hampshire needs.
- VTrans will use the project's results to look at new platforms, as a starting point to fill in gaps in their existing UAS procedures and workflows, and as a reference for future discussions in the peer group.

20-1: In-Service Performance Evaluation of NETC Steel Bridge Railings is a follow on project to 18-1: Development of MASH Computer Simulated Steel Bridge Rail and Transition Details.

21-3: Initiating Seed Production for Effective Establishment of Native Plants on New England Roadsides.

- CT will look to incorporate the seed mixes and more strategic mowing practices beyond simple reduced mowing, including an increase of their mowing height to more than 5 inches statewide.
- MA will use information from this project to assist their landscape architects. They will develop guidance for conservation mowing.
- NH is hoping to increase conversations about using native seed in NH and consider including some of the native seed in their standard seed mix. They will also consider conservation mowing.
- RI has other related projects and will cross-reference the information from them all. The Maintenance Division is very interested in the conservation mowing and are making changes in mower deck height, as well as looking at the timing of mowing throughout the mowing season.
- VT will further test the seed mixes from the study on some of their construction projects. The study supports what VT has been working on related to pollinators over the past 5 years well, and sets them up to continue improving/learning from this effort in the future.