

Road Weather and the Pathfinder Initiative

Paul Pisano

Federal Highway Administration
Road Weather Management Program

Duane Carpenter

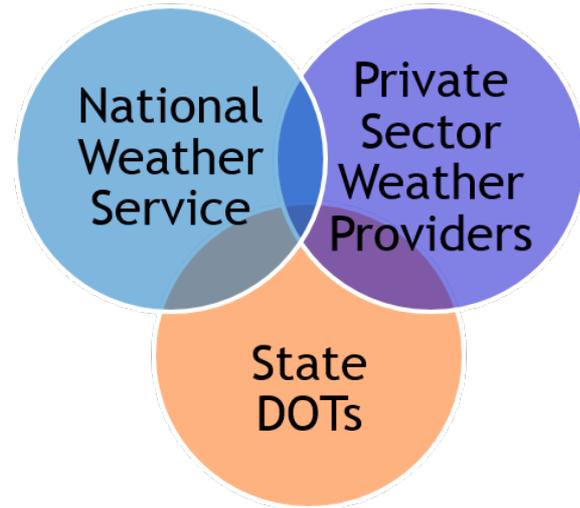
National Weather Service
Road Weather Liaison



The Pathfinder Initiative

Objective: Build collaborative relationships between State DOTs and the Weather Enterprise to improve the weather message to the public

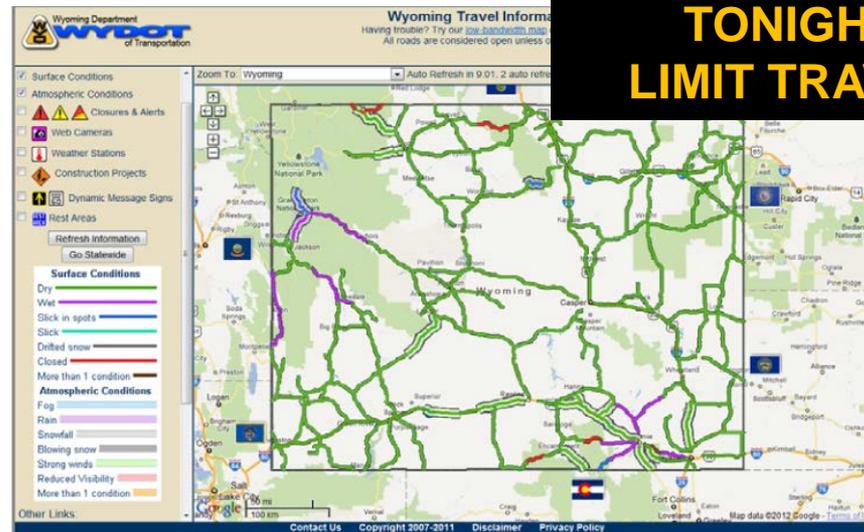
- Better public decision support
- *Weather* forecast translated to transportation *impact* message
- Data sharing and collaboration over the message
- Consistent message from all public sources



Mitigating Weather-Related Transportation Problems

Road weather information that is...

1. Timely
2. Relevant
3. Actionable
4. Consistent



**BLOWING SNOW
TONIGHT
LIMIT TRAVEL**

Wyoming DOT Website, retrieved May 13, 2012, from <http://map.wyroad.info/hi.html>



NWS - Positive Questionnaire Responses

Did you receive information from the DOT and/or private sector firm that helped you generate content for decision support services? - **88.9% responded Yes**

Did the collaboration impact the type of headline issued or lack thereof? - **66.7% responded No**

Did local media also share the message?
- **75% said Yes**

Importance of social media – **Unanimously positive**



DOTs - What can be done to improve chances for collaboration in the future?

- NWSChat
 - Consistent Use
 - Use to determine need/timing of conference calls
- Maintain relationship with NWS
 - Regular communication
- Awareness of seasonal variation
 - Spring storms (although impacts may not be as severe as mid-winter storm) should be taken more seriously due to driver behavior during the spring-time of year.



Wyoming - Before Pathfinder

- Cooperative relationship
WYDOT → DayWeather → NWS
- Working together was often disjointed because there were misunderstandings, lack of knowledge of end-goals
- Tended to be slightly more reactive



Wyoming - During Pathfinder

- Improved relationship
- Improvement to communication
 - More *consistent*, more *action-oriented*
- Highlighted impacts
- Coordinated statements

Pathfinder helped build structure, and an organized path of communication between all parties involved.



Schedule

- June 2015: Conducted review of FY15 test and introduced plan for the Guidance Document.
- August 31, 2015: Meeting in Cheyenne, WY to go over the Guidance Document to be used in FY16. Will also finalize expansion offices.
- September 2015: Training sessions for expansion offices.
- Winter FY16: Offices use/evaluate the Guidance Document.
- May 2016: Winter FY16 review. Discuss expansion offices for FY17.
- August 2016: Training sessions for new FY17 participants.



Contact

Paul Pisano

FHWA, Road Weather Management Program

202-366-1301

paul.pisano@dot.gov

Duane Carpenter

NWS, Road Weather Liaison

301-427-9349

duane.carpenter@noaa.gov

