MONTANA WILDLIFE AND TRANSPORTATION

DATA AND INFORMATION WORKGROUP

10:00am – 2:00pm, Thursday, March 4, 2021

Meeting Notes

Purpose: Continue to work through the process of ranking and weighting data layers, one criterion at a time

Objectives:

- Finish the ranking and weighting process for human safety and property damage
- Start the ranking and weighting process for wildlife and habitat connectivity for large mammals
- Learn about work group member feedback on the weighting exercise
- Plan for the next work group meeting on March 25

Attendees:

- D&I Work Group: Liz Fairbank (MSWP), Andrew Jakes (MSWP), Gabe Priebe (MDT), Paul Sturm (MDT), Brian Andersen (MDT), Justin Gude (FWP), Adam Messer (FWP)
- Planning and Implementation Team (PIT Crew): Renee Lemon (FWP), Hannah Jaicks (MSWP), Deb Wambach (MDT)
- Agency Staff: Patricia Burke (MDT)

Agenda:

1. Introduction

2. Criterion: Human safety and property damage
    a. MDT provided an update on analysis parameters for MHP crash data, MDT carcass data, and MDT traffic volume data, and resulting layers in the mapping application.
    b. The group discussed how to incorporate traffic speed and volume into the analysis and decided to keep traffic volume as one of the three primary data sources. The group will continue considering how best to include speed. It could be a base layer on the map.
    c. MDT recommended using 10 years of data because it aligns with other analysis practices and can help identify trends on lower volume roads. Whereas, using three to five years of data will only reveal trends on higher volume roads.
    d. The group decided not to break out crash data by species because it would take significant work and there is uncertainty about its reliability. Carcass data is a better dataset for identifying species.
    e. There is no way to identify fatalities versus injuries in the crash data.
    f. The group discussed whether commercial truck collision data should be included in the analysis and agreed to hold that thought for now and consider it in the future.
    g. In areas without adequate crash and collision data, speed limits and seasonal range data could be used as a proxy.
    h. For each of the three primary data layers, the group identified spatial coverage, spatial accuracy, data quality, and relative importance. The group will further evolve this scoring mechanism and develop a justification/definition for each.
    i. See action items for next steps.

3. Break

4. Criterion: Wildlife and habitat connectivity for large mammals – the group will work on this at the next meeting

5. Weighting exercise
    a. Justin showed the results from the weighting exercise
    b. There was variation in values, but generally human safety and property damage was weighted as most important and wildlife and habitat connectivity for large mammals was weighted as second most important slightly above struggling or at-risk wildlife populations.
    c. The group noted weighting the criteria is based on values so the steering committee should go through this exercise at the steering committee's meeting in May. Ahead of the meeting, provide the steering committee with Justin's original email to the D&I group and have the steering committee complete the exercise as the D&I group did.

6. Next steps – See action items.

7. Review and Close

ACTION ITEMS:

- Brian will use the ranking developed by the group to create grids with scores for each pixel for each of the data layers – crash data, carcass data, and traffic volumes. Then, he'll combine the three grids resulting in the analysis product for the Human Safety and Property Damage Criterion. Adam will work with Brian on methodology and resolution.
- Justin and Adam will make sure data layers are ready for the next three criteria.
- Andrew will draft definitions of spatial coverage, spatial accuracy, data quality, and relative importance, as well as descriptions of categories under each, and send to the group for feedback.
- Renee will schedule the next meeting on March 25 from 9am to 1pm with short breaks.