

National Winter Maintenance Peer Exchange Conference

Columbus, Ohio

August 28-29, 2007

Research Consortiums

American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO)

The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan association representing highway and transportation departments in the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. It represents all five transportation modes: air, highways, public transportation, rail, and water. Its primary goal is to foster the development, operation, and maintenance of an integrated national transportation system. AASHTO is the voice for transportation and catalyst for organizational and technical excellence. It advocates transportation-related policies and provides technical services to support states in their efforts to efficiently and safely move people and goods. (<http://www.transportation.org/>)



Aurora

Aurora is an international program of collaborative research, development and deployment in the field of road and weather information systems (RWIS), serving the interests and needs of public agencies. The program, launched in 1996, brings together a number of U.S., Canadian, and European agencies. The Aurora vision is to deploy RWIS to integrate state-of-the-art road and weather forecasting technologies with coordinated, multi-agency weather monitoring infrastructures. It is hoped this will facilitate advanced road condition and weather monitoring and forecasting capabilities for efficient highway maintenance, and the provision of real-time information to travelers. Aurora's initiatives are conducted and funded by member agencies, for member agencies. Three times a year, Aurora members meet to set the agenda for RWIS research. Selected initiatives are led by "champion" member agencies, managed by committees of Aurora members, and funded out of the Aurora pooled fund. Through these meetings and monthly teleconferences, members keep informed about progress on Aurora initiatives and other

RWIS-related activities around the world, share their agencies' accomplishments, and learn solutions for common in-the-field problems. Because current members include international leaders in RWIS research, technology, and deployment, many of whom are also affiliated with AASHTO's Snow and Ice Cooperative Program (SICOP) and other RWIS-related programs, the breadth and quality of information exchanged at these meetings is invaluable. (<http://www.aurora-program.org/>)



Clear Roads

The Clear Roads pooled fund project began in early 2004 in response to a need for real-world testing in the field of winter highway operations. This ongoing project led by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation has attracted 14 member states and is funding practical, usable winter maintenance research aimed at rigorous testing of winter maintenance materials, equipment and methods for use by highway maintenance crews. By conducting structured field testing and evaluation across a range of winter conditions and highway maintenance organizational structures, Clear Roads projects delivers immediately useful data and recommendations on the effectiveness, ease of use, optimum application rates, durability, and more, of many advanced winter operations technologies. (<http://www.clearroads.org/>)



Pacific Northwest Snowfighters (PNS) Association

Transportation agencies within the states of Washington, Oregon, Montana and Idaho and the province of British Columbia formed a committee several years ago to develop specifications for chemicals related to snow and ice control. This committee has evolved to become the Pacific Northwest Snowfighters (PNS) Association. The PNS strives to serve the traveling public by evaluating and establishing specifications for products used in winter maintenance that

emphasize safety, environmental preservation, infrastructure protection, cost-effectiveness and performance. The association is comprised of technical experts in the fields of chemistry, environment, maintenance operations and management, insurance law and claims, public affairs and purchasing. The association has been privileged to work with the foremost pioneers in deicing technology. The mission of the PNS is to provide specifications for the highest quality products balancing quality of environment with providing the safest possible transportation system and maximum mobility for the traveling public during snow and ice conditions, within reasonable budgetary, product performance and environmental constraints. By consolidating the resources and purchasing power of the member agencies, the association anticipates that the quality and cost of these products will become more favorable and are considering the challenges and feasibility of developing a contract for use by the entire PNS membership. (<http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/partners/pns/default.htm>)



Snow and Ice Pooled Fund Cooperative Program (SICOP)

SICOP, the Snow and Ice Pooled Fund Cooperative Program, is a Winter Maintenance Technical Service Program (WMTSP) developed by AASHTO (American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials). A principal mission of the Winter Maintenance Program (WMP) is to ensure that the requisite testing and evaluation of potentially implementable international or domestic winter maintenance technologies are performed and that the results of these efforts are presented and disseminated in such a manner that modern winter maintenance technologies are easily understood and integrated into individual state and municipal operational programs. Beyond this principal mission, the WMP works toward establishing a systems approach to snow and ice control in the United States—one involving the vehicle, the driver, and the equipment, the materials and practices—for managing roadway and bridge snow and ice. The goals of the proposed WMP are to (1) sustain or improve levels of winter maintenance service with significant benefit/cost improvements, (2) provide an enhanced level of environmental protection, and (3) place technology in service on operational maintenance sections within two winter seasons. The concept of funding is unique in that all funding will be via a pooled funding mechanism. (<http://www.sicop.net>)