

TRANSPORTATION POOLED FUND PROGRAM QUARTERLY PROGRESS REPORT

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

INSTRUCTIONS:

Project Managers and/or research project investigators 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) TPF-5(358)</i>	Transportation Pooled Fund Program - Report Period: <input type="checkbox"/> Quarter 1 (January 1 – March 31) 2021 <input type="checkbox"/> Quarter 2 (April 1 – June 30) <input type="checkbox"/> Quarter 3 (July 1 – September 30) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Quarter 4 (October 1 – December 31) 2021	
Project Title: <i>The Wildlife Vehicle Collision (WVC) Reduction and Habitat Connectivity Transportation Pooled-Fund Project Strategic Integration of Wildlife Mitigation into Transportation Procedures</i>		
Name of Project Manager(s): Nova Simpson for Nevada DOT Patricia Cramer, PI	Phone Number: Nova Simpson: 775-888-7035 Patricia Cramer: 435-764-1995	E-Mail nsimpson@dot.nv.gov cramerwildlife@gmail.com
Lead Agency Project ID: Nevada Dept. of Transportation	Other Project ID (i.e., contract #): Agreement #: P700-18-803	Project Start Date: 12/13/2018
Original Project End Date: 12/31/2021	Current Project End Date: 6/30/2022	Number of Extensions: 1

Project schedule status:

- On schedule
 On revised schedule
 Ahead of schedule
 Behind schedule

Overall Project Statistics:

Total Project Budget	Total Cost to Date for Project	Percentage of Work Completed to Date
\$146,000.00	\$102,490.23	70 %

Quarterly Project Statistics:

Total Project Expenses and Percentage This Quarter	Total Amount of Funds Expended This Quarter	Total Percentage of Time Used to Date
\$7,822.00 = 5.3%	\$7,822.00	85 %

Project Description:

The *Wildlife Vehicle Collision (WVC) Reduction and Habitat Connectivity* pooled fund study is a collaborative research project through the Transportation Pooled Fund Program. Partners from both the United States and Canada have come together with a common interest in reducing WVC's for the safety of humans and wildlife, as well as restoring habitat connectivity in landscapes fragmented by roadways. Contributing partners currently include Alaska DOT, Arizona DOT, California DOT, Iowa DOT, Michigan DOT, Minnesota DOT, Nevada DOT, New Mexico DOT, Ontario Ministry of Transportation, Oregon DOT, Washington DOT, and Parks Canada. The U.S. Federal Highway Administration - Headquarters is also a partner in this study.

This pooled fund study (PFS) will seek to identify solutions that integrate highway safety and mobility with wildlife conservation and habitat connectivity. The Project: Strategic Integration of Wildlife Mitigation into Transportation Procedures is conducted under Principal Investigator Patricia Cramer and is reported on in this progress report.

Within U.S. states and Canadian provinces, there are few standardized planning processes for considering wildlife in transportation planning, or Best Management Practices (BMP) manuals to instruct personnel at every level how to consider, plan, design, construct, and maintain transportation infrastructure that permits connectivity for wild and domestic animals that could become involved in WVC. This study investigates and makes recommendations on successful procedures that consider and create mitigation solutions to reduce WVC and provide connectivity for wildlife to assist transportation agencies in developing standards at every level.

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

The PI, Dr. Cramer worked with Nevada DOT partners to file for a 6-month extension to this project. It was approved, and the project will be completed by June 30, 2022.

The annual meeting of the Pooled Fund Partners occurred this quarter. It was conducted over Microsoft Teams. Dr. Cramer presented a slide show and proposal for how the contract extension would work in completing the Task 2 Manual. A decision was made to take the remaining travel funds and distribute them to research Team members to help complete the manual. All contracted Team members signed addendums to their contracts for additional work this release of travel funds freed up for them.

The research team outlined the final manual, and began filling in the sections. A slide show that will be used as the base of the Communication Plan was developed. The Communication Plan and Implementation Plan were drafted and sent to the Pooled Fund Partners for input.

Anticipated work next quarter:

A draft version of the manual will be completed and submitted in January.

The draft communication plan and implementation plan will be developed and submitted in February.

In March the team will begin revamping the manual based on input from Pooled Fund Partners, expected by the end of February.

Significant Results:

The project was extended six months to the end of June, 2022.

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).

Many of the past challenges have been overcome, and the research Team is progressing quickly on the delivery of the: 2021 Annual Report, the Manual on Inclusion of Wildlife in Transportation Procedures, the Communication Plan, the Implementation Plan, and further presentations about the results of the study to various audiences.

Potential Implementation:

The information generated from this work will be available for U.S. DOT's and Canadian MoT's for assistance in incorporating wildlife concerns into transportation processes.
It may also be used in the development of the wildlife sections of the U.S. Infrastructure Act.

Project Description:

The Department of Transportation (DOT) currently recommends that structure be added to large underpasses to increase wildlife use and movement, but there are a lack of scientific studies to show the efficacy of this mitigation for small mammals and herpetofauna or potential effects on use by larger species. The USGS has completed two years of Before-After Control-Impact field studies on 8 large upland wildlife underpasses in San Diego County. The objectives of this study are to determine; 1) if small vertebrate species are using these underpasses, 2) if ledges and the addition of structure (rock piles 5m apart along one side of structure) within underpasses facilitate small animal movement and 3) if the addition of structure (rock piles) affect the use rates of medium and large mammals. Using highly sensitive cameras over two years resulted in over 3 million images of which ~200,000 have been reviewed (less than 10% of total). Preliminary analysis indicates that responses to structure and ledges are specific to animal species and groups. This provides substantial training and test data sets to create a machine learning algorithm to classify images by the presence or absence of animals, and a possible second stage of classification to the species level. In order to process all photos, USGS will program a convolutional deep network (DN) to perform supervised species/group classification. Existing classified photos will be used to train the network to predict classes for the remaining ~2.8 million photos. Explanatory models will then be run to compare the relative permeability of underpasses to animal movement and effects of structure on animal activity. The results will inform the design of large underpasses for use by wildlife communities and target species.

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

Meetings (Internal USGS):

- 6 internal meetings to discuss project, strategies and results

Annual Presentations:

- Prepared presentation and presented update for PFS Annual meeting

Programming and Testing (Photo Identification-Machine Learning):

- Added additional training images from other camera trap studies for under-represented taxa.
- Revised label reclassification to reduced number of final target classes.
- Continued to refine the workflows for image labeling, preprocessing, augmentation, conversion to TFRecord files, model training, and model evaluation.
- Began work on developing a system for hyperparameter optimization (which may rely on tools such as Keras Tuner, Cray HPO HPO, etc.).
- Met and revised classification system to reduce total number of classes from 20 to 15 to increase probability of correct classifications.
- Have developed “collaborative intelligence” approach.

Anticipated work next quarter:

- Final development a system for hyperparameter optimization (which may rely on tools such as Keras Tuner, Cray HPO, etc.) and begin to apply it to improving the performance of CNNs.
- Run the training experiments and evaluate results. Select final hyperparameters for training.
- Train the final models on full training dataset.
- Make class predictions (species taxonomic groups) on unclassified images.
- Subset data to remove multiple images of same animal-event
- Randomly select 200 images from each class to validate final classification.
- Start analyzing output using N-mixture models to answer study objectives.

Significant Results:

Following initial model runs we have attained an accuracy of 88.46% on the validation dataset. While this is promising, we are working on obtaining higher accuracy of class predictions before using the predictions in further statistical analyses of the camera trap dataset.

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).**Challenges We Encountered:**

1. Developing workflow is a significant challenge that we did not anticipate. This is a result of having a multi-step, interconnected workflows and very large datasets.
2. The first tests of the convolutional neural nets (CNNs) produced good results on the validation dataset, but less than desirable results on the testing dataset. In both case, predictions need to improved prior to using them in a statistical analysis.
3. There are some cases for which CNN algorithms will always make poor predictions. For example, animals in poor lighting, images with only small parts of animals, very underrepresented taxa, etc.

Steps to Address Challenges We Encountered:

1. (mostly completed) Addressing this challenge basically requires iterating through the workflow many times, identifying and addressing new problems encountered, and refactoring code.
2. (in process) Addressing the challenge of improving performance of the CNNs depends, first, on addressing the workflow issues and second, on repeated experimentation to optimize CNN hyperparameters and numbers of augmented images that need to be added to the training dataset. We may also have to gather and label additional images for other underrepresented classes (i.e. taxonomic groups).
3. (in process) Explore a “collaborative intelligence” approach that leverages the efficiency of the CNNs for predicting species in images, but a subsystem that flags images for which the CNN predictions are likely to be poor so a human observer can verify the labels. Whether or not this step is necessary depends on how well we are able to address the challenge of improving predictive performance of the CNNs.

We have developed a plan to meet project timeline to address these challenges.

Note that total percentages of time and budget completed does not directly compare to project expenses due to the use of matching funds for a significant portion of this project.

Matching Funds: (Jeff Tracey, USGS Advanced Research Computing)

- 120 hours USGS matched this Quarter from USGS Advanced Research Computing for deep learning algorithm programming and running of machine learning algorithms.
- 12 hours for preparation and recording of annual PF meeting presentation.
- Note: Jeff Tracey has moved to USGS Advanced Research Computing and continues to work on this project

Potential Implementation:

Project Description:

Many small animals, especially amphibian populations that must migrate between aquatic and terrestrial habitats, are susceptible to negative impacts from roads within their habitat. Narrow tunnels (<1m) under roads connected with barrier fencing are a standard mitigation solution. However, there is recent evidence that tunnel mitigation systems can act to filter migratory movements of species that disperse over large areas and unintentionally cause population decline. This project supports continued field study to determine; 1) the distances that Yosemite toads will move along barrier fencing before they “give up” and move back into the habitat and 2) the efficacy of a novel road crossing prototype for toads and other small wildlife species. The prototype is an 8” high elevated road segment on a US Forest Service road that provides a safe crossing nearly 100’ wide while allowing both light and rain to pass through. Although the prototype is 100’, it can be made to any length. The project includes an assessment by transportation engineers in collaboration with Caltrans to provide insight, guidance, and concept designs for similar crossing solutions that could be implemented on improved roads and highways. The results of this study will inform the minimum distances required between passages to provide permeability for migratory toads to make population level movements across roads. It will also provide a permeability analysis and concept plans for a new passage design that may provide greater connectivity and offer an alternative to below grade tunnels for sensitive amphibians, reptiles, and small mammals.

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

- Transportation engineering evaluation (Dokken Engineering).
 - Met with Dokken engineering on 1 occasion regarding project and design criteria for elevated road concept designs. Reviewed preliminary drawings. Brought on Tom Langton (amphibian passage expert: UK) for further review.
- Continued camera monitoring through October, 2021
 - US Forest Service field crew checking cameras and uploading data weekly
 - Monthly transfer of data to USGS database
 - USGS Travel to field site to remove cameras and meet with Forest Service.

Anticipated work next quarter:

- Review of all photos with animal identification (individual ID of Yosemite toads)
- Review of draft report ERS concept designs (Dokken Engineering)
- Meeting with Caltrans and Dokken for final design review/comments.
- Begin statistical analysis

Significant Results:

Low activity reported of herpetofauna in general at site. Most photos have not yet been analyzed, will have raw results to report on toads, frogs, and other herpetofauna next quarter.

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).

Summer rainfall is important for toad movement for this project so drought will affect numbers of Yosemite toads. However, we will accumulate data for a wide number of species using ERS passage.

Potential Implementation: NA

Project Description:

All research modules have been submitted, have been processed, and are active.

Topic	Title	Proposed Budget	PI	Submitted?	Approved by NV?	Active account?
C	Design of Fiber-Reinforced Polymer (FRP) Wildlife Overpass Structures	\$70,000	Rob Ament and Matt Bell	yes	yes	yes
F	Identification of the patterns and processes that result in highway accidents involving elk: Informing the design of effective mitigation strategies in areas where elk is a dominant species	\$20,000	Tony Clevenger	yes	yes	yes
G	Wildlife community and species factors affecting crossing structure use: A continental meta-analysis and a 16-year perspective	\$65,000	Tony Clevenger, Marcel Huijser	yes	yes	yes
H	Jump-out design and measures at fence ends and at access roads	\$115,000	Marcel Huijser	yes	yes	yes
I	Efficacy and cost-savings of fencing and wildlife crossings to reduce wildlife-vehicle collisions in the Bow River Valley, Alberta	\$30,000	Tony Clevenger	yes	yes	yes
X	Economic value select species based on biological conservation	\$90,181.20	Chris Neher and John Duffield (as subcontractors from Bioeconomics)	yes	yes	Yes Subcontract (WTI-Bioeconomics) is also active

Literature review

The literature review was finalized and published on 15 Dec 2021.

Anticipated work next quarter:

General:

1. Finish the update for the costs and benefits of mitigation measures

Significant Results:

None

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).

Positive:

MDT funded a project for 2 electrified barriers along Hwy 93N, contract is signed.
Contracted Services Agreement with the 2 installers are active.
1 barrier was installed in the fall.

Negative:

Covid-19 increased expenses related to transportation.

Potential Implementation:

None

Project Description

There are no known FRP wildlife overpasses in North America at this time. The overall objectives of this research project are to identify cost sensitive and environmentally friendly FRP materials and use them in the design of the continent's first FRP wildlife crossing. This structure can then be adapted for use in other locations across North America and will lead to innovation for bicycle and pedestrian crossings over roads. The development and deployment of a structural prototype by this project will help provide technical information that is sorely lacking for such a promising technology.

The project is organized into four tasks: 1) identify and select FRP manufacturers and materials that will contribute to efficient and cost-effective bridge structures; 2) investigate and perform a preliminary design of up to three different wildlife overpass structures using different FRP applications and assure they can meet Caltrans' structural specifications and address wildlife's needs; 3) evaluate the implementation of the selected FRP wildlife overpass structure via cost-benefit, construction and life-cycle metrics; and, 4) disseminate the results, recommendations and conclusions of the investigation.

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

Task 8. The WTI Team continues to work with Caltrans and Advanced Infrastructure Technologies (AIT) to develop preliminary designs for the wildlife crossing along US-97 in Siskiyou County, California. The final design loads are being fine-tuned. They have been delayed because Caltrans has decided to develop a wildlife crossing guide that can be applied to non-vehicle bridges. These guides will make it easier for them to design wildlife bridges in the future and have set rules that can be applied for construction practices, load factors, and other specifications that are different than a vehicle bridge. The WTI Team has used guidance from Caltrans and AIT to develop an FRP wildlife overpass design for US-97 that can be approved by a state DOT and constructed along their road network with minimal departure from normal practices.

Task 9. The results from Tasks 6-8 have been compiled together for the Task Report.

Task 11. The results from Task 7 have been used to create preliminary results for a Life-cycle Cost (LCC) analysis for FRP bridges. Initial results show that FRP may cost more upfront, but can save money over time due to the low costs of maintenance and long service-life.

Anticipated work next quarter:

Task 9. Submit report for Tasks 6-8.

Task 10. Start accumulating different applications of FRP bridges to bike/ped structures.

Task 11. Finish the cost/benefit analysis for the US-97 site location and submit to Caltrans to help with their decision-making process

Task 12. Begin drafting final report.

Significant Results:

- Collaboration with Caltrans and AIT is leading to FRP bridge designs to ensure the process and materials used will be accepted by Caltrans decision-makers and will streamline the process for future projects.

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).

No conflicts.

Potential Implementation:

Yes! Caltrans is committed to building the FRP wildlife overpass and has secured funding to support the design and planning elements of this research project. Thus, instead of a theoretical design, the WTI Team is working more closely with Caltrans staff and the manufacturer of the FRP structure to assure the FRP design will meet state standards and other requirements. The result will be an efficient continuation of the final design, resulting in Caltrans putting the US97 FRP overpass crossing out for a competitive bid for its eventual construction.

I TRANSPORTATION POOLED FUND PROGRAM QUARTERLY PROGRESS REPORT

Lead Agency (FHWA or State DOT): Nevada DOT

INSTRUCTIONS:

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Transportation Pooled Fund Program Project # TPF-5(538)	Transportation Pooled Fund Program - Report Period: Quarter 4 (Oct-Dec 2021) 2021	
Project Title: Efficacy and cost-savings of fencing and wildlife crossings to reduce wildlife-vehicle collisions in the Bow River Valley, Alberta		
Name of Project Manager(s): AP Clevenger	Phone Number: 4036881138	E-Mail apclevenger@gmail.com
Lead Agency Project ID:	Other Project ID (i.e., contract #):	Project Start Date: Jan 2020
Original Project End Date: Mar 2021	Current Project End Date: 30 June 2022	Number of Extensions: 1

Project schedule status:

Behind schedule

Overall Project Statistics:

Total Project Budget	Total Cost to Date for Project	Percentage of Work Completed to Date
\$30,000	\$0	90%

Quarterly Project Statistics:

Total Project Expenses and Percentage This Quarter	Total Amount of Funds Expended This Quarter	Total Percentage of Time Used to Date
\$0	\$0	20%

Project Description:

Currently there is an array of mitigation measures to meet reduce impacts of roads on wildlife. Of paramount importance is that measures need to be effective at meeting their intended objective or management role in the project. While there is general agreement that wildlife fencing in combination with wildlife crossing structures benefits human safety as well as nature conservation goals, there is the opinion that these mitigation measures may be too costly or have little cost-benefits. To obtain a better understanding of the actual costs and benefits of road mitigation measures cost-benefit analyses recently identified threshold dollar values above which individual mitigation measures start generating benefits in excess of costs. The Bow River Valley is one of the most critical habitats for wildlife in the Canadian Rockies. Wildlife research in the area highlights the complexity and limitations of wildlife movement through the Bow Valley due to human activity and natural barriers. We use WVC data previously collected on two mitigated sections of the Trans-Canada Highway (TCH) in the province of Alberta: 1) a 5-km section in Dead Man's Flats, Alberta and 2) an 18-km section in Banff National Park. This work will determine whether highway mitigation effectively reduced the occurrence of WVC and quantify the cost-benefits of the measures in place. Our objective is to evaluate changes in the number of WVCs after each mitigation phase was completed. We will assess cost-effectiveness of the mitigation measures by using the Huijser economic model, comparing the annual cost of the mitigation infrastructure against the cost of WVCs occurring prior to and after mitigation treatment. We believe the results from our mitigation evaluation and cost-benefit model can be a valuable decision support tool for determining mitigation measures to reduce WVCs and demonstrate the utility and cost-effectiveness of highway mitigation in protected and non-protected landscapes.

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

- Final report draft has been completed and is being reviewed internally before finalizing and submitting to Pooled Fund Study Committee in Quarter 1 (2022).

Anticipated work next quarter:

- Finishing the final draft and submitting to Pooled Fund Study Committee for review and final approval

Significant Results:

None to report to date.
The Results will be presented in the final draft document.

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).

No issues affecting his project at the moment.

Potential Implementation:

None to date

F TRANSPORTATION POOLED FUND PROGRAM QUARTERLY PROGRESS REPORT

Lead Agency (FHWA or State DOT): Nevada DOT

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Transportation Pooled Fund Program Project # TPF-5(538)		Transportation Pooled Fund Program - Report Period: Quarter 4 (Oct - Dec) 2021 2021	
Project Title: Identification of the Patterns and Processes that Result in Highway Accidents Involving Elk: Informing the Design of Effective Mitigation Strategies in Areas Where Elk is a Dominant Species			
Name of Project Manager(s): AP Clevenger	Phone Number: 4036881138	E-Mail apclevenger@gmail.com	
Lead Agency Project ID:	Other Project ID (i.e., contract #):	Project Start Date: Jan 2020	
Original Project End Date: Dec 2020	Current Project End Date: 30 June 2021	Number of Extensions: 1	

Project schedule status:

In process of final review and edits of report

Overall Project Statistics:

Total Project Budget	Total Cost to Date for Project	Percentage of Work Completed to Date
\$20,000	\$20,000	100%

Quarterly Project Statistics:

Total Project Expenses and Percentage This Quarter	Total Amount of Funds Expended This Quarter	Total Percentage of Time Used to Date
\$0	\$0	100%

Project Description:

Road networks are extensive in many western North American landscapes and vehicle use has sharply increased with population growth and development in rural and suburban areas. Roads alter important habitat components, such as forage, water, and cover for large herbivores, and often intersect migration and daily movements. In addition, landscapes inundated with roads may cause shifts in ungulate distribution and reduce carrying capacity. By far, the greatest and most direct effect of roads on ungulate populations comes from collisions with motor vehicles. Currently ungulate-vehicle collisions are a significant problem worldwide particularly in rural or suburban areas where they are a major safety problem for motorists. This project will describe the patterns and processes that result in highway accidents involving elk in order to provide transportation planners with the design of effective mitigation strategies in areas where elk is a dominant species. We use selected primary and secondary road segments within Banff, Yoho and Kootenay National Parks and within the adjacent Alberta provincial lands. Records of elk vehicle collisions (EVCs) were collected year-round by Parks Canada in the three national parks and Alberta Environment and Parks from 1986-2000. We tested for independence of the following: 1) sex and age (adult, subadult) classes in EVCs; 2) Demography and condition of elk killed on highways, railways and by predators; 3) differences in sex, age and condition of elk killed on highways, railways and by predators; 4) possible seasonal effects on EVC frequencies; 5) determine the relative risk of EVC occurrence on each highway we calculated the EVC rate per km per year; and 6) how traffic volumes and elk abundance influence EVC rates. We propose to identify and describe the patterns and processes that result in highway accidents involving elk in order to provide transportation planners with the design of effective mitigation strategies in areas where elk is a dominant species.

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

- The project has been completed and signed off by the Pooled Fund Study Committee.
- We have completed our final report and the report has been reviewed and accepted by Pooled Fund committee.

Anticipated work next quarter:

- None. Project Completed.

Significant Results:

- We found that more females are involved in collisions, but when compared to the age and sex classes of the elk population, males and subadults are more prone to elk-vehicle collisions and this occurs more commonly in the fall season.
- The condition of elk as measured from percent fat marrow content was greater for road- and rail-killed elk than predator killed elk indicating that all elk are susceptible to vehicle collisions.
- The magnitude of elk collisions was strongly correlated to traffic volumes, however elk abundance was the primary driver influencing occurrence of collisions over time.
- Our information is informative to design mitigation measures targeting the most vulnerable demographics of a population, i.e. subadults and male elk in the fall.
- Declining wildlife-vehicle collision rates with increasing traffic volumes is a good indicator that a population is declining, especially when 'road avoidance' of the species is known and can support implementation of wildlife mitigation measures before a population crash occurs.
- These results should be meaningful to road and natural resource managers because in many cases, traffic volumes and road-kill data sets are logistically easier to collect and compile as compared with abundance measures.
- Analyses such as ours can help inform the design of strategies by designing strategies for the most vulnerable members of a population, as well as informing placement of measures for recovery efforts.

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).

Project has not had significant delays this quarter.

Potential Implementation:

The management implications and implementation components of project are included in the final report.

X TRANSPORTATION POOLED FUND PROGRAM QUARTERLY PROGRESS REPORT

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

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Transportation Pooled Fund Program Project # <i>(i.e., SPR-2(XXX), SPR-3(XXX) or TPF-5(XXX))</i>		Transportation Pooled Fund Program - Report Period: <input type="checkbox"/> Quarter 1 (January 1 – March 31) <input type="checkbox"/> Quarter 2 (April 1 – June 30) 2021 <input type="checkbox"/> Quarter 3 (July 1 – September 30) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Quarter 4 (October 1 – December 31)	
Project Title: Pilot Study: Incorporating Large Ungulate and Small Reptile Total Value in Collision Mitigation Benefit-Cost Calculations			
Name of Project Manager(s): John Duffield	Phone Number: 406-721-2265	E-Mail bioecon@montana.com	
Lead Agency Project ID: P701-18-803 TASK 05	Other Project ID (i.e., contract #): G105-21-W8409	Project Start Date: 06/01/2020	
Original Project End Date: 12/31/2020	Current Project End Date: 12/31/2021	Number of Extensions: 1	

Project schedule status:

On schedule
 On revised schedule
 Ahead of schedule
 Behind schedule

Overall Project Statistics:

Total Project Budget	Total Cost to Date for Project	Percentage of Work Completed to Date
69,974.00	\$69,974.00 invoiced through 12/31/21	100%

Quarterly Project Statistics:

Total Project Expenses and Percentage This Quarter	Total Amount of Funds Expended This Quarter	Total Percentage of Time Used to Date
\$5,692 invoiced through 12/31/21 (8%)	\$5,692 invoiced through 12/31/21	100%

Project Description:

Funding decisions on specific wildlife collision mitigation measures are based largely on cost-benefit analysis and answering the question; do the benefits to humans and wildlife outweigh the direct fiscal costs of the mitigation measures? To date, one potentially significant component of the benefits of wildlife mortality and injury avoidance has been largely ignored in these calculations--passive use values to humans associated with species protection. This project will develop total value estimates for deer and turtles in Minnesota in a collision mitigation context. Total values include not only direct use such as hunting and viewing but also passive use values (biological conservation values).

The study will utilize an industry-standard repeat contact random household mail survey of Minnesota households to elicit preferences and valuations for avoiding deer and turtle collisions through use of collision mitigation structures incorporated into road design.

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

In this 4th quarter, the final report was edited and all remaining data archiving was completed to finish the project

Anticipated work next quarter:

None

Significant Results:

A final report outlining the study results has been submitted.

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:

N/A

H TRANSPORTATION POOLED FUND PROGRAM QUARTERLY PROGRESS REPORT

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

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Transportation Pooled Fund Program Project # <i>Wildlife Vehicle Collision (WVC) Reduction and Habitat Connectivity</i> Task 1 – Cost Effective Solutions Transportation Pooled-Fund Project TPF-5(358)	Transportation Pooled Fund Program - Report Period: <input type="checkbox"/> Quarter 1 (January 1 – March 31) 2021 <input type="checkbox"/> Quarter 2 (April 1 – June 30) <input type="checkbox"/> Quarter 3 (July 1 – September 30) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Quarter 4 (October 1 – December 31)	
Project Title: Jump-out design and measures at fence ends and at access roads		
Name of Project Manager(s): Dr. Marcel Huijser	Phone Number: 406-543-2377	E-Mail mhuijser@montana.edu
Lead Agency Project ID:	Other Project ID (i.e., contract #):	Project Start Date:
Original Project End Date: 30 Nov 2022	Current Project End Date: 30 Nov 2022	Number of Extensions: 0

Project schedule status:

- On schedule
 On revised schedule
 Ahead of schedule
 Behind schedule

Overall Project Statistics:

Total Project Budget	Total Cost to Date for Project	Percentage of Work Completed to Date
\$115,000	\$107,986.07 (thru Dec)	94%

Quarterly Project Statistics:

Total Project Expenses and Percentage This Quarter	Total Amount of Funds Expended This Quarter	Total Percentage of Time Used to Date
\$16,384.34 (thru Dec) 20.96%	\$16,384.34	90%

Project Description:

- A. Investigate measures aimed at reducing intrusions of large wild mammals, especially carnivores, at gaps in wildlife fences through a literature review and field experiments.
- B. Investigate measures aimed at increasing the use of wildlife jump-outs by deer species (white-tailed deer and mule deer) through a literature review and field experiments.

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

A1 Literature review
Started

B1 Literature review
Started

Field experiments

A2a. Electrified cattle guards at access roads, Parks Canada.

Sunshine and Compound road:

1. The WTI cameras have been installed at Sunshine and Compound road (12 Aug 2020).
2. The cameras were not installed in front of guards, but behind, looking to the area in front.
3. Animals entering the zone 2 m before the electrified area will trigger the cameras.
4. From 2 Sep onwards the cameras have restricted hours because traffic volume was too high to allow 24/7 operation, so now it is 17:00-8:00 (daylight saving time) for both locations.
5. Camera settings 5 images per trigger, no quiet time (rapidfire), high sensitivity
6. 8 Oct 2020: steel plates were installed in front of electrified barriers (completes installation).
7. The 2 ft grounding plate for Compound Road was damaged and was removed on or before 20 Oct. Re-installation will likely be in spring. The Sunshine grounding plate will also be deferred. They both need metal strips installed to protect them from snow plows. These strips have not yet arrived, and so the grounding plates were unprotected when there was the 1st major snow fall (October 14) when it got damaged. So, even though, the wildlife guards are turned on they will not work as well without the grounding plate, nor were they intended to be nearly as effective during the winter (i.e. snow covered). Ground plates and strips will be installed in the spring.
8. Guards filled up with snow in February, not functional, as expected. From Dan Rafla: the accumulation of snow, salt, gravel, etc. between the negative and positive charge cause it to short, or the guard can be completely covered. There has also been connection break, but it has since been repaired.
9. 14 Jul 21: Grounding plates have still not been installed because of lack of funding (Pers. com. Dan Rafla).
10. 14 Jul 21: During the winter, the wiring was not able to withstand the vibrations from vehicles and gravel/salt that fell between the pipes. Wires have since been repaired with the wiring redone to more robust standard (Pers. com. Dan Rafla).
11. 14 Jul 21: Hours of operation for cameras, which were from 5pm to 8am, have been extended from 4pm to 10am. In addition, a 2nd camera was added at Sunshine, facing 90 degrees to the road, and two meters away from the wildlife guard (Pers. com. Dan Rafla).
12. 14 Jul 21: No known intrusions except for a black bear from last fall (Pers. com. Dan Rafla).
13. End Sep 2021: Grounding plates were installed on both locations (Pers. com. Dan Rafla). This completes the



Lake O'Hara

Images reviewed 1-6 Oct : No animals

Guard turned on again on April 17, 2021

15 July 21: guard is operational.

Lake Louise

Camera post not installed yet, will be spring 2021

15 July 21: Parks Canada is still working on getting the Lake Louise camera installed, hopefully soon (Pers. com. Jón Stuart-Smith).

15 July 21: guard is operational.

20 Oct 2021: Camera installed ((Pers. com. Terry Larsen, Parks Canada)

A2b. Electrified mats at fence ends, Thompson Falls.

Camera at west fence end was installed 30 Sep 2020

Coyote approached, did not cross



Camera at east fence end required a new post in the clear zone.

Camera at east fence end required a new post in the clear zone.

A right-of-way encroachment permit was obtained from MDT on 8 Oct 2020.

Post and camera were installed on 27 Oct 2020.

2 wt-deer left the fenced road section, walking/running over guard.

1 of them appeared to have been shocked, the other not.

Multiple elk and w-t deer walked in and out of the fenced road corridor early February, apparently without being shocked. MDT and the manufacturer were alerted again.

The manufacturer is now sending Marcel a voltage meter to check voltage (should arrive mid-April).

However, it seems that MDT may have put the guards at 50% power since installation, against the recommendation of the manufacturer (recommendation is 100%).

In June 2021 it was confirmed that the voltage is set too low on the electric mats (between 4.2-4.8kV). This was reported to MDT, and MDT has stated that they intend to increase the power to the settings recommended by the manufacturer.

WTI observed on 28 Aug 2021 that the voltage was increased to 9.6-10kV (this is what it should have been all along). So far, MDT has not been able to report what date the voltage was increased.

2021-02-10 22:59:48

M 6/10

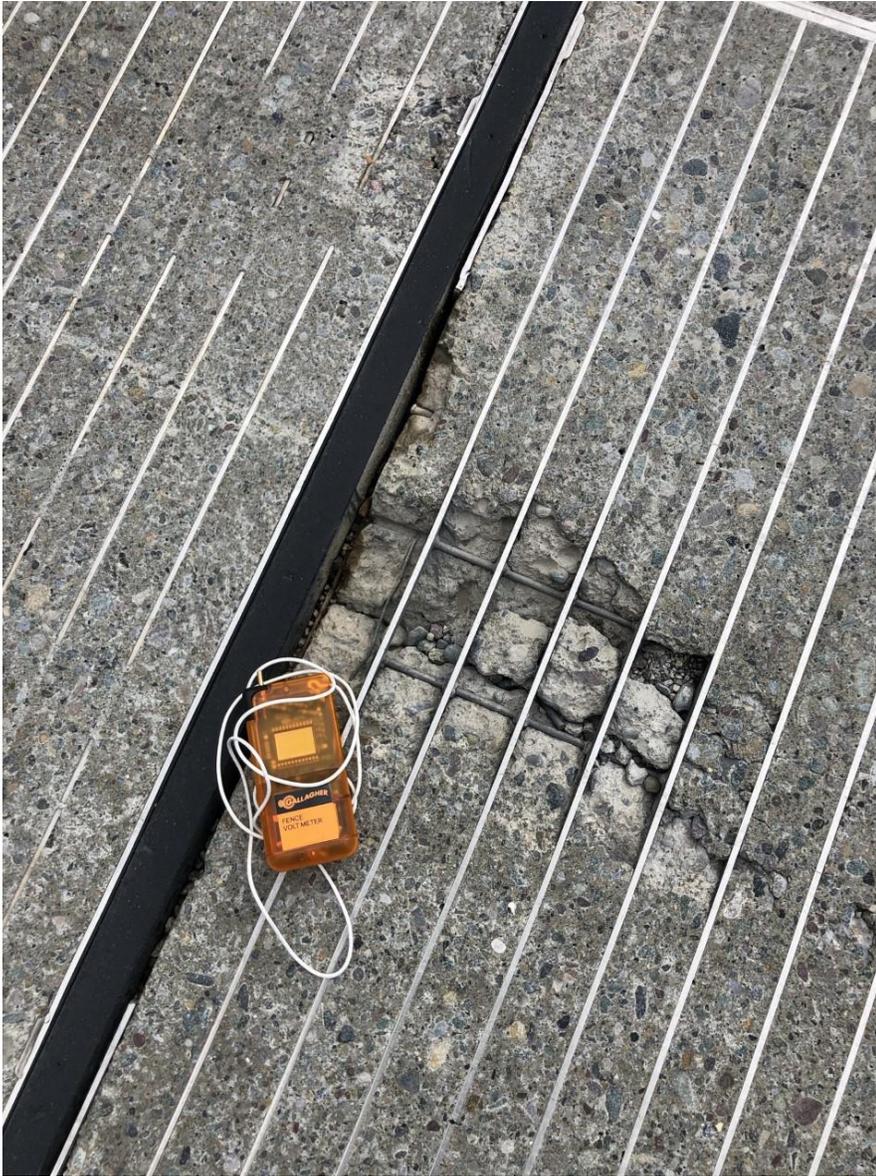
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CAM102

BECONYX

27 Oct 2021: Observed damaged concrete in the electrified barrier. MDT and Crosstek are assessing this.



End Nov and end Dec 2021: no voltage at the 2 guards for unknown reason.

A2d. Different types of gates at gaps in electric wildlife fence, Dixon Melon Farm.

- The images have been interpreted and the data have been entered in a database (through Nov 2020).
- Summary statistics and graphs have been made.
- An abstract was submitted to the 2021 ICOET conference, and it was accepted for a podium presentation (virtual conference).
- A presentation was given at the 2021 ICOET conference
- Crosstek installed a drive-over electrified barrier 4-6 Aug 2021. This replaced the “drive-over wires” barrier. So far 3 bears approached, none crossed.



- So far, far fewer bears have been observed at the gates and at the fence in 2021 than in 2020. It seems that the barriers have been so effective (since end season 2020) that the bears no longer show up... I think the bears think it is a waste of time.
- Farmer reports no or negligible melon loss due to bears in 2021.
- The project was presented at ICOET 2021 on 28 Sep.

B2. Modifications to 10 Jump-outs, US93N Montana.

- Candidate jump-outs have been identified along US93N. 4 are known to receive relatively high use by mule deer, 6 are known to receive relatively high use by white-tailed deer.

The current height of the ten jump-outs selected for this project. EV=Evaro, HH= Ravalli Hill.

Area	#	Height	
		ft	cm
EV	14	6' 8.5"	204
EV	17	6' 0"	183
EV	19	6' 8"	203
EV	20	6' 0"	183
EV	21	6' 1.5"	187
EV	23	5' 6"	168
RH	26	5' 11"	180
RH	27	6' 0"	183
RH	28	5' 9"	175
RH	29	5' 11"	180

- Permission has been obtained for the modifications (from MDT) and for the research (from CSKT).
- MDT will assist with equipment in lowering (after agreement between MDT and WTI-MSU) is signed.
- MDT – WTI agreement was signed in Dec 2020.
- MDT – CSKT agreement was signed early January 2021.
- Permission was obtained from MDT to lower the jump-outs to 5 ft with 18 inch bar on

31 Mar 2021.

- Locate for buried lines was completed on Sat 10 Apr.
- All 10 jump-outs have been lowered to exactly 5 ft (4 in Ravalli on 21 Apr 2021; 6 in Evaro on 4 May 2021). Soil was scraped from the top and deposited at the bottom to achieve a height of 5 ft. The landing area was made level, about 6 ft from the face of the jump-outs. MDT assisted with personnel, a bobcat and a backhoe.



- All 10 jump-outs were equipped with an 18-inch barrier above the ground (rebar) on 18 May 2021.



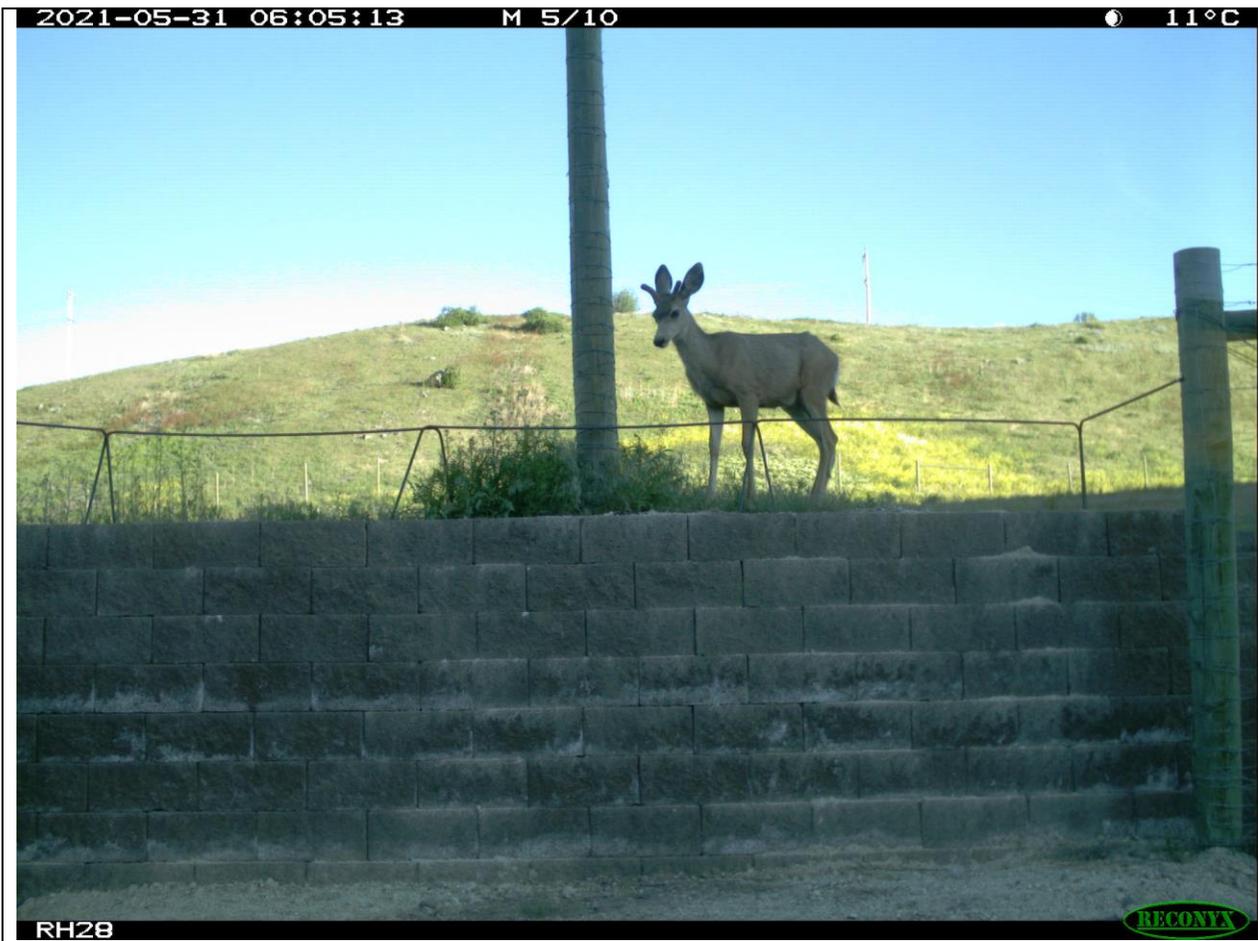
- All 10 jump-outs had cameras installed on 28 May 2021.



Preliminary data (through 8 June) showed that

- a. No deer jumped down (about n=3 groups), This is not good.
- b. No deer jumped up (about n=10 groups). This is good.
- c. 1 black bear climbed down
- d. 1 coyote jumped down

While since June 8 some mule deer and a white-tailed deer did jump down, the results were disappointing. The majority of the animals that jumped down first stepped over the bar with their front feet. Therefore, at half the jump-outs, the rebar was lowered 3 inches. At the other half, the rebar was set back from 12 to 15 inches and with the original height of 18 inches. Evaluation is ongoing.



Anticipated work next quarter:

General:

2. Collect data from Canadian locations
3. Enter and analyze data from barriers at Thompson Falls, Melon farm
4. Data entry jump-outs and data analyses.

Significant Results:

The low-cost electrified barriers at the Dixon melon farm seem promising as (after modifications) they seem to be a very substantial barrier to black bears.

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).

Positive:

Funding from MDT for 2 electrified barriers and permission to lower selected jump-outs along Hwy 93N has been obtained. This will supplement the effort of the pooled fund study related to electrified barriers and jump-outs. One of the barriers was installed in Nov 2021.

Negative:

- Covid-19 increased expenses related to transportation.
- The electrified guards in Canada need protection from snow plows. The protective equipment was not available early enough before winter started. Equipment was only installed end Sep 2021.
- The passage of deer and elk at east side of Thompson Falls is very concerning. I am hoping that it is because the voltage was set too low (lower than manufacturer recommended). Evaluation is ongoing.

Potential Implementation:

The low-cost electrified barriers at the Dixon melon farm seem promising as (after modifications) they seem to be a very substantial barrier to black bears. Two sites along a real highway are now considered for implementation of these types of barriers (see above).

It is important to follow the recommendations of the manufacturer (and not deviate by setting lower voltage, as seems to be case at Thompson Falls).

G TRANSPORTATION POOLED FUND PROGRAM QUARTERLY PROGRESS REPORT

Lead Agency (FHWA or State DOT): Nevada DOT

INSTRUCTIONS:

Project Managers and/or research project investigators 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 # TPF-5(538)	Transportation Pooled Fund Program - Report Period: Quarter 4 (Oct-Dec) 2021 2021	
Project Title: Long-term Responses of an Ecological Community to Highway Mitigation Measures		
Name of Project Manager(s): AP Clevenger	Phone Number: 4036881138	E-Mail apclevenger@gmail.com
Lead Agency Project ID:	Other Project ID (i.e., contract #):	Project Start Date: July 2020
Original Project End Date: Mar 2021	Current Project End Date: 30 June 2022	Number of Extensions: 1

Project schedule status:

Behind schedule

Overall Project Statistics:

Total Project Budget	Total Cost to Date for Project	Percentage of Work Completed to Date
\$64,941.84	\$203.75	40%

Quarterly Project Statistics:

Total Project Expenses and Percentage This Quarter	Total Amount of Funds Expended This Quarter	Total Percentage of Time Used to Date
\$0	\$0	10%

Project Description:

Crossing structures (CS) in Banff National Park and along US Hwy 93 North in Montana, have been monitored for many years, starting as early as 1996, forming the richest database on CS monitoring in the world. These data provide a unique opportunity to assess long-term changes in CS use by a large mammal community. Such a long-term and data-rich perspective is important to understand how slow-reproducing species interact with CS over time. These datasets come from areas with an intact community of large mammals ranging from rare carnivores like wolverine to more common ungulates like white-tailed deer. It is also characterized by mixed landscapes with agriculture and dispersed houses and roads with high traffic volumes. This combination of a relatively intact wildlife community in an area with substantive variation in human disturbance (Banff relatively low human presence and disturbance; Montana relatively high human presence and disturbance) creates a unique 'reference' condition to understand how highways and large mammals interact. Developing a statistical model to describe the relationship between population size and passage rates at CS has a number of important benefits to management. First, structural attributes of CS that contribute to a greater-than-expected passage rate by wildlife enable planners to more rigorously design species-specific mitigation measures. Second, if a strong association between population size and passage rate at particular sites can be found, then management can use monitoring of these limited areas to infer population trends in the broader study area. Third, detection rates of animals using CS are relatively high given the constricted nature of the passage, so monitoring CS use may be a more economical means of population monitoring than other index-type measures. Thus, the various crossing structures along the TCH can serve as a multi-species "super-transect" if appropriate population size and passage rate associations can be demonstrated. Specifically we are interested in understanding the following questions and will use data sets shown in bold to address each one: 1) What is the effect of different covariates on species use over time? Banff & Montana; 2) What are the effects of design and function of CS on community level metrics? Banff & Montana; 3) Can CS monitoring (counts) be used as an indicator of population abundance? Banff.

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

- No work done this quarter as this is the 3rd project in our series of 3 PFS projects.
- We will focus on this project in Quarter 1 (2022).

Anticipated work next quarter:

- Continue with some data analysis and report writing.

Significant Results:

None to date.

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:

None to date