

CTIP PROJECT PROPOSAL
Request for Funding
FY 2005

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Funding Source: (Check one.)

Agency Fund

General Fund

Project Title: Modal Choice and Advanced Traveler Information Park Network Demonstration Project

Background and Purpose: Yellowstone National Park and Grand Teton National Park are linked by US 89. This highway is part of the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail and the John D. Rockefeller Memorial Parkway. These two popular National Parks are located at the Northwest corner of Wyoming and lie directly adjacent to each other. Visitation is high at both parks, particularly during the summer months. This high visitation leads to traffic congestion both within and outside the park in the gateway communities. Currently there is a plan to improve transit in the area and new alternative fuel retro "Yellow Buses" have been ordered for the transit service.

Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) improvement is another strategy to alleviate congestion, complement transit operations (ex. schedule information), and visitor wayfinding. The purpose of the project is to implement an ITS link between Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks. Information kiosks would be placed at strategic locations at both parks (i.e. visitor centers) and in a few locations along the corridor. The kiosks would provide information about the parks, the scenic highway, public transportation services, wayfinding, interpretation, and other pertinent information, such as weather and road construction updates.

This demonstration project is innovative because it:

1. Employs ITS as a congestion mitigation strategy,
2. Provides modal choices and encourages a greater modal split between single occupancy vehicles and transit.
3. Uses ITS to act as an easy access to the information highway both within and between two popular national parks. The visitor will be able to access information before they travel to the next park. It will alleviate driver confusion and will provide more time for the interpretive staff to do their primary jobs; not spending time giving visitors driving directions or transit schedules.

Although, this demonstration will be launched in Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks it will serve as a model for deployment in other clustered parks, such as: Grand Canyon/Zion/Bryce and Yosemite/Sequoia/Kings Canyon. Furthermore, it will provide guidance for clustered national forests and wildlife refuges.

Scope: The General Management Plans, Transportation Studies, and Park, State and Regional ITS Plans will be reviewed. The project will be coordinated with representatives of the parks, gateway communities, Clean Cities Coalition and other interested parties. This team will define what information should to be included on the kiosks and the best kiosk locations for this demonstration. With the assistance of a consultant an ITS kiosk package will be selected that is a best fit for this deployment. A fatal flaw analysis will be done to determine any restrictions on power, operating requirements, maintenance, and cost. The system will be designed, products purchased, and deployed. The system will be monitored and evaluated after one year in operation and a final report will be issued.

Estimated Benefits: This demonstration project will deploy an important transportation strategy that will have beneficial effects on federal lands. Recently, the Management System Rules have been published in the Federal Register. The rules prepared by FLH Headquarters detail requirements regarding the development of management systems by the federal land management agencies. Development of a Congestion Management System (CMS) is a new responsibility of the National Park Service. Parks that do not meet the national standard and are found with unacceptable levels of congestion will need to define transportation strategies, such as ITS to mitigate the impact. This project will provide the testing of an important transportation strategy that will address seasonal congestion along a highway corridor that connects two national parks. The evaluation and monitoring of the implemented project will lead towards the design of ITS best practice on federal lands and will be ready as a tool with the implementation of CMS.

Deliverables: The process and evaluation of the deployment of a multiple park connected ITS traveler information system will be documented. Other national parks, federal land agencies (USFS and USFWS), and federal land planners will be the most likely users of the project information and report.

Duration: FY 2005 and FY 2006

Estimated Cost by Fiscal Year

FY 05 - \$180,000

FY 06 - \$180,000