Montana Wildlife and Transportation Steering Committee

February 11th, 2022

Meeting Notes:

Attendees: Nick Clark, Stephanie Adams, Kylie Paul, Brooke Shifrin, Ken McDonald, Deb O'Neill, Liz Fairbank, Justin Gude, Tom Martin, Linnaea Schroeer, Deb Wambach, Dustin Rouse, Paul Sturm, Dwane Kailey, Michelle McGree

Data and Information Recommendations

- Request was for D&I group to provide some additional recommendations.
    - Product #1- Approved by SC
    - Product #2- Approved by SC in terms of display
        - Rec. When evaluating projects could have feature for top 10% in state and top 10% in district. If project does could give it a bonus in the selection weighting.
            - Request for further discussion around % to use as a threshold when further defining selection criteria. Can keep as a placeholder for now and during Beta testing
            - Colors on heat map are also indicative of what percentage it falls into.
        - If drill down by district for open display, does it cause confusion since an area might show up on the district level, but not statewide. Merit in having the more detailed based on district in project evaluation but might cause a misunderstanding of what the data means for general use.
            - Rec: Do not have the 10% by district on the general display. Have as a tool for internal use
        - How do we strike a balance so that users can use it to help guide their approach to developing projects while not creating a false sense of alarm that a road is a hazard.
            - Can you do something in each district where you can show the comparison within the district based on colors. Turn on a heat map for each district rather than 10%. Colors would change but the scores change.
            - Advantages to be able to see statewide and district wide or FWP region wide
        - **Decision is to beta test with heat map by MDT district and statewide heat map for public display.**
        - **Want 10% or another threshold to remain an option for SC to consider in filter criteria though need further discussion:**
            - **If being in a certain % is part of the scoring criteria it would be important to make sure that is transparent to those who are submitting a proposal.**
            - **Could it be based on the heat level- Choosing to work in red gives x extra point, orange gets a different point etc.**
        - Beta Testers- MDT/FWP/MSWP

        - Also recommend including a land trust- Approved
        - Please also include the SC members
      - Request that Beta Testers provide rational for feedback to help us determine what to include
      - Data access- all the data is already publicly available including type of crash data.
    - Process 1- Audiences for the tool are broad from agencies to non-profits to regional governments
    - Process 2- Still want to have one version for use by all.
      - Though need to work through the statewide to district display options
    - Process 4: Fits within the Phase II criteria the SC is still developing
    - Process 6: Approve the D&I recommendation. Will need to look at the different data cycles to determine what the annual timing looks like
    - Still looking at March/April for beta testing.
    - Do not need additional feedback from SC before beta testing.

Existing Processes

- Review Timing:
  - Community Pond: Once a year- smaller number of
  - Future Fisheries twice a year- more applications
  - Wildlife Research- once a year internal review process
- Key having a solid review panel- think critically
- Willing to change the ranking and the questions as program has evolved
- Every project goes before the panel unless it is missing key information or is late. Very firm on these qualifications
- Include a summary and an initial FWP recommendation for each project. Does not mean they have to go with that recommendation.
- Ranking criteria tell you a lot, but the discussion is key.
- Have a values, mission, goals statement of what makes a good project since legislative
  - Having the sideboards can be helpful
  - Can be helpful to also outline what don't want to do ex. Don't fund picnic tables
- Wildlife Research- helps with internal communications, multi-year projects spread out
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a. FWP Existing Processes presentation – Linnaea/Ken/Deb (30 minutes)
    i. Community Bond Program – in your Teams folder.
    ii. Future Fisheries Ranking Criteria – in your Teams folder.
    iii. Wildlife Research Program – in your Teams folder.
b. MSWP Proposal presentation – Kylie (20 minutes)

        i. Missoula County Bond application – in your Teams folder.
        ii. Concept proposal for project selection – in email from PIT Crew.
    c. DI Phases and Intended Uses – PIT Crew? (If time allows)
    d. MWTSC Roles and Responsibilities – Dwane (If time allows)
        i. Just a check in to make sure we are all good.
2. Closing comments – Everyone (5 minutes or as time allows).
    a. Choose date and time for future meetings.
        i. Next meeting is March 3rd, 9 – 11 am.
            1. None scheduled after that.