

Montana LTAP Progress Report

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Quarterly Progress Report

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY/MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

This State Fiscal Year (SFY) Third Quarterly Report is submitted to the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) and the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to provide details on the activities and project work of Montana LTAP in support of MDT Project No. 02443, Montana Local Technical Assistance Program, during the period January 1, 2021 through March 31, 2021.

We have been quite busy with online meetings, planning efforts, a large MACRS conference live in Great Falls, MT and a fair amount of training. Highlights of Montana LTAP's accomplishments during that period include the following:

- LTAP hosted three monthly safety webinars during the second quarter. SIGNING 101, Culvert Slip-Lining & InfraSteel Rehabilitation, Gravel Road Maintenance – Part 1 were the topics covered.
- LTAP assisted with planning the Annual MACRS Conference, held in Great Falls the end of March.
- LTAP worked as much as we could to deliver local trainings within the State and local COVID regulations, as well as the preference of the local customer.
- Trainings this quarter included: Traffic Control Technician, Work Zone Technician, Train-The-Trainer, Flagging, and MSHA Refreshers.
- Flagger Certification and Butte, Kalispell (4 classes) and Boulder, MT
- Work Zone Tech and Traffic Control Technician classes were delivered in Helena and Boulder.
- Virtual attendance of MACRS Conference planning meetings, held by the MACRS board of Directors.
- Our delivery to over 100 Virtual Asphalt Conference attendees.
- Our delivery to 297 in-class students included students from diverse backgrounds and employment. Below are our tracked statistics:
 - 1% City employees
 - 62% County employees
 - 4% State employees
 - 34% Individuals not listing employment (Kalispell and Highlands College)

This progress report is organized following the four LTAP focus areas:

1. Safety
2. Infrastructure Management
3. Workforce Development
4. Organizational Excellence

SAFETY

Past Activities

Proactive safety training initiatives for local governments are key objectives in this focus area. Technology transfer is accomplished through safety-related articles in LTAP’s newsletter, safety training seminars, staff responses to phone and email inquiries, and on-site technical assistance. In the projected LTAP budget, 48 percent of funding is allocated to the Safety focus area. Table 1 shows the safety focus area budget and costs-to-date.

Table 1: Safety Area Budget Summary, 3rd Quarter SFY 2021.

Task A: Safety 48%				
Quarterly Payroll	86,874.76			
Quarterly IDC's	24,994.86			
Cost Categories	Quarterly Budget	Costs-this-Quarter	Annual Budget	Costs-to-Date
Salaries/Benefits	33,099.24	41,699.88	132,396.96	103,358.81
Prof. Services	943.44	-	3,773.76	-
Travel	600.00	553.80	2,400.00	1,604.69
Supplies/Comm.	820.20	32.36	3,280.80	780.15
Minor Equipment	-	(0.23)	-	18.95
Totals	35,462.88	42,285.82	141,851.52	105,762.60
IDC's	10,137.12	11,997.53	40,548.48	30,079.42
	45,600.00	54,283.35	182,400.00	135,842.02

Thirteen safety related workshops were conducted during this three-month period. A total of 210 participants attended. The 17th Annual Safety Congress was held in Helena January 25-28, 2021. Topics included Work Zone Technician; Traffic Control Supervisor and the Flagger Certification Class Train the Trainer.

The workshops included:

- 4 MSHA Refreshers were held in Missoula, Chinook, Hamilton and Townsend
- 6 Flagger Certification classes were held in Butte, Kalispell (4 classes), and Boulder. Townsend. Topics included flagging duties and responsibilities, and safety, uniformity and liability issues.
- 2 TCT classes were held in Helena and Boulder
- 1 Traffic Control Supervisor class was held in Helena

- LTAP hosted three monthly safety webinars during the third quarter. Signing 101 was the Safety-focused webinar for this quarter. The webinar recordings can be accessed via the LTAP website link:
<http://www.coe.montana.edu/ltapv2/resources/webinars/index.html>.

Challenges

- COVID-19 restrictions and the valid concerns of our customers regarding the safety of group classes remains the most significant challenge in delivering in-person content.
- Normal challenges: Time, distance and demand. We are making strides in addressing the greater need for training in eastern MT in multiple locations. Current training requested includes: Leadership is needed state-wide, Flagger Certification, Workzone Technician, and Traffic Control Supervisor Courses, Roadway Inventory management and snowplow training.
- Online content delivery is severely hindered by our customers regular course of business operations, minimal availability of computers within each shop area, and general dislike of online format of trainings.
- Scheduling any training dates is a challenge during the winter months. Road conditions are a limiting factor, and Montana cities and counties are working hard to maintain the streets and highways during this time.

Planned Activities

- Flagger Certification workshops are being requested statewide.
- LTAP webinars focused primarily on safety topics will continue in 2021 on a monthly schedule.

The LTAP newsletter contained the following articles related to Safety:

- Newsletter articles being developed on an ongoing basis.

INFRASTRUCTURE MANAGEMENT

Past Activities

Montana LTAP is promoting more attention on Infrastructure Management through partnerships with the Asphalt Institute, and through delivering relevant training and technical assistance. In the projected LTAP budget, 18 percent of funding is allocated to the infrastructure management focus area. Table 2 shows the infrastructure management focus area budget and costs-to-date.

LTAP held one Virtual conference in the area of Infrastructure Management classes this quarter. Our annual Montana Asphalt Conference drew an average of 115 attendees over two days. And presentation topics were diverse and relevant due to the diligence of our committee headed by Dave Johnson with the Asphalt Institute.

We also continue our work on technical assists to several roadway management partners including the following infrastructure Management topics.

- LTAP answered several requests for technical assistance regarding sign inventories, pavement condition assessments, PASER program ratings for paved and unpaved roads, and several separate guardrail installation and maintenance issues.

Table 2: Infrastructure Management Budget Summary, 3rd Quarter SFY 2021

Task B: Infrastructure Management 18%				
Cost Categories	Quarterly Budget	Costs-this-Quarter	Annual Budget	Costs-to-Date
Salaries/Benefits	12,412.22	15,637.46	49,648.86	38,759.55
Prof. Services	353.79	-	1,415.16	-
Travel	225.00	207.68	900.00	601.76
Supplies/Comm.	307.58	12.14	1,230.30	292.56
Minor Equipment	-	(0.08)	-	7.11
Totals	13,298.58	15,857.18	53,194.32	39,660.98
IDC's	3,801.42	4,499.07	15,205.68	11,279.78
	17,100.00	20,356.26	68,400.00	50,940.76

LTAP hosted three monthly safety webinars during the third quarter. Culvert Slip-Lining & InfraSteel Rehabilitation and Gravel Road Maintenance – Part 1 were two Infrastructure Management focused webinars for this quarter. The webinar recordings can be accessed via the LTAP website link: <http://www.coe.montana.edu/ltapv2/resources/webinars/index.html>.

The LTAP newsletter contained the following articles related to Infrastructure Management:

- Newsletter articles being developed on an ongoing basis.

Challenges

- COVID-19 restrictions and the valid concerns of our customers regarding the safety of group classes remains the most significant challenge in delivering in-person content.
- Online content delivery is severely hindered by our customers regular course of business operations, minimal availability of computers within each shop area, and general dislike of online format of trainings.

- Scheduling any training dates is a challenge during the winter months. Road conditions are a limiting factor, and Montana cities and counties are working hard to maintain the streets and highways during this time.
- Normal challenges: Time, distance and demand. We are making strides in addressing the greater need for training in eastern MT in multiple locations. Current training requested includes: Leadership is needed state-wide, Flagger Certification, Work Zone Technician, and Traffic Control Supervisor Courses, Roadway Inventory management and snowplow training.
- Several counties have requested a low-cost inventory management system to help them document and keep a basic Capital Improvement Plan in-place. Options are provided for inquiring counties, including North Dakota's GRIT program.

Planned Activities

- LTAP plans to continue to offer gravel roads maintenance and management training this spring/summer. This includes instruction on gravel quality and quantity.
- LTAP plans also continue to offer guardrail, cattleguard, sign inventory and unpaved and paved roadway maintenance and management classes are throughout the year. These are available on request as well.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Past Activities

In the projected LTAP budget, 22 percent of funding is allocated to the workforce development focus area. Table 3 shows the workforce development focus area budget and costs-to-date.

We completed a solid lineup of workforce development related workshops during this three-month period. A total of 291 participants attended. The classes included:

- LTAP Delivered a Leadership Class, with guest speakers from the Montana Extension office and the State Professional Development Center. This class was delivered at the Annual MACRS pre-conference training and was attended by 81 County employees.
- LTAP delivered 6 Flagger classes in Butte, Kalispell (4 classes), and Boulder.
- LTAP delivered 2 Traffic Control Technician (TCT) classes in Helena and Boulder.
- LTAP delivered a Traffic Control Supervisor (TCS) class in Helena.
- LTAP delivered a Flagger Train-the-Trainer (TTT) class in Helena.
- LTAP delivered 4 MSHA Refreshers in Missoula, Chinook, Hamilton and Townsend

Table 3: Workforce Development Budget Summary, 3rd Quarter SFY 2021

Workforce Development 22%				
Cost Categories	Quarterly Budget	Costs-this-Quarter	Annual Budget	Costs-to-Date
Salaries/Benefits	15,170.49	19,112.45	60,681.94	47,372.79
Prof. Services	432.41	-	1,729.64	-
Travel	275.00	253.83	1,100.00	735.48
Supplies/Comm.	375.93	14.83	1,503.70	357.57
Minor Equipment	-	(0.10)	-	8.69
Totals	16,253.82	19,381.00	65,015.28	48,474.53
IDC's	4,646.18	5,498.87	18,584.72	13,786.40
	20,900.00	24,879.87	83,600.00	62,260.93

The LTAP newsletter contained the following articles related to Workforce Development:

- Newsletter articles being developed on an ongoing basis.

Planned Activities

- LTAP will continue to offer our regular Work Force Development offerings in 2021.
- COVID-19 and turnover issues continue to challenge local agencies. WFD is a big area of need for training. FHWA is including WFD in the EDC initiatives, and we expect this to be a big part of how LTAP helps bring Montana’s workforce into the transportation sectors.
- We continue to have more demand than ability to deliver program, and we hope that the FHWA new strategic plan for LTAP helps us focus on this area into the future.

Challenges

- We are seeing a high demand for our Leadership classes. We will do our best to offer a good schedule of these this spring and summer.
- General training of all the basics continues to be in high demand due to turnover in many communities. We expect that trend to continue.

ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE

Past Activities

To provide the best service possible to constituents, LTAP personnel seek training to improve their outreach capabilities. Organizational excellence addresses professional development and leadership training for LTAP personnel. In the projected LTAP budget, 22 percent of funding is allocated to the organizational excellence focus area. Table 4 shows the organizational excellence focus area budget and costs-to-date.

Table 4: Organizational Excellence Budget Summary: 3rd Quarter SFY 2021

Organizational Excellence 12%				
Cost Categories	Quarterly Budget	Costs-this-Quarter	Annual Budget	Costs-to-Date
Salaries/Benefits	8,274.81	10,424.97	33,099.24	25,839.70
Prof. Services	235.86	-	943.44	-
Travel	150.00	138.45	600.00	401.16
Supplies/Comm.	205.05	8.09	820.20	195.04
Minor Equipment	-	(0.06)	-	4.74
Total	8,865.72	10,571.46	35,462.88	26,440.64
IDC's	2,534.28	2,999.38	10,137.12	7,519.85
	11,400.00	13,570.84	45,600.00	33,960.50

- LTAP awarded 19 Road Scholar certificates and 1 Road Master Certificate at the Annual MACRS Banquet in Great Falls March 30th. We could have a very large class of graduates in 2022 as well if training opportunities are able to be provided (COVID).
- LTAP Director Matt Ulberg participated in National NLTAPA Executive Board Meetings and Regional Meetings virtually this quarter.
- Director Matt Ulberg continues to serve as President-Elect for NLTAPA through July of 2021.
- Matt also serves as the planning chair for the NLTAPA National Meeting in Columbus, OH July of 2021.
- LTAP is assisted MACRS with their annual meeting in Great Falls, MT.
- LTAP hosted the Virtual Montana Asphalt Conference with over 100 attendees.
- Montana LTAP Director Matt Ulberg attend the TRB Committee Meetings virtually in January.

- Montana LTAP distributed an updated LTAP Training Needs Assessment Survey to our constituents and training participants at the 40th Annual MACRS conference in Great Falls.

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Table 4: SFY 3rd Quarter Workshop Evaluation Summary

No Surveys Collected this quarter. Please see our Annual Work Plan for annual Survey results.

Challenges

- LTAP has caught up with our Road Scholar program records, and we expect another large class of graduates in 2022.

Planned Activities

- Montana LTAP Director Matt Ulberg has been elected to the National LTAP Association (NLTAPA) executive board and serves as the President-Elect until July 2021.
- Montana LTAP Director Matt Ulberg will attend the NLTAPA Executive Board and Winter Meeting of NLTAPA virtually, prior to TRB.
- Montana LTAP Director Matt Ulberg will attend the TRB Meetings virtually the end of January 2021.
- LTAP Director Matt Ulberg will attend the National NACE VIRTUAL Convention this spring. NACE is a key partner with LTAP nationally and within Montana. Montana's NACE affiliate is MACRS.
- Montana LTAP plans to distribute an updated LTAP Training Needs Assessment Survey to our constituents and training participants at annual MACRS conference in March/April 2021.

SFY 2020-2021 Third Quarter Financial Summary

Table 6: 3rd Quarter SFY 2020-2021 Budget Summary, Jan 2021 - March 2021

SUMMARY:				
Cost Categories	Quarterly Budget	Costs-this-Quarter	Annual Budget	Costs-to-Date
Salaries/Benefits	68,956.75	86,874.76	275,827.00	215,330.86
Prof. Services	1,965.50	-	7,862.00	-
Travel	1,250.00	1,153.75	5,000.00	3,343.09
Supplies/Comm.	1,708.75	67.42	6,835.00	1,625.32
Minor Equipment	-	(0.47)	-	39.50
Total	73,881.00	88,095.46	295,524.00	220,338.76
IDC's	21,119.00	24,994.86	84,476.00	62,665.45
	95,000.00	113,090.32	380,000.00	283,004.21

Table 7: Budget Summary by Focus Area, 3rd Quarter SFY 2020-2021

Focus Areas	Salary/Benefits	Prof. Services	Travel	Supplies/Com	Minor Equip	Subtotal	IDC's	Total
Safety - 48%	41,699.88	-	553.80	32.36	(0.23)	42,285.82	11,997.53	54,283.35
Infrastructure Management - 18%	15,637.46	-	207.68	12.14	(0.08)	15,857.18	4,499.07	20,356.26
Workforce Development 22%	19,112.45	-	253.83	14.83	(0.10)	19,381.00	5,498.87	24,879.87
Organizational Excellence - 12%	10,424.97	0.00	138.45	8.09	(0.06)	10,571.46	2,999.38	13,570.84
TOTAL COSTS	86,874.76	0.00	1,153.75	67.42	-0.47	88,095.46	24,994.86	113,090.32