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Issue Number 79, March 2017

State Aid E-Scene

If you're doing work in MnDOT Right of Way

By: Gary Reihl, Federal Aid Project Development

The Environmental Investigation Unit (EIU) within the MnDOT Office of Environmental Stewardship has interest in projects that:

- Directly impact the TH system
- Include acquisition of highway R/W that includes MnDOT on the property title at any time in the project cycle
- Include work on existing TH R/W

Specifically, the EIU recommends that these types of locally led/partnership projects be reviewed by the Local Government Unit (LGU) with EIU oversight for possible issues associated with the following:

- Contaminated material management related to the presence of contaminated soil, groundwater or other media within or adjacent to the construction project limits and includes properties that may be acquired to construct the project
- Regulated material management related to building demolition/relocation and/or bridge demolition/rehabilitation

The primary purpose of EIU's involvement is to reduce MnDOT's liability associated with acquisition of contaminated properties and the management of contaminated materials and/or regulated materials during construction. Identifying contaminated and regulated material issues early in the project development offers the following potential benefits, in addition to reducing the LGU's and MnDOT's short and long-term liability:

Opportunity to make design modifications around high-risk and other contaminated properties.

- Initiate communication with regulatory agencies on any required notifications and permits, and when possible, secure liability release documentation (Response Action Plans and No Association Determination letters)
- Adequate characterization of contaminated and regulated material issues and to add this information into bid specifications to minimize project delays and to identify and plan for significant project costs

Process

Whenever a project will be constructed on **existing** or new MnDOT R/W, the agency administering the project must submit the completed Contaminated/Regulated Material Checklist and project description with a map showing the location of the proposed project, to EIU for project review as early as possible, such as during programming, scoping, preliminary design or layout development.

Training

The EIU will provide training on contaminated and regulated materials to LGUs. This training will provide information necessary for government officials to understand environmental liability issues associated with contaminated and regulated materials and management approaches that have been used successfully by MnDOT to reduce liability concerns and assist construction in staying on schedule and on budget.

Please contact the [EIU](#) for further assistance.

Don't buy wetland credits until you've checked with BWSR

By: Gary Reihl, Federal Aid Project Development

If you have an approved or authorized Corps of Engineers Permit be sure to verify with the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) that your wetland credits are already reserved. The Corp usually will not authorize their 404 permit until the mitigation credits are verified with BWSR or the permit applicant.

If you are just starting the permit application process send in your "complete" application and make sure you send the application (or copy of) to all the agencies that need to take action (Corps, BWSR, DNR etc.). Don't rely on someone else to do it! BWSR is the only one that can tell you they don't have wetland credits to cover your project.

Here is the latest information about the wetland banks:

Bank Service Area (BSA) closures

The Minnesota Legislature has responded to the funding shortfall by passing legislation that has been signed by Governor Dayton. Laws of Minnesota 2017, Chapter 7 (HF434/SF326) contains the following provisions relevant to the Local Road Wetland Replacement Program (LRWRP):

Section 1. Until BWSR establishes wetland bank credits in all BSA's that are adequate to meet the statutory obligation to replace wetland impacts resulting from eligible county, city and township road projects:

(1) It must use wetland credits from one BSA to meet the wetland replacement obligation for local roads to the extent permitted under state and federal law; and

(2) The draining and filling of wetlands for local road projects determined to be eligible for the LRWRP are exempt from replacement when authorized by a Clean Water Act Section 404 general

permit and compensatory mitigation under the Section 404 program is not required.

Section 2. \$5 million is appropriated to BWSR to acquire wetland credits for the LRWRP.

Immediate changes

This legislation and its associated funding will result in the following changes to BWSR management of the LRWRP.

Statewide wetland replacement will be provided for eligible projects

The immediate availability of funding, combined with Section 1, paragraph (1) eliminates the need for the Plan adopted by the BWSR Board on October 27, 2016. This means that BWSR will return to the practices employed prior to the adoption of the Plan and use LRWRP credits to replace all eligible county, city and township road projects consistent with federal or state law.

This change should have little immediate impact on implementation of the LRWRP:

- Since the current replacement credit shortage leaves little potential to use credits from adjacent BSAs because of restrictions imposed under both state and federal law; and
- As project review and reporting requirements remained in place during implementation of the Plan, and only one project was formally notified that replacement would not be provided by the LRWRP.

Given the passage of this legislation, the BWSR Board will consider rescinding the Management Plan at its March 22, 2017 meeting.

Clean Water Act Section 404 General Permit Exemption

Section 1 paragraph (2) effectively exempts certain LRWRP eligible county,

city, and township projects from needing to obtain WCA replacement when those projects are authorized by a Section 404 general permit and for which compensatory mitigation is not required under Section 404. Note that this does not affect the reporting of project impacts to BWSR. BWSR will obtain verification from the Corps of the Section 404 general permit authorization to proceed with compensatory mitigation and to ensure that replacement credits are not used for these activities.

Short term actions

Purchase of Existing Credits from the Wetland Bank

BWSR has been appropriated \$5 million in State General Funds to acquire wetland credits currently available in the Wetland Bank to meet the immediate needs of the LRWRP. BWSR's goal is to ensure that a minimum one-year supply of credits is available in all wetland bank service areas based on historical program usage. Wetland credits will be acquired through a request for proposals process that will begin in late March and conclude with the acquisition of credits in May.

BWSR will continue to monitor the wetland credit status of each BSA and, to the extent funds and wetland credits are available, make additional acquisitions as the need arises.

Finally, BWSR will continue to coordinate regulatory processes associated with wetland replacement for local road projects as we have always done with the Corps. This coordination is important to make sure that local road projects are not delayed due to these processes.

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Greater MN ePlans process – Federal Aid for locals

By: Cathy Huebsch, Plans Engineer

Electronic document submittal was launched this fall for greater Minnesota. After a couple months we've come up with some "best practices." What to do and who does what?

Once the DSAE has reviewed and approved your plans, the DSAA sends an email to SALT stating that your plan set and all documentation is available for SALT review and approval. SALT will review the plan set and send comments. If the comments require changes to any page in the plans, **a complete plan set should be resubmitted to SALT**, ccing the DSAE. Each updated sheet should be re-dated to show page is revised from original. If there are revisions to the title sheet, the DSAE will need to sign and send on to SALT. When approved, the Transmittal Letter will state the date of plan submittal which has been

approved. SALTs typical approval email will contain the Transmittal Letter as well as the signed title sheet. The full approved plan will be available on the SALT website in the same file as your project specific electronic documents referenced in the Transmittal Letter.

More electronic excitement! Or, saving more trees. For those of you who have asked about receiving the DCP packet electronically only, Chelsey Palmateer, our Grad Engineer, has developed an electronic document that will guide you through the process of creating your own DCP packet, tabs and all, which will eliminate the need to kill more trees. Stay tuned for that launch, and if you'd like to be a beta tester for her tool please let her know. Chelsey may be contacted at 651-366-3818 or chelsey.palmateer@state.mn.us.

New Army Corps of Engineers liaison

By: Gary Reihl, Federal Aid Project Development

Omar Ortiz is the new U.S. Army Corps of Engineers liaison from the Corps St. Paul district office. Omar will be responsible for evaluation of Corps jurisdictional determinations and permit requests (formerly done by Ben Orne) from MnDOT and city and county projects.

Before coming to St. Paul, he worked in the Portland District, where he served as a Regulatory Project Manager for four years. He was responsible for regulatory evaluations for multiple counties in southern Oregon for numerous actions ranging from roadway and culvert maintenance to renewable energy and stream restoration projects. Omar has a Master's Degree in Community and Regional Planning and Bachelor's Degrees in Philosophy and Public Administration from the University of Oregon.

His contact info is:

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Right of Way and Utility Certificate - streamlining the process for all

By: Cathy Huebsch, Plans Engineer

[Right of Way Certificates 1 and 1A](#) have been updated (February 2017) to include a **checkbox** for you to **select one option** regarding railroad and utility impacts on your project.

Selecting one of these:

- There is no utility, and railroad work required for this project. (Cert 1 or 1A)

OR

- All utility and railroad work required for this project has been completed. (Cert 1)

Will eliminate the need for the Utility Certification.

If you select "All the necessary arrangements..." or fail to select any checkbox, you must submit the Utility Certificate (also newly revised).



FYs 2018–2021 HSIP solicitation results

By: Sulmaan Khan, Program Support Engineer

Results from the most recent Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) solicitation have been released. This solicitation included funding for fiscal years 2018 – 2021 for local government agencies in greater Minnesota. A total of 58 applications were received. Out of this, 41 applications were awarded for funding totaling more than \$10.1 million. There were 29 different counties throughout the state which successfully received funding. The table below shows a summary of funding awarded based on project type.

The criteria used for ranking and prioritizing projects for selection included being identified in the

County Road Safety Plans, addressing a high risk area, demonstrating systemic planning, documenting a benefit/cost ratio greater than 1.00, and availability of funding. The primary focus of these projects is to reduce fatal and serious injury crashes as part of the Toward Zero Deaths initiative. Additional information on selected projects can be found on the [State Aid Traffic Safety webpage](#).

If you have any additional questions about HSIP, please contact Sulmaan Khan at 651-366-3829 or sulmaan.m.khan@state.mn.us.

Project Type	Funding Awarded
Intersection Modifications	\$458,000
Reduced Conflict Intersections	\$1,655,000
Intersection Improvements (Signing, Lighting)	\$126,000
Enhanced Pavement Markings and/or Rumble Strips & StripEs	\$4,983,182
2' Shoulder Paving, Rumble Strips & Safety Edge	\$2,206,200
Chevron Sign Installation	\$73,800
Upgraded Signs, Edgelines and/or Intersection Lighting	\$154,800
Roundabouts	\$266,400
Rural Intersection Conflict Warning Systems (RICWS)	\$225,000
Total	\$10,148,382

Accessing the most recent documents

As a friendly reminder, please do NOT save forms and other documents on your personal computer.

MnDOT's website changes daily, so please view and/or download forms, manuals, etc. directly from the website to ensure that you have the latest version.



New online project map

By: Rick Kostohryz, MnIT @ MnDOT, State Aid

The new State Aid Project Map makes use of MnDOT's ArcGIS Online site called MnMap. MnMap allows developers to rapidly create and publish online mapping products that are accessible and intuitive.

State Aid Project Map features:

- Project layer refreshed nightly
- Projects within the current year and 4 years into the future
- Tied, active and suspended layers
- MnDOT construction projects
- Customize with a variety of imagery, street grid and terrain backgrounds
- Clicking on a project line will display a pop-up window with project detail
- Map detail immerses when zooming in, including project labels
- Search feature
- Measure tool

Projects on the map are dependent on records within the centralized State Aid Project Tracking system. In order to be included on the map project records require key geographic and schedule data. Geographic and schedule data gaps can occur and occasionally projects can be misrepresented. Please contact sal-tirhelp.dot@state.mn.us or your local DSAE if you know of errors or omissions on the map.

To launch the new State Aid Project Map visit the [Local Road Map webpage](#) and click on "MN State Aid Project Map (MnMap)."

Minnesota local agency Asset Management Peer Exchange

By: Joel Ulring, Pavement Engineer

Are you a city or county engineer of a rural greater Minnesota and interested in managing your agencies transportation assets, but realize you have staffing and funding limitations among other challenges? Or are you unsure how to get started or what resources are available to assist you? If so, please join this Peer Exchange as we explore the issues and challenges surrounding asset management for small and rural agencies in Minnesota and learn potential strategies including some tools that are available to overcome them. Hopefully what you learn here will enable you to begin development of an effective and successful asset management program in your agency.

When

May 16 & 17, 2017

Where

Holiday Inn Hotel & Suites, 75 37th Ave. S., St. Cloud, MN 56301

Purpose

This Peer Exchange is being sponsored by the MnDOT's State Aid for Local Transportation with program assistance from the University of Minnesota Center for Transportation Studies and funding assistance from the FHWA. This event is intended to provide the opportunity for learning how small rural agencies across the U.S. and locally in Minnesota are effectively and successfully implementing asset management of transportation related infrastructure in their small/rural agencies. Facilitated discussions and discovery activities will be focused on:

- what are the hurdles or difficulties for small rural agencies in developing and implementing asset management

- what may be some strategies to overcome these hurdles and difficulties
- what resources are available to assist agencies in successfully implementing asset management

Agenda

Tuesday (8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m.) will include introductions, presentations from national and local agencies who have successfully implemented asset management, presentations on a few asset management tools and opportunities for discussion.

Wednesday (8 a.m. – noon) will consist of final presentations, overview and facilitated discussions with discovery activities.

Who should attend

City and county engineers from non-metro agencies in outstate Minnesota.

Cost

No cost. Sponsored by MnDOT State Aid and FHWA, St. Paul Division.

To register for this event, please go to the [Minnesota LTAP Peer Exchange webpage](#). Contact Joel Ulring at joel.ulring@state.mn.us or 651-366-3831 if you have any questions.

State Aid Finance Website Redesign

By: Alyssa Klossner, Website & Application Support

The State Aid Finance website has been newly redesigned. The new site features a fresh look, streamlined menus, mobile and tablet friendly viewing, and enhanced accessibility.

The new site provides users with a simplified and more user-friendly experience, making it easier to access important information quickly.

Other notable changes include:

- Adding additional key topics to the top navigation
- Adding headers and subheads to webpages

- Removing any old, out-of-date materials
- Decreasing amount of webpages and grouping related information together

Questions, comments or suggestions can be sent to Cindy Degener at cindy.degener@state.mn.us.



Equal Pay Certificate: New for contracts >\$500,000

By: Cathy Huebsch, Plans Engineer

This **NEW** requirement applies to all projects utilizing State Funds (TH, DNR, LRRP, etc.) with a contract cost **greater than** \$500,000. Human Rights and Equal Pay Certifications – which comes from MS 363A.46 Equal Pay is a required statute and applies to all contracts in excess of \$500,000 utilizing any amount of state funds. The contractor must select the appropriate option on the Equal Pay Certificate. If selected as Apparent Low Bidder, the contractor must supply an Equal Pay Certificate of Compliance or exemption from the Minnesota Department of Human Rights, before the contract can be executed.

The Equal Pay Certificate should be included in applicable proposal packages and should be part of the bid proposal. The Proposal Document is now on the [SALT Electronic Proposal Documents table](#) and will be included in the electronic proposal package available upon plan approval.

You may download the [list of contractors](#) holding Human Rights and Equal Pay Certifications that are required for contractors with 40 or more full time employees on contract with state agencies in excess of \$500,000.

Employee News

After working with MnDOT more than 31 ½ years (all in D3A) Ken Larson, DSAA from district 3 has retired on February 8th. Ken began working at MnDOT in 1985 as a Highway Tech and has worked for the offices of Design, Preliminary Design, Construction and Maintenance before starting in State Aid in 2011. Prior to MnDOT, he worked home construction in northern Minnesota and Grand Forks, including owning his own small business in Bemidji for five years. We wish Ken well in his retirement and thank him for his many years of service to MnDOT.

We are pleased to introduce and welcome Chelsey Palmateer, our newest Grad Engineer. Chelsey's home base is State Aid's Central Office, and her first rotation is here. Her next rotation will begin in April

and will be in the Planning Office in Mankato. Chelsey has a Bachelor of Civil Engineering and Master of Science in Transportation Engineering from the University of Minnesota and she is currently finishing a Ph.D. in Transportation Engineering. Prior to starting as a Grad Engineer, she worked as a student worker in MnDOT's Metro District Planning, Program Management and Transit, MnDOT's Metro District Traffic Program Support, MnDOT's Regional Transportation Management Center, Metro Transit Engineering and Facilities, and the Civil Engineering Department at the U of MN.

Thank you, Candy Harding, for your 9 years of tremendous service in State Aid Finance. Candy

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2018 Spec

By: Joel Ulring, Pavement Engineer

MnDOT has made their final changes and the 2018 Standard Specifications for Construction is anticipated to be available in June of this year. Based on this date, State Aid will require its use beginning January 1, 2018. One of the overall changes to the specification is the removal of metric measurements with exception where they relate to testing procedures (which are in metric). Other major changes include:

- Concrete – contractor's will now be performing concrete mix designs. This results in several changes which Maria Masten has been traveling and presenting on the changes at all the local meetings she can to get the word out.
- Bituminous – full implementation of MSCR binder grades.
- Grading & Base – mostly clarifications with summary of changes located on the Material's Grading and Base webpage.

State Aid has been updating the website with these changes.

coming soon

Continued...Employee News

took a new position on February 15th in the Special Services section of the Office of Financial Management.

Amie Wunderlich has accepted the State Aid Finance Federal Aid vacant position and will be starting on April 3rd. Amie comes from the Office of Financial Management

and previously was an Accounting Supervisor at MnSCU's Inver Hills Community College and Anoka Technical College. Amie has a two year degree in Accounting and a Bachelor's degree in Business Management. She may be reached at 651-366-4915 or amie.wunderlich@state.mn.us starting April 3rd.



(Ken Larson)



(Chelsey Palmateer)



(Amie Wunderlich)



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