

WASHTO Committee on Maintenance

Annual Report - March 2010

Wyoming DOT hosted the 2010 WASHTO Committee on Maintenance at the Plains Hotel in Cheyenne on March 7 – 10, 2010. Ken Schultz and his Maintenance Division hosted the meeting and did an excellent job of ensuring that all the details necessary for an effective meeting were taken care of.

Chris Christopher of Washington State DOT chaired the committee meeting.

15 of the 18 WASHTO states, as well as FHWA, were able to participate, including:

Alaska	Montana	Oregon
Arizona	Nebraska	Texas
California (call in)	Nevada	Utah
Colorado	North Dakota	Washington
Idaho	Oklahoma	Wyoming

All of the conference presentations are on Wyoming's FTP site located at this address:
<ftp://wydot-ftp.dot.state.wy.us/WASHTO%20Maint/>

The agenda covered a wide variety of topics including a state roundtable, performance measurement, rest areas, snow and ice operations, environmental/climate change issues, workforce development, pavement maintenance, and striping and signage.

A few highlights:

1. Between furloughs, pay and hiring freezes, travel restrictions, and equipment freezes, almost every state is continuing to be impacted by the current economic climate.
2. Almost all states have either mandatory or voluntary energy use reduction goals, related primarily to electricity consumption at facilities. Washington is the only state with stringent biodiesel/electricity mandates for its fleet.
3. Arizona's presentation on their decision to close several of their rest areas generated a significant amount of discussion. Arizona's governor is appealing to their congressional delegation to repeal the federal laws that currently prohibit commercialization/privatization at the rest areas.
4. Of the 15 states in attendance, 9 have relatively new, comprehensive maintenance management systems in place. Wyoming DOT probably has the best combination of an integrated "state of the art" system that has also been in place for enough time to see if it really works (about two years). Interestingly enough, there were about 25 WYDOT employees in attendance. They ranged in levels from the equivalent of region MEs to lead techs. During the MMS discussion, there were

very candid questions posed to that group about whether they felt the MMS was effective and beneficial. The response was consistently yes to both, and, at the end of it, they all like their system and would not go back.

5. Alaska DOT's presentation on their "Smart Snowplow" was fascinating. This technology utilizes a see-thru display that allows operation of a plow in zero visibility. It's a combination of high accuracy GPS navigation, digital mapping of the roadway, and a radar system that detects vehicles in front and behind. Similar to a fighter jet, the location of the roadway shows up on the screen in front of the driver. The seat in the truck will vibrate on left if they are moving toward the centerline and the right if they are moving off the road. The cost includes installing towers and equipment on vehicle, around \$200,000 for a tower and about \$40,000 per plow.

Also, the Alaska DOT presentation on ice damage/flooding on the Yukon River near the town of Eagle once again demonstrated the fascinating types of issues that their maintenance program has to get involved with.

6. Oklahoma DOT is attempting to implement physical fitness testing for new hires in their maintenance program. It is a very interesting concept that involves rigorous testing. Oklahoma will provide an update next year on how well the implementation is going.

Business Meeting:

Western Partnership Pooled Fund: The decision was made to not conduct a scan tour this year, due to the challenging economy. Utah, Oregon, and Idaho are considering hosting in 2011. A decision will be made via e-mail by May 2010.

WASHTO Maintenance 2011: Nebraska DOT agreed to host in 2011. It will be held in early March in Omaha.

WASHTO Maintenance 2012: Colorado, Texas, or Washington are considering hosting in 2012. All three states will have discussions internally and a decision will be made via e-mail by May 2010.

New Chair: Kevin Bloss, from Oklahoma DOT, is the new chair.

New Vice Chair: Toribio Garza, from Texas DOT, is the new vice chair.

Proposed Resolution: Supporting the relaxation of federal rules related to the privatization/commercialization of rest areas on the National Highway System.

Resolutions Passed:

1. Thanking Wyoming DOT for hosting the 2010 meeting.

2. Thanking Chris Christopher for his work in chairing the committee.

3. Rest Area Privatization.

**Presentations Selected for the WASHTO Annual Meeting
July 11-14, 2010 in Bismarck, ND:**

1. I-80 Coalition – Bill Hoffman, Nevada DOT
2. Smart Plow System/Eagle Ice Flow – Mike Coffee, Alaska DOT
3. MDSS – Brad Darr, North Dakota DOT