Montana Wildlife and Transportation Steering Committee

March 3rd, 2022

Meeting Notes

Initial Ideas for names for the mapping tool

- Pull together the suggestion list and then see if there are any others and then also flag for the BETA testers.
    a. Montana wildlife and transportation assessment tool
    b. Wildlife information and location data (tool)
    c. Wildlife Accommodation Areas of Interest
    d. Montana Wildlife and Transportation Needs Assessment

Meeting Minutes approval

- Approval of both meeting notes. Preparing to post them.

Project Selection Process

- Review of the DI group proposed Phases document that was developed to help the SC better understand how the mapping tool could play a role in the needs assessment process.
- There will be a public facing document that provides guidance for public use of the tool.
- D&I group is also developing a document that shows the limitations of the data that feed into the tool.
- This is really to show this is one part of the assessment and is a tool that should be used in a broader evaluation process. The tool should not circumvent or shutdown efforts. More a guide for how the tool can help support evaluations.
    - Key is there are other factors that need to be part of the evaluation.
- **This mapping tool is not the final word. Additional criteria for evaluation are key. Tool is one part of a larger set of criteria for project evaluation.**
- Transparency and predictability are key in the process. An applicant should have a clear idea what criteria will be used to evaluate their proposal on the front end.
- How will the mapping tool be used in the evaluation process. Should road segments that are a higher heat class receive an additional point etc in the process? Do not want it to be exclusionary. An area could be lower in the heat mapping, but if scores high in the other project criteria should still be considered.
- The tool is for evaluation not to tell stakeholders whether or not they should consider a proposal only on certain "heat map " level segments. If you are going to consider proposing a project are there needs that are not represented in the data used for the tool. There need to be other criteria that are being met and make sure there is a strong case for those.
- **Key is that it is information sharing. It is not the decisionmaker- it is to help us all make better informed decision. Its value will also depend on the continued commitment to keep updating the data and refining the tool itself.**
- Could look at having people click a notice on the tool that they understand the tool/ a disclaimer. Would be useful to be able to track how much use it is getting to help gauge its value

to the public. Is there value in knowing the types of stakeholders that are engaging with the tool. Could do an option to voluntarily self-identify your user identity (agency, land trust, etc) on the disclaimer.

- SC agrees to some form of disclaimer when you access the tool.

Display options- Good with the current display for the Beta testing.

- ACTION: Send the PIT crew those you would like to BETA test and any key questions.

MSWP Proposal on Sponsorship/Process

- Proposal is to not rely on one of the SC entities to do the initial screening, but to have the application itself serve as the initial filter.
- The other option could be to require a number of letters of support as opposed to the idea of two or more entities applying together.
- Sponsor concept is to help serve as a liaison or aid to help ensure the application is complete and as strong as possible.
    - Is there a way we could screen for completeness as opposed to merit of the proposal?
- The value of the MSWP SC is the leverage the strengths and expertise of the three entities. How do we ensure a project that meets the key criteria receives the evaluation of the full make up of the SC.
- Want to make sure it passes the muster of the regional staff of FWP and MDT before spending much time in evaluating as a SC.
- Help to weed out initial ideas versus well developed projects. Could there be an feedback and way for people to improve their project and reapply.
- Need for additional discussions related to this topic on the next