



National Association County Engineers

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NACE UPDATE

The almost bi-weekly newsletter for Board members, Committee Chairs, and Members
August 4, 2009- Volume 09 Number 20

(Note: Sources of information include the AASHTO Journal, NACo staff, Senate and House publications, the Federal Highway Administration, and other association news journals)

View NACE member and NACo Highway – Highway Safety Subcommittee Chair Dan Fedderly’s Presentation To Congressional Staff on Our Local Roads Matter website!

Dan Fedderly, Executive Director Wisconsin County Highway Association, Dunn County Supervisor and former Wisconsin County Highway Superintendent presented the “rural county” view in a briefing to Congressional Staffers for the National Association of Counties. To view his presentation visit the NACE Local Roads Matter Campaign site <http://countyengineers...org/LRM/index.html> or click on the Local Roads Matter button on the left side of this page. Then click on the Social Media Center.

Senate Approval Sends \$7 Billion Highway Trust Fund Transfer to President

The Senate voted 79-17 last Thursday to pass a bill that would deposit \$7 billion into the Highway Trust Fund from the federal government’s General Fund to ensure state transportation departments will continue receiving full reimbursements for federal-aid highway projects through September, the end of the current federal fiscal year. The Highway Trust Fund is facing a cash shortfall as soon as next month due to tax revenue coming in below levels projected in the 2005 transportation law known as “SAFETEA-LU” as a result of Americans driving less during the economic recession and thus paying less in gasoline, diesel, and heavy-truck taxes. View the full story at <http://arewethereyet.transportation.org/AJ073009-newsalert.html>.

House Approves Transportation Appropriations for FY 2010

The House of Representatives on last week approved transportation funding proposals for Fiscal Year 2010 by a vote of 256-168, fending off amendments to cut the overall spending levels and to eliminate specific earmarks. The bill provides \$41.1 billion for highways and \$10.5 billion for mass transit for the federal fiscal year that begins Oct. 1. A 1 percent increase is included in the measure (HR 3288) for the federal-aid highway program over the \$40.7 billion appropriated during this fiscal year (not including highway funds included in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act). The amount approved by the House for FY 2010 matches the request made by the Obama administration. However, since there will not be sufficient dollars in the Highway Trust Fund to support this spending level, the appropriations amount is subject to action by Congress to fix the trust fund shortfall.

States Facing “Real Cuts” Under Pending \$8.7 Billion Rescission of Federal Authority

Even as state transportation departments are implementing economic recovery projects nationwide, many are preparing to cut their existing highway programs by millions of dollars if Congress fails to fix a bookkeeping provision that calls for taking back \$8.7 billion in federal aid previously authorized. Since enactment of the 2005 transportation measure known as “SAFETEA-LU,” Congress has quietly taken back about \$16.5 billion in “contract authority” apportioned to the states. Now the biggest cut of all, \$8.7 billion, will occur Sept. 30 if no action is taken to repeal it. States built up balances of unused contract authority in past years because Congress always restricts the amount of federal-aid funds they can actually spend by setting “obligation limitations.” Taking back the leftover funds provided a way for Congress to balance the books of the Highway Trust Fund and provide funding for other programs. The practice of rescissions, which began as a relatively modest \$300 million in 2002, escalated to cuts of \$3.4 billion in contract authority in 2007. Congress also stepped in to demand that the cuts be taken across most federal-aid programs, but exempting funds for safety and those monies distributed to metropolitan areas. Now, with balances of unobligated funds being sharply reduced, some states will be forced to cut project spending, not just the unspent balances.

How is Your State Tracking ARRA Stimulus Funds? – One report.

To find out how your state is doing view the article in the attached link.

<http://www.stateline.org/live/details/story?contentId=416578>

Transportation Research Board Low Volume Roads Committee Information on 10th International LVR Conference

Visit this new site link for information <http://sites.google.com/site/trbcommitteeafb30/>

Visit the FHWA Local and Rural Roads Safety Program Website

http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/local_rural/

This website hosts a wealth of information for County Road professionals to assist them in crafting and implementing safety programs in their counties. It is worth a visit to view the many guides and publications, statistics, and policies that are available.

How States and Territories Fund Transportation: An Overview of Traditional and Nontraditional Strategies

This NGA report provides states with an overview of traditional funding mechanisms, profiles of new and innovative programs at work in the United States and overseas, and a summary of each state's surface transportation funding approaches. The report covers state-driven mechanisms only and is meant to help states identify strategies to consider in addressing their revenue needs alongside federal and local approaches. Available at:

<http://www.nga.org/Files/pdf/0907TRANSPORTATIONSTRATEGIES.PDF>

Low-Cost Safety Improvements, Blended Approach

Web-based and Web-conference Training

Low Cost Safety Improvements, Blended Approach provides the knowledge and skills needed to analyze crash data, identify crash patterns, and select appropriate “low cost” countermeasures.

This blended learning approach combines the best of live instructor-led instruction with the benefits of self-directed learning. Three Web conferences equally spaced throughout the length

of the course provide you direct access to an instructor and peers. Between the Web conferences, you will access and interact with content that can provide you with tips and techniques for identifying appropriate low-cost countermeasures that you can use to improve safety. You control the value and personal benefit of participating in this course.

OUTCOMES: Upon completion of the course, participants will be able to:

- Identify appropriate engineering countermeasures from crash patterns by using the Six-Step Crash Mitigation Process (CMP)
- Select appropriate countermeasures for: roadside hazards based upon deficiencies in operations or design, deficiencies in signage, roadway markings, and lighting; and deficiencies in operation/design of highway intersections

TARGET AUDIENCE: This course is intended for individuals responsible for identifying, recommending, selecting, installing, and/or maintaining appropriate low cost countermeasures to help reduce the number of crashes.

TRAINING LEVEL: Basic

LENGTH: 10 hours **CEU:** 1 Unit **FEE:** \$125 per participant

CLASS SIZE: Minimum: 10; Maximum: 45

REGISTRATION: To request a session of this course, go to the NHI Web site at <http://www.nhi.fhwa.dot.gov> and select the "Host a Course" link, then complete the "Host a Web Conference Training (WCT) Course" form. After the form is received, the instructor will contact the local coordinator to schedule the session. Requested dates may be shown on the form; however, scheduling is subject to instructor availability. All confirmed sessions are listed on the NHI Web site by date and course number.

NHI Training Information: NHI Scheduler • (703) 235-0534 • E-mail nhitraining@dot.gov

Subject Matter Contact: John McFadden • (410) 962-2482 • E-mail john.mcfadden@dot.gov

NHI Training Program Manager: Thomas Elliott • (703) 235-0319 • E-mail thomas.elliott@dot.gov

TR News: May-June 2009 Transportation and the Environment: Mutual Enhancements

The May-June TR News focuses on transportation and the environment, with the goal of "making it better than before." Authors from committees in TRB's Environment and Energy Section examine such topics as transportation and environmental sustainability, successes and emerging challenges in air quality management, transportation ecology and wildlife passages, public outreach on the noise impacts from transportation projects, transportation and historic preservation, and more. [\[More\]](#)

TRANSPORTATION AGENCY DIRECTOR POSITION VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

Cobb County Georgia has announced a position of interest to NACE members. Cobb County is a suburban county of Atlanta, GA. See the attached.

COUNTY HIGHWAY ENGINEER – CROW WING COUNTY, MN

Crow Wing County has an extraordinary opportunity for the well-experienced professional engineer. This key position leads a 40 person department with an annual operating budget of \$11 million and serves as a member of the senior management team with accountability for organizational leadership. This complex assignment requires a highly strategic and community focused leader with broad perspective and a collaborative approach towards transportation

planning and management. Knowledge of roadway and traffic control engineering, design and construction management, project funding, regulatory and legislative processes are all essential requirements. This opportunity includes an attractive benefit package with comprehensive health, dental and life benefits, fully funded short term and long-term disability insurance, paid time off, fleet vehicle, professional development, and retirement contributions through the Public Employees Retirement Association. Relocation assistance is negotiable and salary is commensurate with experience. Qualified candidates are encouraged to send a cover letter, resume, salary history and work-related references to Tamra Laska, Human Resource Director, Crow Wing County Courthouse, 326 Laurel Street, Suite 12. Brainerd, MN 56401. Or email tami.laska@co.crow-wing.mn.us. Review of applications will start on July 27, 2009

VMT Tax: Is It Really Doable?

The University of Iowa Public Policy Center is looking for a few good folk to see how they respond to a proposed mileage-based road user charge system (also often referred to as a VMT-tax). Participants in the study will have an on-board computer temporarily installed in their vehicles, which will store a record of the charges that might accrue for road use if such a system were officially in place. The study's goals: 1) to make sure that the system is reliable, secure, flexible, user-friendly and cost-effective; and 2) to find out why vehicle operators accept or reject the system, what they like and what they don't. Drivers must be from the following areas: Wichita, Kansas; Billings, Montana; Chicago, Illinois; Miami, Florida; Portland, Maine; and Albuquerque, New Mexico. For complete information or to join the study, go to <http://www.roaduserstudy.org/survey.aspx>

Harry Truman's Excellent Adventure - Road Tripping Along America's Highways

In the summer following his departure from the highest office in the country, former president Harry S. Truman and his wife Bess packed up their new Chrysler New Yorker and undertook a journey that millions of Americans make every year - the cross-country road trip. Author Matthew Algeo's engaging account of the 19-day trip, *Harry Truman's Excellent Adventure: The True Story of a Great American Road Trip* (<http://www.trumanroadtrip.com/page/page/6814760.htm>), follows the two as they drove from their hometown in Independence, Missouri, across the Midwest to Washington, DC, with important trips to Philadelphia and New York City. Without Secret Service or a presidential pension to support them, the two hit roadside motels and diners as well as swell joints like the Mayflower and Waldorf=Astoria. Their efforts to travel incognito were foiled time and time again as most Americans they encountered recognized them, offering a "Hello, Mr. Truman" or "Hiya, Harry" wherever they went. According to the author, who followed their trip across 2,500 miles, Truman loved the open road. "He was a 'road scholar' - not a 'Rhodes scholar'...He really knew roads."

DWCP (Driving While Cell Phoning)

The Latest Peril Forty-eight percent of American adults think using a cellphone is the most dangerous distraction for people while driving, yet 81 percent do it and 98 percent consider themselves safe drivers. This is just one of the many interesting details found in a recent New York Times article, "Driven to Distraction: Drivers and Legislators Dismiss Cellphone Risks," Sunday, July 19, 2009.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/07/19/technology/19distracted.html?scp=1&sq=cellphone%20use%20series&st=cse>)

The article, authored by Matt Richtel, provides links to key research as well as maps showing state bans on texting, cellphone or handset uses. For those truly adventurous, the Times has included an interactive "game" that measures your reaction time when you are driving and a text or cellphone rings: <http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2009/07/19/technology/20090719-driving-game.html>.

In a second article, the New York Times reported that a driver's risk of collision is 23 times higher if they are texting:

http://www.nytimes.com/2009/07/28/technology/28texting.html?_r=1&ref=technology.

According to their research, the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute found that prior to a crash, drivers typically spent five seconds looking at their phones - that's more than enough time to travel the length of a football field at highway speeds.

Public Roads: July/August 2009

The latest issue of the Federal Highway Administration's Public Roads magazine has been released. This issue covers safe routes to school, the use of color to convey safety messages, a project to improve the I-90 corridor over the Cascades, and more. [\[More\]](#)

FHWA Focus Magazine: June 2009

Articles in the June 2009 issue of the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA's) Focus magazine explore guidance on accelerated bridge construction, grant applications for the FHWA Highways for LIFE program, FHWA's Life-Cycle Cost Analysis Technical Forum, and more. [\[More\]](#)

National Transportation Atlas Database

The Bureau of Transportation Statistics, a part of the U.S. Department of Transportation's Research and Innovative Technology Administration, has released a DVD of nationwide geographic databases of transportation facilities, transportation networks, and associated infrastructure, to be used within a geographic information system. [\[More\]](#)

Rural Safety News: July 2009

The Center for Excellence in Rural Safety at the University of Minnesota has released the latest issue of its rural safety electronic newsletter, which highlights research and resources concerning rural safety. [\[More\]](#)

Safety Evaluation of Lane and Shoulder Width Combinations on Rural, Two-Lane, Undivided Roads

The Federal Highway Administration has released a report that explores the safety effectiveness of various lane-shoulder width configurations for fixed total paved widths as a countermeasure for roadway departure crashes. [\[More\]](#)

Safety Evaluation of Offset Improvements for Left-Turn Lanes

The Federal Highway Administration has released a report that explores the safety effectiveness of various lane and shoulder width combinations on rural, two-lane, undivided roads in the

Evaluation of Low-Cost Safety Improvements Pooled Fund Study (ELCSI-PFS) Phase II.
[\[More\]](#)

Best Practices for Dust Control on Aggregate Roads

The Minnesota Department of Transportation has released a report that examines the performance and cost of commonly used dust palliatives on roads located throughout Minnesota to determine the extent to which treatments reduced dust levels. [\[More\]](#)

Technology Enabling Near-Term Nationwide Implementation of Distance-Based Road User Fees

The Intelligent Transportation Systems Institute at the University of Minnesota has released a report that examines an in-vehicle device that uses the distance traveled by a vehicle to determine a fee that would be charged for road usage. [\[More\]](#)

Slope Maintenance and Slide Restoration

[Join us for a Webinar on September 17](#)

REGISTER NOW

Space is limited.

Reserve your Webinar seat now at:

<https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/348707081>

This webinar will highlight the latest issues in slope maintenance and slide restoration for transportation maintenance professionals. Speakers will discuss the fundamental conditions that affect slope stability and deterioration; the costs associated with maintenance, stabilization, and restoration; and practices and techniques to manage erosion. Discussion will be encouraged among presenters, and webinar participants will have the opportunity to ask questions.

Presenters for this session include:

- o Benjamin Rivers, Federal Highway Administration:
Overview of Slope Maintenance & Slide Restoration
- o Dwayne Stenlund, Minnesota Department of Transportation:
Maintenance Perspective
- o Jody Kuhne, North Carolina Department of Transportation:
Geotechnical and Engineering Geology Perspective

Registration: There is no fee for TRB Sponsors, listed here:

<http://www.trb.org/directory/sponsors.asp>. Others must pay \$99 per site. Space is limited, so please register in advance. For questions about using this software, including webinar audio or visual complications, please contact Reggie Gillum at rgillum@nas.edu or 202-334-2382.

Title: *Slope Maintenance and Slide Restoration*

Date: Thursday, September 17, 2009

Time: 2:00 PM - 3:30 PM EDT

After registering you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the Webinar.