A scenic landscape featuring a river flowing through a valley. In the background, there are mountains under a clear blue sky with a single, soft white cloud. The foreground shows green grass and some shrubs. The overall scene is peaceful and natural.

RROWDys

Newsletters

November 1999

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Alaska Department of
Transportation and Public Facilities
Statewide Design and Engineering
Services Division

The News

Project Welcome

Tamar di Franco

What's all the noise in right of way and utilities lately? Well, beginning in early spring of this year, we embarked on a project to redesign all of our right of way and utilities permits to focus on customer service, streamlining, and a fee structure to support the entire process. The project is now well underway and has been expanded to include all right of way project development processes as well. It will include the development of a statewide database to house and manage all of the information.

What will the results look like?

1. A single, statewide database for use by all right of way and utilities staff to assist them in performing their jobs more efficiently.
2. Streamlined permit processes that result in permits being issued or denied in a more timely manner. Those permits will be available both through paper applications, and in a web-based environment.
3. Revised regulations, which include a new appeals board to hear appeals of right of way permit denials.

What's the name of the project? It doesn't yet have a name, which can certainly be frustrating for staff working on the project. Have a suggestion for a name? Send it to the project manager! •

Project Coordination Team Up and Running

Tamar di Franco

The Project Coordination Team held its second meeting on October 25 and 26 in Fairbanks. The two-day meeting covered lots of ground – from issues brought up by other teams to an intense discussion on new draft regulations to a bit of psychology on human reactions to change.

One of the main decisions the group made is what you're now reading – start a project newsletter as soon as possible! (They also wanted a spruced-up web page that will soon follow.)

During the first day of the meeting, the group studied "transitions management," or how to help people get through change. Since people aren't machines, they go through change in their own ways, and at their own speed (see article on page 3 for more information). The group discussed how to help one another and the staff working on the project to accept ending the old way of doing business and finding a way to come to embrace the new way of doing business. Much of the discussion focused on the interim time while our new systems are under development – the so-called "neutral zone." This time during a

Continued on page 3

Teams, Teams, Teams

The Signs Team. The Driveway Dudes. The Project Coordination Team. The Lane Closures and Special Events Teams. What? Why? Who? In future newsletters, you'll be hearing from all of the teams about their activities. But for now, a summary:

The Signs Team members are Paula Brault, Dave Heier, Rick Kauzlarich, Barry Rohm, and Pat Thayer. The Signs Team was the first group to meet and design a road map for implementing their changes. They are the lead team on the project, breaking trail for everyone else.

The Driveway Dudes are: Wendy Bishop, Manuel Lopez, Ron Reitano, and Jeri Ann Strand. They are redesigning the driveways permitting processes, and have successfully advocated for eliminating project driveway permits!

The Project Coordination Team is John Bennett, Jim Bryson (FHWA), Bill Cummings (Dept. of Law), Mike Downing, Frank Mielke, Kim Rice, and Nancy Slagle. This group oversees the project. Its purpose is to ensure successful implementation of improved right of way and utilities work processes.

The Lane Closures and Special Events Team is Colleen Ackiss, Ron Martindale, and Rick Purves. They have only met once, but will be hitting the ground running in mid-November.

Why the team approach? When facing a challenge like this project, teams produce results. They provide a good forum for discussion, debate, and creativity. They also let people in the Department from different areas of the state get to know one another. •

Project Manager, Tamar di Franco

Tamar came to the Department in October 1997, to help kick off the creation of the Statewide Design and Engineering Services Division. Prior to joining DOT/PF, she worked as a special assistant at the Department of Revenue. Huh? Tamar is an environmental engineer and economist by training. This summer, Mike Downing, the Director, tasked her with leading the efforts on the projects. In fact, she's dedicated nearly 100% to the project.

Though she's not fond of admitting it, Tamar grew up in northern California. She has also lived in Philadelphia, Fort Collins (Colorado), Sydney (Australia), and northern Guatemala. Tamar has lived in Juneau for five years – after five years in Anchorage, she enjoys the small community, but claims that over seventy days of rain in a row, “are a few too many. I don't look good in mold.” Tamar has been married for just over a year to a Juneau lawyer who quit the law last spring, and is now studying to be a teacher. Talk about major personal transitions!

“I enjoy having a single project to focus on; it's really a luxury. I especially enjoy getting to meet and work with so many staff in the Department who I might not otherwise meet,” Tamar says. She'll be getting out to each regional office twice a month beginning in December, and she encourages people to stop by and visit when she's in their office. •

Stress got you down?

Project Coordination Team

Feeling stressed about all this work? You're not alone! This year, we're undertaking our biggest capital improvement program yet, and we're undertaking a major initiative to automate most of our work in right of way and utilities. There's no question that this is not an easy time. Many people feel underappreciated and overworked. We're not getting more staff; in fact, the general fund portion of our budget is likely to be reduced during the next legislative session.

Well, your Project Coordination Team members recognize what you're going through. They spent time at their last meeting brainstorming ideas to help reduce staff stress-levels. Some of the ideas they came up with:

- Providing interim revisions to the right of way manual to remove roadblocks to efficient operations;
- Borrowing personnel from other regions;
- Borrowing personnel from construction over the winter season;
- Revising productivity evaluation standards during the project to recognize the importance of staff contributions to the project; and
- Regularly recognizing staff contributions to the project.

If you have other ideas for making your work atmosphere more pleasant and less stressful, contact the Project Manager and she'll post them on the website to share with others. We're all in this together, so we may as well work together to succeed! •

Continued from page 1

project can be quite difficult for people, as it's frequently difficult to figure out what exactly we're supposed to be doing. It can also be a time of creativity – which we hope to tap as we design our new system.

We devoted our time during the second part of our meeting to outstanding issues from other teams, and to discussing a set of proposed regulations that we plan to send out for public comment in mid-November. I provided a summary of the work of the other teams to date, and provided information on the 3-day worksession many of the right of way staff attended in mid-September. I reported that we have growing support and enthusiasm for the project, and asked that the PCT name the project – it's not easy to talk about the nameless project (this is on the agenda for the November 16 PCT meeting, so if you have ideas, pass them on to a team member before their next meeting).

Both the Signs Team and the Driveway Dudes have provided creative ideas for simplifying and streamlining their work processes. The PCT has discussed all of those ideas – such as eliminating project driveway permits, attaching driveway permits to the land rather than the land owner, and asking M&O to install signs (such as TODS) rather than asking the customer to do so. Some of these recommendations will be adopted through regulation or policy by the end of the calendar year. Others may require a bit more time for discussion to ensure that we consider all sides of an issue before making a final decision. •

It's not so much that we're afraid of change or so in love with the old ways, but it's that place in between that we fear...it's like being in between trapeezes. It's Linus when his blanket is in the dryer. There's nothing to hold on to."

Marilyn Ferguson

Transitions Questions?

What's the difference between change and transition? According to William Bridges, "*Change* is situational: the new site, the new boss, the new team roles, the new policy. *Transition* is the psychological process people go through to come to terms with the new situation. Change is external, transition is internal."

So, what does that really mean? Well, in this project, we're going to *change* to an automated work flow system. We're all going to *transition* into being comfortable using it.

If you have questions about this idea of transitions, give Tamar a call. She has copies of a book called Managing Transitions, by William Bridges, available. The book is a good introduction to the differences between change and transition, and has helped many of our staff understand more about why they react the way they do to changes. •



This Month's Events

November 1

8:00-4:30, Anchorage Appraisals Group

Worksession to finalize flowcharts and consider redesign

November 2

8:00-4:30, Anchorage Plan Preparation Group

Worksession to finalize flowcharts and consider redesign

November 3

8:00-4:30, Anchorage Relocations Group

Worksession to finalize flowcharts and consider redesign

November 8

8:00-4:30, Anchorage Airport Acquisition Group

Worksession to finalize flowcharts and consider redesign

November 9-10

8:00-4:30, Anchorage Signs Team

Interview with computer consultant

November 9

8:00-4:30, Anchorage Preaudit Group

Worksession to finalize flowcharts and consider redesign

November 15

8:00-4:30, Anchorage Highway Acquisition Group

Worksession to finalize flowcharts and consider redesign

Continued on Page 4

*Continued from Page 3***November 16****8:00-4:30, Anchorage****Project Coordination Team**

Monthly meeting

November 17-18**8:00-4:30, Anchorage****Lane Closures/Special Events Team**

Team meeting. Agenda to be determined

November 19**8:00-4:30, Fairbanks****Project Meeting**

Verify flow charts and discuss possible efficiencies

November 22**8:00-4:30, Juneau****Project Meeting**

Verify flow charts and discuss possible efficiencies

November 29**8:00-4:30, Anchorage****Project Meeting**

Verify flow charts and discuss possible efficiencies

November 30**8:00-4:30, Anchorage****Chat with Tamar**

Project Manager available for project discussions (first of many to be held)

Database? Why me?

Databases. Computer consultants. Internet. Websites. Do any of these make you uncomfortable?

If they do, join the club. Many of us have been burned many times on failed computer projects. Remember the project in the early '90's to build a statewide right of way database? Remember that we sent requirements off to Information Services, and some time later, the project collapsed of its own weight? What about the Highway Analysis System? Remember Boeing just coming and dumping an application on our laps? No wonder people are skeptical of computer projects that involve more than their own desktop machines.

So, why should we believe in this project? Well, for one, this project has a manager who is not a computer person.

In fact, before this project, Tamar didn't even know exactly how to describe a database and what it does (she still has trouble with this exercise). She is committed to making the project a success and not letting the computers or computer people run the show.

Second, we're working with our computer consultant to design a new approach to building a computer system. We're asking our computer consultant, a firm called 7X, to work collaboratively with us to design and document the requirements for our system. It's a new way of building computer systems and we're really on the cutting edge of the process. Our computer guy, Ed Knoch, is committed to helping us make it work. This new approach will likely require more of our time at the beginning, but should result in a better product in the end. •

Get your name in



...write a newsletter article!

Interested? Talk to the Project Manager! This will be a monthly newsletter, with news about the project, the people, and the ideas. Please, volunteer!

Stay current with the latest project events at

http://www.dot.state.ak.us/external/state_wide/dnc/eos.d/rowdys/pgsmain1.html

get the latest on worksession schedules, project developments, items for comment, and opportunities to participate.

Bookmark it!

Contact the Project Manager, Tamar di Franco, at:

Tamar difranco@dot.state.ak.us or at 465-6956

Coming next month...

- News from the project development teams
- Reports from the trenches on process redesign
- An interview with the Director
- What's PGS?
- Regulations report

December 1999

Inside this Issue

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Alaska Department of
Transportation and Public Facilities
Statewide Design and Engineering
Services Division

The RROWDYS: RIGHT RIGHT-OF-WAY DELIVERY SYSTEM

Signs Times

Pat Thayer, Right of Way

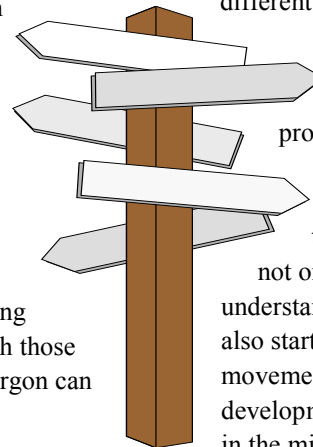
We've come along way, baby! We've come a long way since June 1999. Like watching a child grow, we've watched our signing process grow and become defined through streamlining for efficiency. After our meetings in July, August, and September, each region has a better understanding of how we did things similarly and differently. Our meetings led to open communications among team members between and within the regions.

O' it hasn't all been easy. We've had our language barrier that caused us to slow down and look at how we communicate with others. Jargon has been a big eye opener. We all know about being careful in the use of jargon with those outside our arena, but inside jargon can be just as confusing.

We now have a vision of a finely tuned program that will not only help us in doing more with less, but help the public (which is why we are here) to better understand the process and what is expected from them.

What's next? Working with the computer programmers to develop an on-line system for the signing program. We met with the computer programmers in October to begin mapping out an on-line program. The program will encompass the whole process, from when an applicant calls to inquire about a sign program to the actual installation of the sign.

You can imagine that when we met with the programmers, *we* were speaking English, but *they* were speaking a language that hasn't yet been discovered. All joking aside, this was a serious stumbling block and one we were not prepared for, nor were we sure how we were going to succeed. We left that meeting feeling very concerned about the process and where we were going to end up. The programmer felt the frustration as well. We all knew that something had to be done for us all to be able to communicate between two different worlds.



The solution was not painless; the programmers spent many hours learning our language and were able to develop a process that not only helped us in understanding their world, but also started an exciting forward movement in program development. Talk about meeting in the middle!

We met again with the programmers in November and have now begun mapping out a program so when a member of the public calls to inquire about a signing program, anyone, anywhere, in any region can help. The process is being developed so the application is checked for completeness at each step.

We were all excited about the progress we made and wished we could have tried a demo before we left. We are itching to do a trial run!•

HEP - REC (Huh?)

Kurt Smith, D&C Standards

The HEP REC'ing crew (formerly known as the Lane Closures and Special Events Team) met in Anchorage on November 17 and 18. "HEP," in addition to being an apt description of the crew members, stands for Highway Event Permit. "REC" stands for Roadway Encroachment or Closure Permit.

After accomplishing its primary mission of creating cool acronyms, the crew worked on defining the HEP and REC processes. They decided that the REC would be a stand-alone permit that may be attached to utility, driveway, HEP, or other permits. They considered the use of lane-rental pricing to establish the cost of the permit (this was tabled pending legal review). They created a preliminary draft of the conditions under which a HEP would be required and completed process flow charts of the HEP and REC processes.

Mike Downing sat in for the beginning of the meeting and gave an overview of the permit redesign process. He emphasized the need for statewide consistency. Different processes between regions are acceptable only to the extent that they are based on objective differences such as rural/urban boundaries, traffic volumes, etc.

The crew next meets on December 6 and 7 in Anchorage to further refine the processes in a joint modeling session with the programmers. •

***Don't forget:
Comments are due on
the regulations by
December 16, 1999.***

Why? We Asked Assistant Commissioner, Mike Downing

Bill Dann, PGS

Soon after assuming the reins as head of the Division in October of 1997, Mike Downing realized that there was a "budgetary problem" with the permitting process. After an in-depth review, he found that the legislative appropriations for right of way and for utilities permits were not adequate to cover the costs of reviewing the permits.

As part of his research, Mike also found that the regulations governing these activities were outdated (dating back to 1969) and that the activities were suffering for management inattention. Complaints coming into Headquarters made it clear that there was variation in the policies and the administration of permitting between regions. It also became apparent that staff tried to strictly follow the rules but that chaos was being created because of the ad hoc approach the system fostered.

Soon after the creation of the Division, Mike created peer groups for functional areas in order to achieve consistency across the regions and define best practices. The specific problems with right of way and utilities were defined about a year and a half ago, but were not taken up seriously at that time. Then, over the next year, there was increasing evidence of the severity of the problems. That led Mike to assign Tamar di Franco nearly full time to addressing and resolving these problems. •

Regulations Update

Tamar di Franco, Project Manager

On Sunday, November 14, we started the public comment period on our draft regulations on encroachments, driveways and road approaches, land disposals, relocation assistance services, and appeals. We advertised the regulations in the Anchorage Daily News, the Fairbanks News Miner, the Juneau Empire, and the Kenai Peninsula Clarion. Public comments on the regulations are due on December 16. After that, we'll review and adjudicate all of the comments we receive, and submit our final regulations to the Lieutenant Governor by early January, 2000.

Here's a summary of the regulations. You can find the full text of the draft regulations on the project website.

1. We are proposing to amend regulations found in 17 AAC 10.010 and adopt new regulations as 17 AAC 10.011 through 17 AAC 10.015 which relate to the issuance of permits to allow encroachments within highway rights of way. The regulations will establish requirements for the issuance of these permits and establish application and permit fees.
2. We are proposing to amend regulations found in 17 AAC 10.020 and 17 AAC 10.040, and adopt new regulations at 17 AAC 10.060 through 17 AAC 10.095 which will establish requirements for the issuance of residential and various types of commercial driveways allowing ingress to and egress from the state

Continued on page 3

Continued from page 2

highway system. They also establish application fees and a performance deposit to ensure the driveways are installed in conformance with the terms of a permit issued.

3. We are proposing to adopt new regulations as 17 AAC 10.100 through 17 AAC 10.106 to establish the requirements for disposal of land not needed for highway purposes. These regulations establish procedures for negotiated sales, competitive sales, and over the counter sales.

4. We are proposing to adopt new regulations as 17 AAC 81.010 and 17 AAC 81.020 that implement AS 34.60. These regulations will provide for a variety of benefits to persons or business organizations that are displaced, or otherwise impacted, by federally funded land acquisitions. The regulations also provide an administrative appeal process for aggrieved parties.

5. We are proposing to adopt 17 AAC 85 as new regulations. This new chapter provides an appeals process for denials for encroachment permits, driveway and road approach permits, land disposal, and permits for highway signs for the traveling public. The regulations establish a three-member appeals board, consisting of the Director of Statewide Design and Engineering Services and the Regional Directors from the regions in which the denial did not occur (or each member may appoint a designee), thus removing the Regional Director of the region in which the denial occurred from the process. Questions? Contact the Project Manager. •

Legalese

Bill Cummings, Department of Law

What’s the difference between a statute, regulation, policy, and manual?

Statutes

Statutes are passed by a simple majority of both houses of the Legislature and signed into law by the governor. If the governor vetoes a bill, it may only become law if it is subsequently passed over the governor’s veto by a two-thirds majority of the Legislature in joint session. Bills to raise revenue or make appropriations require a three-fourths’ majority in both houses of the Legislature. Our statutes are cited by title, chapter, and section – for example, AS 19.05.020.

Regulations

State agencies are granted the authority and given the responsibility by the Legislature in statute to adopt administrative regulations. For example, the Department’s authority to adopt regulations relating to highways is found in AS 19.05.020. That statute provides:

“The department shall adopt regulations necessary to carry out the purpose of AS 19.05 – AS 19.25. The regulations may not conflict with AS 36.30 (State Procurement Code) or regulations adopted by the Department of Administration to implement that chapter.”

The Department also has authority to adopt administrative regulations under AS 44.42.030. That statute provides:

“The department may adopt regulations under AS 44.62 (Administrative Procedure Act) to implement, interpret, or make more specific its powers and duties.” (emphasis added)

Stated very formally, an agency, such as the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities, adopts regulations under AS 44.62 to implement, interpret, or make more specific, statutes related to its duties. It has the obligation to adopt regulations when the matter addressed affects the rights of members of the public. Administrative regulations are cited in the following manner: 17 AAC 10.010 (which relates to encroachments in highway rights of way).

Policies, procedures, and manuals

The Department has policies and procedures, and manuals that provide direction to its staff on how to perform various administrative duties or technical tasks. These documents are adopted under the Commissioner’s authority to manage the Department. In terms of the day to day management of the Department, so long as these documents address only matters relating to the internal management of the Department, they are legitimate exercises of the Department’s management prerogatives. Policies and procedures, or manuals may not be used to regulate the matters that are more than just the internal management of the Department. If the policies and procedures affect the rights of third parties, then the Department should adopt regulations under AS 44.62.

So, hopefully, you now understand a bit more about the legal authorities and responsibilities the Department has, and why we’re going through some pretty extensive processes to develop and amend regulations that govern the Department’s activities. •

Since You Asked

Tamar di Franco, Project Manager

We've had lots of interesting, creative, and thoughtful suggestions from staff for ways to improve our processes. While we won't be able to implement every suggestion, we will consider them all. Here are some of the latest ideas under consideration, and where they are in the review process.

- Can we use email for notifications to consultants of the need for appraisal work? Can we receive consultant proposals for contracts via email? *Possibly. The Project Coordination Team is reviewing the idea.*
- Can we use electronic approvals for internal approvals? *Yes, we intend to have this be an integral part of the system.*
- Do we want to scan incoming correspondence? *Possibly. The Project Coordination Team is reviewing the idea.*
- Can we include the Department of Law in our system to help speed the condemnation process? *Possibly. The Project Coordination Team is reviewing the idea. This may present "firewall" problems, but we may be able to resolve them.*
- Are we going to include materials sites in the system? *Yes, but not during initial system development. We intend to add them later.*
- Will we make the necessary changes to move to a 90-day notice to vacate? *Yes, this is a change permitted by the federal regulations, and can be done through a change in the manual.*
- Will we go to a substantially paperless system? *Yes, in as much as we can, we intend to move to a paperless system.*
- How will we deal with changing mileposts and stationing on projects over time? *We hope to use a geo-referencing system for the main spatial relationships in the system.*
- Will the system include GIS? *Not at this point. It will be GIS-compatible so that we can add that layer in the future, should funds become available.*
- Are there plans to work to get old projects into the system, or is it prospective only? *We currently plan only for prospective use, though if people have the time and the resources, the system will be able to accept prior project and permit information.*
- Will we still need to use the Revenue Accounting System for tracking invoices? *No. We will build the system to interact directly with the state accounting system, and to produce any additional financial information directly.*
- Will we continue issuing driveway permits for construction projects? *No. We currently have an interim policy eliminating this requirements, and the current draft regulations permanently eliminate the requirement.*
- Do we still do project and parcel rodent inspections? *No. We eliminated the requirement recently through an interim policy change. We will make the change permanent in the manual next year.*

DRAFT

Phases of development for automated workflow applications

Group I:
Signs
Driveways
Lane Closures

Group II:
Plan Prep
Pre Audit
Appraisals

Group III:
Highways Acquisitions
Airports Acquisitions
Relocations
Property Management

	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
System Requirements Specification												
Application Development and Lab												
Pilot												
Roll out												

Flowcharts Galore!

Tamar di Franco, Project Manager

Have you seen the flowcharts gracing the walls of the right of way offices? If not, take a look!

The flowcharts represent several days' worth of work by many of your co-workers – an effort to standardize and record our right of way project development processes statewide. We undertook this effort in preparation for automating at least some portion of all of the project development processes in RROWDyS.

What did we cover? Plan preparation, acquisitions/condemnations, appraisals, relocations, property management, and pre-audit.

The flowcharts will remain on the walls for a few weeks, in hopes that people will study them, ask questions, and make suggestions (to team members or your Chief). The right of way chiefs will be meeting on December 20-21 to *try to* finalize the flowcharts and the interrelationships between the processes and activities – so be sure to submit your comments before then.

Once we have detailed flowcharts, we can move on to documenting the processes with our computer consultants, and begin development of systems requirement specifications (for more information, see chart on page 4).•

Project Logo Contest

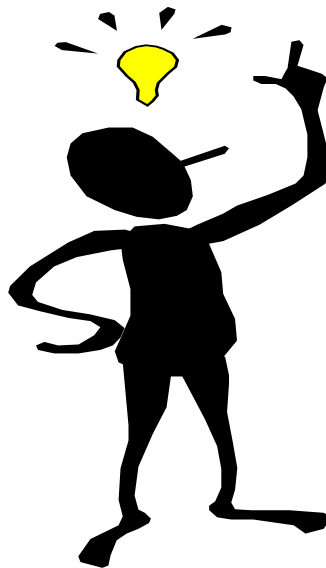
Attention Artists!

We need a project logo! As the work on RROWDyS moves forward, we need a way to recognize ourselves and our efforts. We plan to get sweatshirts made up with a project logo and make them available for purchase. We'll also use the logo to refer to the system in the future.

What should represent this project? It's now called RROWDyS, the Right Right-of-Way Delivery System. What does that mean to you?

Send your entry to the Project Manager – don't put your name on the entry directly, but attach your name in a separate sealed envelope so that judging can be conducted confidentially.

Nominations are due on December 17. The winner will be announced in the January newsletter, and will receive \$50 cash, a gift certificate for lunch for two, and a free project sweatshirt.



“There is a time for departure, even when there's no certain place to go.”

-- Tennessee Williams

This Month's Events

December 1

8:00-4:30, Fairbanks

Project Open House

Project Manager available for project discussions

December 2

8:00-4:30, Juneau

Project Open House

Project Manager available for project discussions

December 6 - 7

8:00-4:30, Anchorage (8:00-noon on second day)

HEC – REP Crew

Joint modeling session with computer consultant

December 13

8:00-4:30, Anchorage

Driveway Dudes

Joint modeling session with computer consultant

December 14

8:00-4:30, Anchorage

Driveway Dudes and HEC – REP Crew

Transitions training

December 14

8:00-4:30, Fairbanks

Project Open House

Project manager available for project discussions

December 15

8:00-4:30, Anchorage

Project Open House

Project manager available for project discussions

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December 16

8:00-4:30, Juneau

Project Open House

Project manager available for project discussions

December 17

8:00-12:00, Anchorage

Project Planning Session

Project manager meeting with management and computer consultants

December 20 -21

8:00-4:30, Anchorage

ROW Chiefs Meeting

Meeting to review all right of way project development flows

What's PGS?

Tamar di Franco, Project Manager

Who are these guys Bill and Doug who keep hanging around our meetings?

They are the owners of Professional Growth Systems, Inc., the management consulting firm the Department hired to assist us with developing RROWDyS.

Why hire management consultants?

Oftentimes, it seems, that outsiders are better at leading us to see things about our own work from a new perspective. So, in April, the Department issued a request for proposals to provide assistance in documenting our permitting processes, proposing a standardized process, and setting recommended permit fees. PGS responded to the RFP, proposing instead

to bring a group of Department staff together to have them redesign the permit processes themselves. This approach led to some creative, radical ideas in our permit redesigns.

Since the start, Doug and Bill have been integral to the project, helping us learn to redesign our permitting processes creatively, learn to carefully develop flowcharts, and generally help us stay on track while we sort out difficult issues.

Are they a permanent fixture?

No. They will be around to continue to help us as we move into our system development, but they will begin to phase themselves out as we move further along. We'll be on our own before you know it. •

Transitions Resources:

Managing Transitions: Making the Most of Change, William Bridges, Perseus Books, 1991. (Copies available in all regional offices and headquarters)

Transitions: Making Sense of Life's Changes, William Bridges, Perseus Books, 1980.

Who Moved My Cheese?, Spencer Johnson, G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1998. (Copies available in all regional offices and headquarters)

I'm not afraid of death. It's just that I don't want to be there when it happens.

-- Woody Allen

Stay current with the latest project events at

http://www.dot.state.ak.us/external/state_wide/dnc/eos.d/rrowdys/pgsmain1.html

get the latest on worksession schedules, project developments, items for comment, and opportunities to participate.

Bookmark it!

Contact the Project Manager, Tamar di Franco, at:

Tamar_difranco@dot.state.ak.us or at 465-6956

Coming next month...

- An interview with Fast Eddie
- Driveways News
- Regulations Update
- First SRS reports available
- Flowcharts Finalized

January/February 2000

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Alaska Department of
Transportation and Public Facilities
Statewide Design and Engineering
Services Division

The RROWDyS: RIGHT RIGHT-OF-WAY DELIVERY SYSTEM

HEP/REC News

Ron Martindale, Traffic/Safety

The HEP/REC Team (doesn't that flow trippingly off the tongue?) held their joint modeling session with 7X on December 6-7. The purpose of this meeting was to set computer application modeling parameters for the HEP/REC permit process.

Day 1 started out slowly as the team members struggled to understand the technical side of CORBA (Common Object Request Broker Architecture) and Class Modeling, both of which are needed to understand the modeling process. We initially were mired in details while the consultants were trying to get us to think "outside of the box" and in more generic terms.

Once we accepted this and went through a few exercises in understanding classes of activities and how they related to each other, we began to make progress. By the end of the session on December 7 (an appropriate date for being Pearl-Harbored with new concepts that strained our brains), we were able to develop a flow model needed by the techno-folks to build an internet-based application to serve our needs.

Much credit goes to the team from 7X in helping us to break through our difficulties and understand what they needed. Chris Little, Edward Knoch, and Larry Tuck from 7X and Chris Keller from Wostmann & Associates were very patient with us as we struggled with the concepts and made

them repeat and back up many times before the fog began to lift. They were able to draw out of us the tidbits they needed to understand our process. Their questions generated a good deal of discussion among team members that helped us all to understand regional differences and how to settle on a common process. Also, thanks to Doug Johnson from PGS for keeping us on track and for his understanding of the process.

Although there is still much to do to flush out the details, our session was a good start and provided a solid foundation to build the computer-based process around. We look forward to continuing to build on this foundation. •

And the Winner is...

Tamar di Franco, Project Manager

Well, no one yet. Our project logo contest garnered just three submissions. Rather than select one of the submissions, we've hired a graphic artist to take the best from the three ideas, and add some additional artistic flair. We'll have our new logo by early February. We'll use the logo to identify the project on the website, forms, manuals, and more.

Once we have the logo, we'll also be gearing up to order sweatshirts with the project logo, as "Friday-wear" for project staff. The sweatshirts are "silver heather" (that's grey to you and me), from Land's End, and will cost \$35 each. Please stay tuned for your chance to order one! •

First Draft SRS Reports Available

Tamar di Franco, Project Manager

At long last, 7X has delivered our first round of draft System Requirements Specifications (SRS) for our three permits teams. The reports are posted on the project website, in PDF format (go to the section on Hot News); the website also includes directions for how to get comments back to the computer folks.

Each SRS includes a very detailed discussion of all of the data fields and data types that will be required for each permit type. They also include details on actions that the system will complete, and communications it will handle. The documents are very detailed, and can be a bit intimidating to plow through, but I encourage everyone who has been involved, or who is interested, to download the documents, and at least give them a cursory review.

This is your opportunity to speak up and get your ideas into the permits system – these documents are the basis for building the computer system later.

If you see team members who were involved in the preparation of these reports, ***congratulate them!*** The reports are a remarkable reflection of intense planning and brainstorming efforts by our fellow staff. The work on the reports really began all the way back in April of last year!

Our next step in the permits effort is to begin developing the framework for the system. We hope to do that in February and March. While we still have a long way to go, the hardest of the efforts are now behind us. •

Comments on the draft SRS's are due on January 28, 2000!

Fast Eddie, the Computer Guy

Tamar di Franco, Project Manager

If you've spent any time with Ed Knoch (pronounced like knock), one of the things you know about him is that he talks fast. I mean really fast. And he thinks fast. And he moves fast. Since this is a fast moving project, we thought he'd be a perfect fit. Sometimes, we've had to slow him down, he moves so fast.

Ed works for a firm called 7X, the internet people. 7X is a subcontractor to Wostmann & Associates, Inc., a Juneau-based firm that has a term-contract with the state to provide computer consulting services. We obtain his services, and those of others at 7X, through "task orders", a rather innovative method of contracting for services. This allows us flexibility in contracting, allowing RROWDyS to proceed much more quickly on the computer front than would be possible otherwise.

While not a native Alaskan, he's close – a Canadian. Ed has been working in the client/server industry for nine years. He owned his own company for a while, but became tired of the headaches of being the boss. Ed has tons of design, development, and implementation experience. He's an expert in document management, real-time sensing, GIS and web-based data delivery, data-modeling, and mission critical front-end systems. •

Regulations Update

Tamar di Franco, Project Manager

Though there have been a few hiccups along the way, our first set of regulations are well on their way to adoption. You still have time to comment on the regulations – they are posted both on the Department's external webpage, and on the project webpage.

The public comment period on the regulations closes on January 28 (we originally planned to close public comments in mid-December, but had some problems with our original advertising, so we had to extend the public comment period). We plan to give ourselves a week to adjudicate the comments we receive, then send the adopted regulations to the Department of Law's regulations attorney, then on to the Lieutenant Governor for final approval and adoption.

Once we close out the current round of regulations, we'll start work on the next set. The scope of the next round of regulations includes:

- Review and amend existing regulations in 17 AAC 60 on signs;
- Clarify permitted signs in the highway right of way;
- Address pending sign issues, such as memorial signs; "welcome to" signs; signs for schools, libraries, and museums; native corporation signs; signs for other government agencies; and signs for non-profit corporations; and
- New regulations for highway event permits and roadway encroachment and closures permits. •

No More Rats?

Dave Heier, Right-of-Way

With the swift signing of an interim policy memo, Director of Statewide Design and Engineering Services, Mike Downing, has successfully eliminated rodent and pest inspections from the state’s Right of Way Manual. This is great news – we have no rats along the highways in Alaska, and will no longer be tasked with looking for them and filling out forms 25A-212, 25A-213 and 25A-214 while complying with P&P 28-8000 with regard to licensed exterminators.

The “SMELL INSPECTION” will no longer be needed for the pest rodent; as the manual so eloquently states, “Rodents are known to have a characteristic odor (particularly rat excretion). You will need to develop your own identification as no narrative description of this or a comparable odor is available.”

The “NOISE INSPECTION” will also be eliminated; as the manual stated, “Rodents can sometimes be heard scurrying within floors and walls.”

Our Right-of-Way Agents are very excited about this historic change and policy directive.●

Technology Work Group Checks in

Dave Heier, Right-of-Way

The ad-hoc technology work group held a meeting on November 29 to discuss the technical aspects of implementing a brand-new computerized workflow application.

The meeting agenda included a discussion about the experience and qualifications of the computer contractor; staff concerns about past failures in implementing these types of systems; and staff concerns about the preliminary needs assessment produced for the project.

The group closed the meeting with a discussion of outstanding concerns about the project as it moves forward. The Project Manager has taken this list of concerns to the Project Coordination Team, and they will discuss the concerns as the project progresses. The issues we identified are:

- Long term system support for the application
- Funding for maintenance and revisions to the system
- Training
- Funding for hardware needs
- End user performance and speed of the system
- System dependability
- Application flexibility●

NEAR TERM PROJECT SCHEDULE

February

- Joint modeling sessions for project development teams
- Begin system development for permits

March

- Finalize System Requirement Specifications for project development work processes
- Continue system development for permits

April

- Begin pilot of system for permits

“An adventure is only an inconvenience rightly understood. An inconvenience is only an adventure wrongly understood.”

-- G.K. Chesterton

This Month’s Events

January 6

**10:00-4:30, Anchorage
Joint Permits Team Meeting**

Permits teams representatives meet with 7X to discuss outstanding issues

January 19

**8:00-4:30, Anchorage
ROW Chiefs Meeting**

ROW Chiefs discuss overall project development flow

January 31

**10:30-5:00, Anchorage, PGS
office**

Project Planning Session

Project manager meets with consultants

February 1-3

**8:00-4:30, Anchorage, 7X office
Plan Preparation Joint Modeling
Session**

Joint modeling session with computer consultant

February 1

**10:00-4:30, Anchorage
Preaudit/Finance Meeting**

Meeting to discuss project development financial issues related to project

February 2-3

**10:00-4:30 (day 1), 8:00-4:30
(day 2), Anchorage
Project Coordination Team
Meeting**

Monthly meeting

Continued on Page 4

Continued from Page 3

February 8-9

**8:00-4:30, Anchorage, 7X office
Appraisals Joint Modeling
Session**

Joint modeling session with
computer consultant

February 15-16

**8:00-4:30, Anchorage, 7X office
Acquisitions Joint Modeling
Session**

Joint modeling session with
computer consultant

February 22-23

**8:00-4:30, Anchorage, 7X office
Relocation/Property
Management Joint Modeling
Session**

Joint modeling session with
computer consultant

February 29-March 1

**8:00-4:30, Anchorage, 7X office
Preadit Joint Modeling Session**

Joint modeling session with
computer consultant

To Be Scheduled

Project Open House

Project Manager visits regional
offices to check in

Since You Asked

Tamar di Franco, Project Manager

We continue to have lots of interesting, creative, and thoughtful suggestions from staff for ways to improve our processes. While we won't be able to implement every suggestion, we will consider them all. Here are some of the latest ideas under consideration, and where they are in the review process.

- Can we review all of our signs programs and standardize them? *You bet! We intend to undertake a comprehensive review of all of our signs programs during the winter, and plan to develop new regulations in spring 2000.*
- Can we implement a regional permits officer to deal with all of the permits in a single location? *Probably. We're beginning to discuss what that position ought to do, who it ought to report to, and what permits it would process.*
- Can the system make some of our routine annual reporting easier for us, like our reports to the IRS? *Yes! We just need to be sure that when we set out the requirements for the system, we tell the computer folks up front what abilities for reporting we want to have. This may include the ability to do some ad-hoc queries as well.*
- Do we still have time for getting our ideas into the permits system? *Yes. Comments on the draft system requirements specifications are due to the computer consultants at 7X by January 28.*
- Are we going to have on-line "help" for the new computer system? *Yes, but the extent of that help system has not yet been determined. Some suggest a full system, including the laws and regulations and the manual; others suggest a more streamlined approach. We'll make those decisions when we are closer to full system development.●*

Transitions Resources:

Managing Transitions: Making the Most of Change, William Bridges, Perseus Books, 1991. (Copies available in all regional offices and headquarters)

Transitions: Making Sense of Life's Changes, William Bridges, Perseus Books, 1980.

Who Moved My Cheese?, Spencer Johnson, G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1998. (Copies available in all regional offices and headquarters)

Stay current with the latest project events at

http://www.dot.state.ak.us/external/state_wide/dnc/eos.d/rrowdys/pgsmain1.html

get the latest on worksession schedules, project developments, items for comment, and opportunities to participate.

Bookmark it!

Contact the Project Manager, Tamar di Franco, at:

[Tamar difranco@dot.state.ak.us](mailto:Tamar_difranco@dot.state.ak.us) or at 465-6956

Coming next issue...

- Permits system development
- More SRSSssssss
- Regulations Update
- Manual Rewrite
- News from the Teams

Inside this Issue

- Alaska Department of
Transportation and Public Facilities
Statewide Design and Engineering
Services Division



Since I have been Commissioner, I have been encouraging my managers to consider innovative ways to improve the delivery of services to our customers and to improve our efficiency in capital projects delivery. This has been particularly important in light of our growing federally funded capital program, and, more recently, Governor Knowles' proposed accelerated transportation plan.

During the Department's Effectiveness Review Project in 1997, the same effort that brought us our successful Statewide Design and Engineering Services Division, we identified right of way as one of the areas we ought to try and streamline. Since then, I've been waiting for an appropriate time to address this issue.

After Statewide Design and Engineering Services had been operating for about a year, I asked Mike Downing to think about additional steps he might take to standardize and streamline some of the work that his Division does, particularly in right of way.

The RROWdyS project is Mike's answer to my question. I have been actively supporting the efforts of all of the staff who have been involved since the project began. This project is one of

I'm especially impressed with the staff's efforts to document their work in flowcharts – that plan preparation chart is impressive! I also like the customer-focused redesign of our permits functions, and the staff recommendations for a coordinated one-stop permitting shop in each region.

I know that it's difficult to work on both our first priority of producing the capital projects program and on a streamlining project like RROWdyS. I appreciate all of your hard work and enthusiasm on the project. •

Tamar di Franco, Project Manager

Well, it's finally here – the project logo (yup, that's it up top). This is the logo that will forevermore identify right of way and the automated work flow efforts we're undertaking. You should already see the logo on the project website. The logo will also be on some of our forms, our manual, and on our operational website once we actually have the permits and project development systems on-line.

We're also going to order sweatshirts with the logo on them. The sweatshirts are from Land's End, 95% cotton/5% polyester, and silver-heather (that's grey to you and me). Cost is \$35 each. You have until April 15 to order, so get that order in soon (see the attached order form). Send your order and check to Tamar di Franco, HQ, D&ES. Sweatshirts must be paid for with your own money; we can't use state or federal funds to pay for them.

Get the spirit – Friday is RROWDyS day! Wear your sweatshirt! •



Funding Challenges

Tamar di Franco, Project Manager

Can you believe that RROWdyS has been active for nearly a year? We've spent about \$250,000 on the project so far, but the struggle for funding hasn't been easy.

Early in 1999, we approached the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) about funding the project, and they quickly agreed. Developing management systems is an area FHWA is eager to support, and they've been actively involved in the project since its inception. Since we focused primarily on permits for use of the highway right of way for the first several months of the project, this funding was sufficient.

Once we expanded the project to include all right of way project development activities, we revised our proposed scope, schedule and budget, and approached both FHWA and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) about funding the next phase. FHWA, as a big supporter of the project, agreed readily to fund their share.

FAA was a bit more problematic. In late winter when we made the funding request, Congress had not yet acted on the new aviation program; as interested as FAA was in funding the project, they couldn't do so without a reauthorized program.

That put us in a bit of a dilemma. We wanted to complete the aviation project development part of the project, but couldn't do so with FHWA funds. We then approached Deputy Commissioner Brownfield about the possibility of using non-participating funds to cover the aviation part of the project until Congress gave us a new aviation program and funding. After a detailed briefing on the project, Mr. Brownfield

agreed to provide these funds for the interim.

Now, as of mid-March, it appears that Congress is going to finally approve an aviation bill. That means we should soon have FAA funding for the project as well. •

Coordination Team Meeting Highlights

Tamar di Franco, Project Manager

The Project Coordination Team (PCT) has been hard at work over the last two months. They've made some important decisions about the project, and suffered one loss along the way. Here are some meeting highlights from February and March:

- The PCT addressed the question of electronic approvals and signatures. State law currently allows electronic signatures, but no state agency has yet tried it. RROWdyS will not (for the near term) allow electronic signatures, but it will include (in fact, require) electronic approvals within the Department.
- The team has asked the computer consultant to find a way to allow agencies such as Department of Law and the Municipality of Anchorage, as well as consultants,

to have access to the system. The system must have strong security, however. The external access will be heavily controlled, but should increase our efficiency.

- The team requested that the Regional Directors reconsider their opposition to M&O installing signs such as TODS. Unfortunately, the PCT was unable to successfully sell the idea. For now, we'll remain with the status quo, with the customer arranging to have signs installed by sign contractors.
- They are tackling the issue of management reporting, to ease regular reporting requirements. As envisioned, the system will automatically generate many routine reports, particularly those required by our federal funding agencies.
- Some members of the PCT are working with the design group chiefs and the preconstruction engineers to try to find ways to improve communication between right of way and design, particularly with respect to design changes and right of way acquisition problems.

If you have questions, ask a team member. Meeting minutes are also posted on the project website. •

Regulations Update

Tamar di Franco, Project Manager

Unfortunately, the news on the regulations front isn't the best. The regulations review attorneys have had our regulations since the end of February. Thus far, they are doing nothing but throwing up obstacles to finishing the regulations and getting them forwarded to the Lt. Governor's office. At press time, Mike Downing was turning up the pressure to get the regulations finished quickly, by working directly with the supervising attorney of the section. We've told the Department of Law that our regulations must be in place by the early part of May, in time for our season. Stay tuned! •

Permits System Development

Tamar di Franco, Project Manager

At last report, we planned to have the permits system under development by mid-February. Unfortunately, our computer consultant (7X) has delayed the start of system development until early April.

It turns out that recruitment for information technology staff is quite difficult, even for the private sector. 7X has now recruited two new staff who will be doing much of our system design and programming.

They are also undertaking a substantial training effort for their entire firm at the end of April, to bring folks up to date on the JAVA-CORBA technology that we're going to be using.

In the meantime, we busy working on other aspects of the permitting project, including

- reviewing permits;
- developing standard and special conditions that can be fed into the system;
- new forms for internal use;
- starting to revise and add to the existing regulations in 17 AAC 60 on signs; and
- developing new regulations for HEP/REC permits.

So, don't dismay -- the folks at 7X have **promised** that we'll be underway in April! •

Of Note...Utilities

During the last year, we've focused our efforts mainly on right of way. Originally, the project scope included utilities as well. As we've tried to keep our efforts on course, it has become clear that we are going to have to wait to add utilities to the mix for quite some time. So, utilities staff, rest easy – but you're not off the hook! •

Of Note...Right of Way Manual

A recently adopted set of federal regulations (in 23 CFR) has made substantial changes to our right-of-way requirements. They also set out a requirement that each state rewrite its right of way manual (to reflect the changes) no later than January 1, 2001. In addition to these changes, the RROWDyS project will result in more changes being made to the manual.

Rather than wait for a complete rewrite of the manual, we are issuing interim policies to adopt specific changes to the manual when important items come to light, such as the rat inspection requirements that were eliminated in November of last year.

In the coming months, the right of way chiefs will be working on a plan of action for getting the manual rewritten in time to meet the federal deadline.

The next version of the manual will be vastly different than the one on our desktops today. Stay tuned for further developments. •

Coming Events

April 10-11

8:00-4:30, Anchorage
Implementation Roadmap Planning

Members of PCT plan next twelve months' activities.

April 18

8:00-4:30, Juneau
Project Coordination Team

Monthly meeting

TBA

8:00-4:30, Anchorage
Design-ROW Meeting

Meeting to discuss interactions between sections

TBA

All Regions
Regional ROW Meetings

Meetings on project scope

“The most dangerous time in the life of nations is the time between systems – when the old ways are discredited, but the new habits and new institutions have not yet taken shape.”

-- Michael Novak

SRS Status

Tamar di Franco, Project Manager

If you weren't at the Joint Modeling Sessions with 7X, ask someone who was there what it was like. These meetings are reportedly extremely tiring, yet also extremely productive. Gruelling is how one person described it.

The meetings consist of a group of "subject matter experts" (that's our right of way staff) and the computer consultants getting together for a couple of days to work out the nitty-gritty details of how information and work flow through the system. During February, five groups met with the computer consultant to begin stitching together the framework for our computer system. These groups were plan preparation, appraisals, acquisitions, relocations/property management, and preaudit. These

teams' work will be the start of the next System Requirements Specification (SRS) we will be getting from 7X.

To narrow and finalize the project scope, each region will be having meetings in late March or early April on the "needs" and "wants" of the staff for the computer system. This work will feed into the development of the SRS.

Now's the time to get your thoughts heard – listen up for the regional meeting in your office, and please, participate! •

Regulations, Round Two

Tamar di Franco, Project Manager

Now that our first regulations effort is nearly complete, it's time to begin thinking of what we'll cover in our next regulations project. The current scope, as envisioned by the Project Coordination Team, includes:

- Review and amend existing regulations in 17 AAC 60, to simplify and clarify the signs programs that we currently administer;
- Address signs that are not currently in regulations, including memorial signs; "welcome to" signs; subdivision signs, signs for schools; libraries, and museums; native corporation signs; neighborhood watch signs; signs for other government entities; and signs for Chambers of Commerce, Rotary, Lion's Club, etc; and
- Establish new regulations for Highway Event Permits and Roadway Encroachment and Closure Permits.

We hope to begin drafting regulations in April, and proceed to get them out for public comment this summer. Stay tuned for your opportunity to participate. •

*"Every beginning is a consequence.
Every beginning ends something."
-- Paul Valery*

Want to see your name in lights?

Please, volunteer to write a newsletter article!

We're seeing the Project Manager's name far too often – we want to hear from staff, from people on the front lines of the project! Contact the Project Manager to volunteer.

Stay current with the latest project events at

http://www.dot.state.ak.us/external/state_wide/dnc/eos.d/rrowdys/pgsmain1.html

get the latest on worksession schedules, project developments, items for comment, and opportunities to participate.

Bookmark it!

Contact the Project Manager, Tamar di Franco, at:

Tamar_difranco@dot.state.ak.us or at 465-6956

Coming next issue...

- Project Schedule
- Project Scope
- Regulations Update
- System Development Report
- Permits Officer
- A Word from our Sponsor



May 2000 Bulletin

Project News

- The project schedule is now posted on the RROWDyS website, under the Project Coordination Team's page. That schedule will be kept current, so you can view the latest project happenings.
- The new permitting computer system is scheduled to be on line by the end of 2000.
- The project development system is scheduled to be fully on line by September 2001, with interim products available for use as early as September 2000.
- **Sweatshirts have arrived, and will be distributed as quickly as possible!**

Computer News

- 7X has begun work on the design for the permits portion of our computer system. They are working with the Permits Team on the applicant entry screens and protocols, which are scheduled to be delivered in early July.
- 7X is also working on the System Requirements Specifications for the project development segment of the project. That document (likely to be 200-300 pages!) will be complete by early June. From there, we can launch our software development efforts on project development.

Legal News

- May 4 is the effective date for our new regulations on relocation assistance, land disposals, driveways, and appeals. April 20 was the effective date for our new regulations on encroachments. See the project web page for text of the final regulations; all forms and applications are located on the Division's right of way web page (thanks to Rick Kauzlarich!). If you're involved at all with any of these topics, please, read the regulations!
- We are continuing to work on the scope of the next regulations project, which will mainly cover SIGNS. This will be a big effort to clean up the various policies we have adopted during the past several years, and get all of our sign programs into regulation. Drafts should begin circulating in early summer.

Staff News

- Permits Team assigned! Members will represent their regions during development of the permitting system. The lucky nominees are: Wendy Bishop (Southeast), Dave Heier (Central), and Pat Thayer (Northern)
- Watch here for news on Project Development Team members...

Budget News

- Commissioner Perkins approved a new project scope, schedule and budget on May 1. He gave his approval to approach the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Aviation Administration to request funding for the remainder of the project.
- FHWA agreed to the change in scope, schedule and budget on May 1. They agreed to fully fund their share of the project.



June 2000 Bulletin

Project News

- Don't forget to keep up to date on the project schedule, which is posted on the website (under the project coordination team).
- It may seem like there's a lull in the project right now...but we're working as hard as ever; we just aren't sitting in meetings as much. The major effort on the project right now is in bringing our last year's redesign work on-line as a new computer system...you'll see results this summer!

Computer News

- 7X has begun work on programming the first phase of the permits portion of our computer system. It will be delivered in mid-July, and we'll have prototypes to review in the next few weeks. This first part of the system is the screens that on-line applicants and permits staff will use to get all of the applicant's information into the system. It will be pretty much the same for all permit types.
- The Software Requirements Specifications for the project development segment of the project is complete, and posted on the project website.
- The next step for project development is to start our design and programming work, later this month.

Legal News

- June is the month for starting our next regulations project. We'll begin drafting new language in the next couple of weeks.
- We're putting together a plan for cleaning up our old permits and leases, to get them all into a consistent format, and eliminate those signs that can't be permitted.
- Bill Cummings will be back in the saddle part time starting June 12. Welcome back, Bill!

Staff News

- Project Development Team assigned! Members will represent their regions during development of the permitting system. The lucky nominees are: Wendy Bishop (Southeast), Sheryl Platz (Central), and Melissa Jones-Owen (Northern).
- Many thanks to Melissa Jones-Owen for implementing our new program codes for right of way and utilities. She's worked hard to get a usable system of codes in place. Thanks for your hard work!
- We are waiting for approval to hire a statewide right of way and utilities staff member to help with rewriting our manuals, developing policy, and generally lending a hand...we hope to have someone on board by August.

Budget News

- FHWA has funded their share of the project, to take us through completion.
- FAA is now considering a grant application for the aviation share of the project. We hope to have news this month on our application.



November 2000 Bulletin

Important Dates

- **November 20:** Wostmann/7X deliver the “limited” permits system
- **November 21:** Signs Team meeting in Anchorage
- **November 29:** Staff testing of system on-site at 7X
- **December 19:** Project Coordination Team meeting in Juneau to address project schedule, tasks to be completed, and other pending issues
- **End of December:** Wostmann/7X deliver the “basic” permits system, for installation on Department servers and use by permits staff

Project News

- The project schedule has changed substantially since the last newsletter in June. **What changed?** First, the computer-programming schedule has been delayed (see below); second, the regulations effort is delayed slightly. *The new dates in the project schedule are tentative.* Check out the revised project schedule at http://www.dot.state.ak.us/external/state_wide/dnc/eos.d/rrowdys/pgsmain1.html
- In late summer, Mike Downing met with Bob Wostmann regarding the Department’s concerns about computer programming progress for the project. At that meeting, Mike decided to put the project development programming on hold, and focus solely on the permits programming.
- Commissioner Perkins has approved our illegal sign removal plan. Implementation will begin soon. Stay tuned...

Computer News

- After reorganizing their programming teams, Wostmann & Associates and 7X are on task, working hard on the permits software development. By November 20, they will have a limited application developed.
- After the limited system is tested, the computer programmers will continue with the next layer of programming, to get a basic system operational.
- As of early January 2001, staff will be able to use the basic permits system to begin to get up to speed with the system. By April 2001, the permits system will be fully operational both for staff and the public, just in time for the permitting season.

Legal News

- We are still working on draft regulations, which we will put out for public comment in the coming months. The regulations will include modifications to the encroachment regulations, the appeal regulations, creation of new regulations for highway event permits, and possible modifications to the sign regulations. *Note that the dates in the project schedule for regulations are tentative.*

Staff News

- Welcome aboard, Jeff Hill! Jeff is our new State Right of Way Chief. He has 27 years of experience in right of way with the Department. Jeff's main effort right now is to make sure we revise our Right of Way Manual by January 1, 2001, as required by the Federal Highway Administration. Jeff is also very active in RROWDyS, co-managing the project with Tamar di Franco.
- And, speaking of Tamar, she's back at work now. Tamar is the delighted mother of 3-month old Ciara. Ciara is getting lots of first-hand knowledge of right of way, having attended the October Project Coordination Team meeting.

Budget News

- Our FAA funding is imminent...when it arrives it will bring the project to complete funding.



December 2000 News

- I understand that system testing went well on November 29. Please provide me or Jeff with your comments on how you think things are going.
- Mike Downing approved purchase of the software necessary to load RROWDyS onto the Department's server. That means that the current version of RROWDyS will be available for staff at their desks in a couple of weeks (We're relying on Andrew Keefe, our new IS person, to work the magic to get the system loaded). **A caveat: any data entered into this version of the system will be lost when we load the next version that's due from Wostmann/7X on December 31.** We'll let you all know when the programs are loaded.
- We are merging all permits teams into a single permits team, effective immediately. Membership: Colleen Ackiss, Paula Brault, Dave Heier, Ron Martindale, Pat Thayer, Fred Thorsteinson.
- Project Coordination Team meeting December 19 in Juneau. Bill Dann of PGS to facilitate. *Permits team needs to elect a representative to attend.*
- The permits team will meet in Anchorage on January 3-4 to develop a plan and work items for launching the permits portion of RROWDyS in April; please mark your calendars. Doug Johnson of PGS will facilitate the work session. Location to be announced.
- The funds for the sign removal program/implementation of community services signs should be on-line next week. Jeff Hill will work with the regional ROW staff on the project.
- The Revised Program requesting new positions will go to the Commissioner's Office for signature today (12/6). Central and northern should be able to hire permit officers soon.
- Check out the Division web site. It's much more user friendly now, with all permits located in one place. It's at:
http://www.dot.state.ak.us/external/state_wide/dnc/eos.d/eosidx.htm

Please distribute this message to folks you think would be interested...Thanks ----- Tamar