

**Technology Deployment Initiatives and Partnership Program
Request for Funding
FY2004**

FHWA Strategic Goal Area:
Human and Natural Environment

FLH Technology Strategy
Develop and Disseminate Best Practices

Project Title:
Public Involvement Tool for Construction

Problem Statement:

Newsletters are an existing mechanism to inform the public. Producing a newsletter requires the development of a mailing list and actual mailing both of which are costly, time consuming, and may not reach the desired cross-section of the public needing information during the construction of a project.

In the rural, public lands setting reaching the public that will be impacted by construction can be difficult. New tools are constantly developed to address the common public criticism that “Nobody told me”. In order to get the message out there, WFLHD construction division proposes to evaluate the use of placemat public involvement in a rural Idaho community. People who may not read news articles about the local construction projects or listen to public service announcements can read restaurant placemats displaying project information as they dine in the local community.

Background:

Public information materials are materials that provide information about a transportation investment that is underway or in the planning stage. Public information materials are an essential form of communication in any public involvement process. Public information materials communicate quickly. They are often visually appealing, and many need not include a great deal of detail. The typical construction newsletter contains information on the project scope, construction schedule, alternative routes, and planned closures in a simple and in straightforward fashion.

In the rural community, the local restaurants serve as a tangible link to the community. Many restaurants function as a social gathering place for area families. Information presented at these venues allows communication with the local resident, sportsman, and sightseer.

Benefits:

The placemat newsletter can be one of an extensive list of tools insuring the information is “out there.” The public lands visitors are a very large group with fewer information needs than those who are intensely involved and need information frequently and in more depth. These users are looking for the brief simple message to get them on their way. The placement can relay construction information in the form of renderings, simplified diagrams, and cartoons as well as text. The placemat newsletter can be taken with individuals upon leaving the restaurant.

Scope:

WFLHD will produce placemat newsletters for dissemination to local restaurants to make sure the word gets out about the construction schedule, alternative routes and temporary road closures. The project selected is the Salmon River Road in Riggins, Idaho.

Deployment Method:

The WFLHD will document the success of this tool at the Salmon River project and recommend future use on other federal projects. The summary report will be shared throughout WFLHD and to the other Federal Lands divisions.

Estimated Costs:

The estimated cost for deployment is \$1500.

Duration:

For purposes of the proposal, the following completion is estimated.

Deployment Fall, 2004

Champions:

Mike Helvey, WFLHD Construction Project Engineer
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