



**North/West Passage  
Transportation Pooled Fund Study  
TPF-5(093)  
Q2 2006 Status Report  
April 1 – June 30, 2006**

**Project Description**

The North/West Passage Transportation Pooled Fund (TPF) Study is a multi-state cooperative program for the coordination, development, and deployment of Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) along the I-90 and I-94 corridor. The states of Washington, Idaho, Wyoming, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Minnesota, and Wisconsin have been in contact since February 25, 2002 discussing the development of a North/West Passage multi-state transportation program, which was formally established as a TPF Study in 2003. North Dakota, Minnesota, and Wisconsin contributed funding for the development of a Phase 1 work plan. Additional contributions have been made by the states of Idaho, Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, Washington and Wyoming for the development of a Phase 2 work plan. Wisconsin and Montana continue to express interest in the North/West Passage Corridor, but do not have funding secured to participate at this time. The Federal Highway Administration serves as a monitoring body, providing strategic and technical input. Minnesota serves as the Program Administrator and a Steering Committee consists of one representative from each of the states that have financially contributed to the effort. The Steering Committee meets monthly or as necessary to provide overall program direction.

**Status/Progress This Quarter and Next Steps**

**Phase 1 Work Plan Projects**

The North/West Passage TPF Study pursued eight projects selected and approved in December 2003 by the membership as outlined in the Work Plan – Phase 1 projects. The purpose of the Phase 1 projects was to implement and evaluate integrated traveler information systems and coordinate maintenance operations across state borders. All of the Phase 1 projects are now complete and individual reports for each are available online at [www.nwpassage.info](http://www.nwpassage.info). A full Phase 1 interim report has also been published and will be available online in the coming weeks.

**Phase 2 Work Plan Projects**

The Steering Committee will develop a full work plan identifying projects to pursue for Phase 2 in early 2006. However, the first project identified for Phase 2 will develop an ITS Integrated Corridor Strategic Plan for the North/West Passage. The Steering Committee elected to wait until the strategic plan is further developed before identifying a more complete list of projects for Phase 2.

- **Project 2.1 – ITS Integrated Corridor Strategic Plan**

The contract for this project was awarded to the SEH Team (SEH, PB Farradyne and TranSmart Technologies) and work began in mid-October. The plan will focus on center-to-center information sharing opportunities, includes a high-level architecture for the corridor, develop an inventory of communication coverage, and identify a coordinated deployment and operational

concept for traveler information systems across state borders. The plan will also consider current ITS industry interests such as the Clarus initiative and 511.

This quarter, a stakeholder workshop was held in Minneapolis (4/19-20) to define and prioritize potential solutions for the North/West Passage Corridor. The workshop included the state representatives, with other stakeholders attending as travel and budgets allowed. The workshop agenda consisted of an administrative review, review of the chapters drafted to-date (1-3), and working sessions to identify potential solutions, desired functions and information flows. The workshop proceedings were summarized and presented in the Concepts, Potential Solutions and Desired Functions chapter (4) of the strategic plan. The Corridor Architecture chapter (6) was also drafted immediately following the workshop. The workshop will also be further used to develop the Technology Assessment chapter (5) of the plan during the next quarter.

In addition to the stakeholder workshop in April, two other meetings were held with the group to continue development of the strategic plan: Technical Meeting 2 (5/22/06) and Technical Meeting 3 (6/29/06).

The North/West Passage web site ([www.nwpassage.info](http://www.nwpassage.info)) was also updated this quarter. Previous meeting and presentation materials, an updated schedule for future meetings, and draft chapters of the strategic plan were all added to the site for visitor and state representative access.

There were two, new presentations on North/West Passage during the ITS America Annual Meeting in Philadelphia, 5/7-9. Session 37 presented early work among Minnesota, South Dakota and North Dakota to share information for 511, in addition to plans for expanding information sharing for 511 throughout other states in the corridor. Session 45 highlighted broader based information sharing among reporting systems for traveler information, as well as operational purposes in the corridor.

A North/West Passage response to the FHWA Real-Time System Management Information Program request for information was prepared and submitted. The collective response focused on only those questions directly related to cross-border information sharing among reporting systems. The response also supported the individual responses from each of the states. Also related to FHWA, the North/West Passage continues monitoring the Clarus initiative. In anticipation of a forthcoming request for application from FHWA, the state representatives have agreed to a unified proposal for the North/West Passage as a Clarus deployment site. Once the request is released, the states will further strategize about their proposal.

Finally, the focus of the remaining chapters of the strategic plan was discussed and modified during Technical Meeting 3. It was agreed that because of the importance placed on maintenance and operations it should be treated similar to traveler information in the plan. As such, it was agreed to fold the identification of communication alternatives into the Technology Assessment chapter (5) as simply another aspect of supporting technology. It was further agreed that the time and chapter (8) originally allocated for the more in-depth communications assessment would be reallocated to a new chapter (8) entitled, "Maintenance and Operations System Integration." The tasks and timeframes below have been modified to reflect this change in scope, focus and schedule.

<b>Task</b>	<b>Estimated Start</b>	<b>Estimated Finish</b>
1. Project Management, Administration and Coordination	Mon 10/17/05	Thu 11/30/06
2. Complete Technology Inventory	Mon 11/14/05	Thu 2/16/06

(chapter1)		
3. Identify Issues, Problems and Needs (chapter 2)	Mon 1/16/06	Fri 3/10/06
4. Establish Goals, Objectives and Vision (chapter 3)	Mon 1/16/06	Fri 3/10/06
5. Concepts, Potential Solutions and Desired Functions (chapter 4)	Mon 2/13/06	Fri 4/21/06
6. Assess Technology (chapter 5)	<del>Mon 3/20/06</del> Mon 5/22/06	<del>Mon 5/22/06</del> Thu 8/24/06
7. Develop Corridor Architecture (chapter 6)	<del>Mon 5/22/06</del> Thu 4/20/06	<del>Wed 9/13/06</del> Thu 6/29/06
8. Identify Traveler Information and 511 System Integration (chapter 7)	<del>Mon 5/22/06</del> Thu 7/20/06	<del>Tue 8/1/06</del> Thu 9/21/06
9. Identify Maintenance and Operations System Integration (chapter 8)	<del>Mon 5/22/06</del> Thu 9/21/06	<del>Wed 9/13/06</del> Thu 10/19/06
10. Develop Concept of Operations and Deployment Strategy (chapter 9)	<del>Mon 6/19/06</del> Thu 10/19/06	<del>Thu 9/21/06</del> Thu 11/16/06
11. Prepare Strategic Plan	<del>Mon 9/18/06</del> Thu 11/16/06	<del>Mon 11/20/06</del> Thu 1/25/07

Next quarter, work will continue with the strategic plan. The Technology Assessment chapter (5), Traveler Information and 511 System Integration chapter (7), and Maintenance and Operations System Integration chapter (8) will be drafted.

A North/West Passage presentation will be made at the 2006 National Rural ITS Conference in Bozeman, Montana. The presentation will highlight the strategic plan being developed for the corridor, as well as the group's recent participation in federal activities such as the Clarus initiative.

The group will also continue monitoring the Clarus initiative in anticipation of the forthcoming request from FHWA.

### **Phase 1 Work Plan Financial Summary**

Member commitments for Phase 1 Projects totaled \$100,000.

- North Dakota \$25,000 (SP&R Dollars)
- Minnesota \$50,000 (SP&R Dollars)
- Wisconsin \$25,000 (80/20 I-90/94 Earmark Dollars)

### **Phase 2 Work Plan Financial Summary**

Six of the eight states in the corridor have committed \$400,000 in total for a Phase 2 Work Plan. Following is a summary of financial contributions by members through March 31, 2006. Because funding is comprised of various state and federal sources, FMIS will track SP&R dollars and Mn/DOT will administer and track other state and federal dollars through partnership agreements with the corresponding states.

- Idaho \$50,000 (Federal and State Dollars)
- Minnesota \$100,000 (SP&R Dollars-Not Yet Obligated)
- Montana-Not Yet Committed

- North Dakota \$50,000 (SP&R Dollars-Partially Obligated)
- South Dakota \$50,000 (SP&R Dollars-Not Yet Obligated)
- Washington \$50,000 (State Dollars)
- Wisconsin-\$50,000 (Federal and State Dollars)
- Wyoming \$50,000 (Federal and State Dollars)

**Project Manager**

**Mark Nelson**

Minnesota Department of Transportation (Mn/DOT)

651-634-5293

mark.nelson@dot.state.mn.us

***Report by: Ginny Crowson, SEH***

***Submitted: July 14, 2006***