Going-to-the-Sun Road (GTSR) Rehabilitation

Results from October 2004 Mitigation Outreach Effort

by

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A report prepared for the

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS

ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
GTSR	Going-to-the-Sun Road
ITS	Intelligent Transportation Systems
WTI	Western Transportation Institute

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1. OUTREACH STRATEGY

The purpose of this memorandum is to summarize the results from outreach meetings conducted in October 2004 in support of the Glacier National Park Going-to-the-Sun Road Mitigation Project.

1.1. Purpose

The purpose of the first round of meetings in the outreach effort was to solicit input from the public and interested stakeholders to help the transit and intelligent transportation systems (ITS) consultants in developing alternatives. It was initially proposed that stakeholder workshops and public "open house" meetings would be held – the stakeholder workshops would attract potential partners to build institutional and organizational support for solutions, while the public meetings would allow for general comment from those not represented by stakeholders. Park staff subsequently decided to defer general public involvement to the second round of meetings and a newsletter feedback process.

Given the significant outreach that has occurred through the earlier environmental impact statement (EIS) process and Citizens Advisory Committee, it was agreed that this outreach process should not be perceived as re-opening an assessment of needs.

1.2. Logistics

Upon consultation with park staff, it was agreed to have two stakeholder outreach workshops: one in Browning and one in Kalispell. The locations on either side of the park would promote attendance from interested stakeholders on both sides. The Browning meeting was located at the Bureau of Indian Affairs office in Browning, and the Kalispell meeting was located at a hotel conference center near downtown Kalispell. Park personnel distributed a press release on these meetings through its normal publicity channels.

To develop an invitation list for stakeholders, park personnel combined and sorted through lists that had been developed for previous park outreach efforts, along with a list of recommended stakeholders prepared by WTI.

Stakeholders were invited to the meeting using a cover letter signed by the park superintendent and a meeting agenda (see Appendix A).

WTI provided sign-in sheets, name placards, meeting agendas, copies of the Going-to-the-Sun Road (GTSR) Record of Decision, and a suite of articles from *TR News* related to transit and ITS solutions in national parks. Park personnel provided reference copies of the GTSR EIS for review.

1.3. Meeting Format

The workshops consisted of opening remarks by John Kilpatrick, Director of Facilities Management for Glacier National Park, and Gary Danczyk, Glacier National Park's lead for the

mitigation effort. Steve Albert from the Western Transportation Institute (WTI) gave a brief presentation related to traveler information needs, transit and ITS projects in select national parks, and relevant Montana initiatives (see Appendix B). Gary Danczyk, along with Valerie Rodman from the Federal Highway Administration and Susan Law from Glacier National Park, discussed the mitigation project in more detail (see Appendix C).

Following these presentations, Steve Albert facilitated discussions with all present stakeholders regarding the questions that were presented in the invitation letter. Chris Strong from WTI transcribed the discussion on flipcharts. These are summarized and paraphrased in the following chapter.

2. STAKEHOLDER OUTREACH WORKSHOPS

2.1. Browning

The Browning stakeholder outreach workshop was held on October 26, 2004 at the Bureau of Indian Affairs. A list of workshop attendees is provided in Table 2-1. The attendees consisted primarily of people with interest in transit issues, so the discussion leaned in that direction. This section will summarize the findings of the Browning meeting.

Table 2-1: Browning Workshop Attendees

Name	Organization	Phone Number	E-mail
Rich Bond	GPI Transportation	226-5709	Rbond@glacierparkinc.com
Linda Chase	Brownies Grocery W-Stop Restaurant	727-4448 226-4426	browniesegp@yahoo.com
Kelly Harris	Skillings Connolly	542-2140	Kharris@skillings.com
Joseph T. Jessepe	Personal	338-7151	
EV Lundgren	Personal	888-5363	
Margaret Lundgren	Personal	888-5363	
Leon Stiffarm	GPI	226-9235	
Dick Turner	Montana DOT	444-7289	dturner@state.mt.us
Charley J. Wagner	The Spiral Spoon	226-4558	cjwagner@3rivers.net
Bob Wilson	GPI Garage	226-4411	GPIGarage@glacierparkinc.com

2.1.1. Goals of Mitigation

As an ultimate goal, stakeholders wanted to see the GTSR completed so that people will want to continue to visit the park. They also wanted to ensure that visitors would continue to have the once-in-a-lifetime "Glacier experience," into which transportation, construction, interpretation and history all play a role. They wanted to see tat transportation helped to enable the park experience, rather than being a hindrance or barrier to it. Stakeholders hoped that the GTSR rehabilitation project would not result in reduced visitation to the region, and favored proactive approaches that might be used to reduce the visitation impact (or possibly increase visitation). These included:

- A long-term public relations effort
- Marketing the rehabilitation project as "history-in-the-making" – a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity – with some interpretation showing how the project is coming together
- Promoting a tour of the park (on park transit) as a better way to see the park than driving

It was felt that it was important to promote visitation to the park, perhaps as part of a Glacier-Yellowstone tour district, to preempt potential visitor anxiety about delays.

2.1.2. Encouraging Transit Usage

There was general consensus that the transit system would be an important piece of the mitigation effort. There was discussion about whether the transit system was only a temporary system to cover the rehabilitation period, or whether it was planned as a permanent addition to the park. There was much discussion about how to encourage use of the transit system, while not reducing park visitation or adversely impacting "Red Bus" usage.

- Target Audience. While stakeholders felt that the proposed locations of stops at trailheads made sense, there was concern that the shuttle should not focus entirely on hikers, but rather on getting the "average user" out of the car. Families were specifically mentioned as a good target audience. It was commented that visitors in the early or late summer may be more inclined to drive than families who would come during July or early August.

- Promotion Methods. There was a variety of discussion of when, where and how to promote the park's shuttle system. Regarding when, it was said that some people will plan a trip to the park up to two years in advance, while others wait until they arrive at the park to plan their visit. Based on their experiences in other national parks, some visitors have an expectation of shuttle services being available in Glacier; in other cases, visitors may never have considered that they could see park sites without their own vehicle. It was felt that promotion could begin with Travel Montana, as well as locations away from the park (e.g. the Babb port of entry). Once arriving at the park, printed maps should highlight how the shuttle system provides access to popular park locations, and it should indicate amenities that may be available at stops (e.g. restrooms). It was suggested that main selling points for using the transit could include an enhanced visitor experience, lower cost, greater enjoyment, improved safety, and being environmentally friendly.

- Route Structure. Stakeholders said that it was important to provide service to campgrounds and hotels where visitors stay, to reduce car traffic in the park and mitigate potential parking challenges within the park. There were suggestions about a regional approach, where visitors would leave cars in nearby towns (e.g. Columbia Falls and East Glacier) and use a park shuttle for seeing the park. It was suggested that some stops could be added, for example, between the Loop and Logan Pass, between Eastside and Siyeh Bend, and at Sunrift Gorge, St. Mary's Falls, and Lake Apgar. Stops were suggested at Many Glacier and Two Medicine for boat users. Stakeholders said that the shuttle making stops at the right locations was critical to building and sustaining ridership.

- Route Scheduling. For service to hotels outside the park, it was felt that low-frequency service would be acceptable, as visitors typically enter the park during a pretty narrow time window in the morning. Peaking characteristics for the hiker shuttle – 7 to 9 am and 4 to 6 pm – may be different from those elsewhere in the park (e.g. Logan Pass). It was agreed that there should be some flexibility in scheduling and operations early on, as experience with visitor use of the shuttle is gained. Stakeholders thought that some express service could be good for easier visitor center access.

- Multimodal Linkages. There was concern about how the park shuttle system would integrate with Amtrak and tour bus companies. Amtrak provides some visitor traffic to the park, and

having shuttle availability to help these visitors could be valuable. Stakeholders indicated that visitors arriving by train are often uninformed about the relative distances to park sites, and may end up renting a car when, with a shuttle, it would not be necessary. With tour bus operators, there could be enough passenger traffic disembarking from one tour bus to fill several shuttle vehicles. Stakeholders were concerned that there is enough shuttle capacity to handle tour bus traffic.

On the other hand, stakeholders expressed some concern that tour bus companies could find a way to exploit a shuttle service by integrating it with some limited bus service of their own. It was noted that at Acadia National Park, where there is a significant volume of park visitors arriving on cruise ships, that there is a "natural flow" for people to go onto tour buses and not the park's free shuttle, although visitors may walk a quarter-mile to get the free shuttle.

- Vehicles. Stakeholders agreed that the style of shuttle vehicles is important to success of the system, and that a good shuttle will better the park. There were concerns with the prototype vehicle with its width, and that it would be better to run on propane only than being a bi-fuel vehicle. There was some discussion about vehicle size. Stakeholders felt that a vehicle that feels and looks like a van would not be appropriate for the park, and could have some safety concerns. Some stakeholders noted that a larger vehicle like the prototype, however, might be overkill from the perspective of carrying capacity and cost. Stakeholders wanted a vehicle that would feel comfortable, have an aesthetic style to encourage ridership, fit on the road, and would not cause concern to vehicles traveling the opposing direction. Vehicles should include some ITS equipment, such as automatic vehicle location, automatic passenger counting, and automated stop announcements.

- Interpretation. There was some discussion about using the transit shuttles to provide information about GTSR rehabilitation, as a means of encouraging ridership. However, there was some concern about making sure that the shuttles did not try to replicate the interpretive experience available on the Red Buses. Having videos on the shuttle vehicles with information on the project was considered to be overkill. Suggested alternatives included providing video and kiosks at the transit center or selected transit stops, providing a tri-fold brochure that shuttle riders could read, and having informational-type "advertisements" on the shuttles. Stakeholders felt it was important to not have driver commentary on the shuttles that could compete with the Red Buses, and thought it was better to leave it to the responsibility of the visitor to get the information in which they are interested.

- Price. The general feeling expressed by stakeholders is that the shuttle would need to be free to be attractive. There was some comment expressed that it wouldn't necessarily need to be free, but would need to be "cheaper" than driving a personal vehicle in the park, and would offer different amenities (e.g. coffee, lunch, restroom stops).

2.1.3. Traveler Information

While most of the discussion focused on transit, there was some discussion about general visitor information needs, some of which could be provided through intelligent transportation systems. Overall, it was emphasized that the information must be current or timely, or it loses credibility.

- Types of information. Stakeholders felt, at a minimum, the following types of information were critical to provide visitors with: GTSR road status, expected delays, and alternative routes. Real-time transit arrival information would be welcome as well.

- When and how to receive information. Stakeholders felt that a variety of options for receiving real-time, accurate information would be helpful. Having a "one-stop shop" web site which had shuttle information, along with rehabilitation status and weather, would be valuable. On a daily basis, information should be ready as early as 6 am so that visitors can plan their day's activities. It was noted that local businesses are often a point of contact for visitors seeking current park information, and stakeholders were not aware of the 1610 AM radio system or the park's telephone information number (ext. 7800) to receive park information. The 1610 AM system could be a good way of providing information, provided it is kept current. It was suggested that twice a day could be a good frequency for updating the radio messages. Because of coverage limitations for individual transmitters, it may be necessary to establish several locations within the park, based on the location of rehabilitation activities. The 511 traveler information number could be viable on either side of the park, but there are dead spots in the park. 511 would be strengthened by having connections with other states, so that visitors could get information sooner. Streaming video to hotels, motels, lodges and gateway communities showing current conditions would also be helpful. It was noted that Web cameras have been very successful. There was also interest in making information available on PDAs.

- Partnership opportunities. There were several types of partnership opportunities that were discussed. These included using local businesses as conduits for current park information (including hosting kiosks), as well as partnering with ski resorts in putting together a vehicle fleet. There was some discussion about creation of a "smart card" to better link businesses to park visitors and perhaps offer financial incentives to visitors using the shuttle system. It was felt such an approach would succeed better on a multi-park basis.

2.1.4. Continued Involvement

Stakeholders were interested in keeping informed about the project. They preferred a web site that would be updated regularly, and they wished to receive e-mails as the web site was updated with new information.

2.2. Kalispell

The Kalispell stakeholder outreach workshop was held on October 27, 2004 at the WestCoast Kalispell City Center Hotel. A list of workshop attendees is provided in Table 2-2. This section will summarize the findings of the Kalispell meeting.

Table 2-2: Kalispell Workshop Attendees

Name	Organization	Phone Number	E-mail
Sheila Bowen	Whitefish Chamber	862-3501	sbowen@whitefishchamber.org
Greg & Donna Larson	Eddie's Restaurant	888-5361	eddies@centurytel.net
Catherine Richter	San-Suz-Ed	387-5280	catherine@sansuzedrvpark.com
Dale Duff	Rocky Mtn Transp Inc	863-1200	dduff@digisys.net
Jan Metzmaker	The Glacier Fund	862-6110	Jan_Metzmaker@nps.gov
Monica Jungster	Montana House	888-5393	mthouse@digisys.net
James Nichols	Montana House	892-1137	
Bill Lundgren	West Glacier Mercantile	888-5403	
Brian Carper	Winter Sports Inc.	862-2900	bcarper@bigmtn.com
Elmer Kuball, PE	Alpha Callender Consultants	408-229-1747	acc@vcn.com
Pete Stark	Glacier Park Inc.	892-6721	
Kathie Lapcevic	Glacier Country	837-6211	glaciercountry@montana.com
Robert Lucke	Somers, Mt.	857-2102	
Randy Gayner	Glacier Guides	387-5555	info@glacierguides.com
Mark Van Artsdale	Glacier Park Boats	756-5577	desmet@centurytel.net
Kathleen Flint	Glacier Campground	387-5689	
Larry & Lynda Vielleux	Izaak Walton Inn	888-5700	
Sally Thompson	Glacier Raft Co. & Outdoor Center	888-5454	grc@glacierraftco.com
Greg McClure	West Glacier KOA	387-5341	wgkoa@digisys.net
Clarice Ryan	Flathead County Resource Use Committee		
Scott & Nancy Collard	Smoky Bear Ranch	387-4249	smkybear@smokybear.com
Brad Tschida	M.A.R.S. Stout	721-6280	brad@marsstout.com
Rick Harmes	HHN		

2.2.1. Goals of Mitigation

Stakeholders agreed that they wanted to keep GTSR open during rehabilitation and minimize the potential loss in visitation. One key to this was promoting alternative activities/destinations at the park (e.g. Two Medicine and Many Glacier), or alternative ways to see the park (e.g. a loop shuttle trip that would use GTSR and US Route 2). This would require both information and transit strategies. However, there was some concern about access to underutilized parts of the park. For example, many stakeholders felt that other parts of the park were underpromoted, and were served by substandard roads. The park expressed concern about promoting certain areas of the park, but saw merit in promoting other areas. It was suggested that the Camas entrance could be open for more of the year, but park staff said that its opening status was based on snow.

It was suggested that another way to reduce visitation impacts would be to explore some night-time construction.

Stakeholders agreed that there could be some positive visitation impact by emphasizing the unique opportunity to see rehabilitation of GTSR in progress. This would require some promotion through broader regional and statewide channels, especially since many visitors plan their visits to the park as a part of a larger tour of the American West. Having a viewing center where visitors could watch the rehabilitation work in progress was thought to be beneficial.

Seeing the park on a loop trip between GTSR and US Route 2 is already done by some travelers, but stakeholders felt the park could encourage this through more proactive marketing and providing additional interpretation and pullouts along US Route 2. It was noted that every

personal car trip that would normally see all of GTSR and go in and out of the same park that is converted to a loop trip would reduce traffic on GTSR. A shuttle on US Route 2 could help in encouraging that type of trip. Another tour option that was suggested was a guided group tour for motorcyclists.

Limiting car access to the park, thereby increasing queuing of vehicles at park entrances, was not thought to be a good strategy, given the desire to preserve visitation levels as much as possible, and the emphasis on voluntary mitigation measures. However, there was some interest in seeing improved management of parking within the park as a means of reducing congestion.

2.2.2. Encouraging Transit Usage

Affordability, comfort, attractiveness, safety and on-time reliability were key factors cited in encouraging visitors to use transit within the park. In addition, the shuttle service should be perceived as offering a different type of experience in the park. For example, the shuttle would allow GTSR visitors to enjoy more of the scenery without having to worry about keeping their own car on the road.

- Target Audience. It was said that there are two types of people who visit the park: those who know what they want to do before they arrive, and those who do not. Stakeholders felt it was good to target the second group of people to encourage them to ride a park shuttle as a part of their park visit. Hikers were thought to be a good potential target for using the park shuttle, to reduce the demand on parking lots within the park.

- Promotion Methods. Stakeholders thought that local businesses would be an important promotion point for the shuttle system. The system should offer a visitor experience with convenience such that businesses would recommend it. Another suggestion was that the shuttle could offer specialty tours, such as gift shop access on rainy days, or strolls on the east or west sides of the park.

- Transit Center. It was thought that the transit center would be important in encouraging transit use. Stakeholders said that it should start with more than a parking lot, and should have some interpretive information there as well. Park staff noted that the long-term plan would be for a "discovery center" to develop. This was welcome by stakeholders, who said that Apgar was inadequate. From a design perspective, it was agreed that the transit center and parking facility must use context-sensitive design to meld with the existing landscape. It was considered important that visitors be directed (through signage or ranger instructions) toward the transit center as they enter the park.

- Transit Stop Amenities. Stakeholders thought different levels of amenities and information would be more appropriate for different stops. At the less remote locations of the park, more information should be provided, such as interpretive information about GTSR and its history. Real-time arrival and service frequency information was perceived to be valuable at all stops, along with information about adjacent attractions.

- Route Structure. Linking the shuttle system to gateway communities and to alternative options was thought to be critical to the shuttle system's success. Reliable feeder service to access

local businesses and campgrounds was supported by stakeholders. It was felt that gateway communities would benefit by being located near shuttle stops. However, it was noted that there is a shortage of parking at area businesses in West Glacier, so the operations of the feeder service would need to be carefully designed.

- Having a local bus service was preferred to express service, in order to encourage experiencing more of the park. There was some discussion about having "wave stops" in West Glacier, where visitors could flag down a shuttle vehicle from any point along the route in town. While some considered it to be a good way to attract riders from campgrounds, hotels, and restaurants into the park, some felt it may hamper schedule adherence. It was noted that this is allowed on the Island Explorer shuttle service at Acadia National Park, and the schedule has built in slack to accommodate wave stops.

- Route Scheduling. If there is a feeder service for area businesses, it was felt that the feeder service schedule should not result in delay to the main shuttle. One suggestion with route scheduling was to have park staff set-up recommended itineraries with various durations (for example, a two-hour tour, a four-hour tour, an all-day tour). These itineraries could be designed to fit with the shuttle service, encouraging day-use visitors to use the shuttle.

- Vehicles. To support attracting a broad range of riders, stakeholders thought it was important for the vehicles to be ADA-compliant, and to be able to accommodate gear (e.g. hiking backpacks) and kids. Stakeholders felt the shuttle vehicles could provide some interpretation.

- Price. Stakeholders felt that relative cost could be a significant issue in encouraging ridership. Some said that a free shuttle would be most attractive to attract riders. There was concern that even a small fee could introduce logistical challenges. Some stakeholders proposed adding a surcharge for visitors entering the park by personal vehicle, while others suggested a variable pricing scheme for cars based on time of day.

2.2.3. Traveler Information

Stakeholders felt that accurate and timely information was critical for helping visitors to experience the park during rehabilitation. Communication at the ground level – to local businesses and to visitors – was felt to be very critical during rehabilitation. It was noted that there were communication problems during the 2003 fire season which made things difficult.

- When and how to receive information. Targeting visitors well before they get to the park was felt to be helpful in encouraging transit usage. Stakeholders agreed that an important point for visitors to receive information was at hotels, restaurants, and businesses in the gateway communities before visitors head into the park, as this is where visitors often are planning their daily activities. It was suggested that local merchants already serve as "kiosks" for visitors in providing information. A daily e-mail or broadcast message sent to local merchants would help the information to be current. It was felt that a regularly updated Internet site describing project progress and expected delays would be helpful to local businesses who may interact directly with visitors. They could also hand out maps showing shuttle service or newsletters with an update on the current status of the project.

- Stakeholders said there was a greater expectation among visitors to be able to use technology to receive visitor information. However, it was important that a variety of means be used, such as computer kiosks, Internet sites and 511. Stakeholders said that visitors may use a variety of means in planning a single visit; for example, they may start by accessing a park Internet page, and would then use 511 for more current information. It was noted that park hotel rooms do not typically have Internet access, so that should not be used as an only means. Wi-fi might be a possibility. Local businesses expressed some willingness to host computer kiosks to provide current park information. There is no available local access television channel on which to provide park travel information, and stakeholders felt that 1610 AM radio would not be used much. Lower technology means, such as information available through a newsletter or at a chamber of commerce, could still be effective.

- Pre-trip information was felt to be an important part of the mitigation strategy, with information available one hour east or west of park entrances. Having touchscreen kiosks at distant locations like these, or at rest areas, airports and state or international borders, could help people to know what alternatives are available, for transportation to and within the park, as well as alternative activities (e.g. National Forest, the Bison Range, ski areas). Multi-state integration of 511 with some information about the park and alternative attractions was thought to be valuable as well. Pre-park information should be more general, while information provided at the park should deal more specifically with attractions and alternatives. There was some concern that a pre-trip information strategy should be developed soon, to target seasonal and regional tourism publications that may be published for the 2006 season.

- Sustainability. There was some concern expressed over the labor and equipment that would be needed to make the entire mitigation strategy – both information and shuttle service – work. Stakeholders wanted tried and proven technologies to be used, with training in place so that systems could continue to be functional.

2.2.4. Continued Involvement

Stakeholders were interested in continuing to stay information about the project's progress. The preferred method seemed to be a regularly updated Internet site, with broadcast e-mails sent out as new information is posted. Press releases would also be beneficial.

APPENDIX A: INVITATION MATERIALS

October 13, 2004

Name
Agency / Organization
Address
City, State ZIP

Dear <<name>>,

Glacier National Park has begun implementation of the decision reached in the Going-to-the-Sun Road Rehabilitation Plan/Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Record of Decision. Once the Transportation Bill is signed, the National Park Service (NPS) and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) anticipate that the accelerated schedule and mitigation efforts will be implemented.

Transit and intelligent transportation systems (ITS) were two strategies put forward to offset the negative impacts of road rehabilitation on the regional economy and visitor experience. While the EIS studied these approaches, these earlier preliminary studies did not provide enough detail to implement such a system. To ensure that a transit and ITS system are both in place by the time the rehabilitation effort begins in earnest in 2006/2007, the NPS and FHWA have awarded contracts to David Evans and SAIC to develop a detailed Transit Plan that will address shuttle system operations and infrastructure and an ITS Plan that will address real-time traveler information and options.

We would like to provide you with an opportunity to meet with members of my staff and both contractors to receive information on the transit and ITS construction effort and to share your ideas on transit customer needs and ITS information tools that should be considered. Transit and ITS will be more successful with your input.

We are hosting two meetings to discuss this work. We are inviting you, our stakeholders, to share your ideas with us. The meetings will be held at the following locations and times:

Tues., October 26, 2004 – 1:30 to 4:30 pm	**Bureau of Indian Affairs** 531 SE Boundary Browning, MT
Wed., October 27, 2004 – 1:30 to 4:30 pm	**WestCoast Kalispell Center Hotel** 20 N Main Street Kalispell, MT

Enclosed you will find an agenda for the meeting. We hope you will be able to participate. If you plan to attend, please complete and return the enclosed RSVP form and fax it back to us at 406-888-7904 or call Connie Stahr at 406-888-7972.

If you are unable to attend, please send your written suggestions and ideas by e-mail to glac_public_comments@nps.gov Attn: Transit/ITS, or by mail to Glacier National Park, Attn: Transit/ITS at Glacier National Park, P.O. Box 128, West Glacier, MT 59936.

Thank you for your continued support of this critical effort.

Sincerely,

Michael O. Holm
Superintendent

Enclosure

Going-to-the-Sun Road
Transit/ITS Meeting

RSVP Form

Please fax to Connie Stahr at (406) 888-7904
or e-mail her at Connie_Stahr@nps.gov by Friday, October 22, 2004.

Name: _____

Affiliation: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

If you are able to attend, please check one box in the table below

	Browning Oct. 26	**Kalispell Oct. 27**
I plan to attend the GTSR Transit/ITS Meeting		
I will not be able to attend but will have someone attend in my place Name of substitute _____		

If you are not able to attend, please check one box in the table below

I will not be able to attend either meeting, but please keep me informed as this project progresses	
I will not be able to attend either meeting, and please remove me from your mailing list	

Glacier National Park Going-to-the-Sun Road (GTSR) Rehabilitation
Transit/ITS Stakeholder Meetings

October 26-27, 2004

Time	Topic	Presenter(s) / Facilitator(s)	Objectives / Questions to be Answered
1:30 pm	Welcome and Introductions	Mick Holm, Glacier NP	▪ Provide welcome ▪ Introduce workshop presenters and attendees
1:35 pm	GTSR Rehabilitation Summary and Status	Mick Holm or John Kilpatrick, Glacier NP	▪ Provide overview on construction project ▪ Discuss park goals during rehabilitation ▪ Describe status of project
1:50 pm	Overview of Regional Efforts	Steve Albert, WTI	▪ Introduce projects in Montana and other national parks that provide opportunities or ideas
2:10 pm	Update on GTSR Transit and ITS	Gary Danczyk, Glacier NP	▪ Discuss GTSR rehabilitation project and schedule ▪ Discuss transit and ITS plans being developed.
2:30 pm	Brainstorming Sessions	Chris Strong, WTI Steve Albert, WTI	▪ Two breakout groups – transit and ITS ▪ Inventory concerns about transit and ITS ▪ Discuss ideas regarding system design/function
3:15 pm	Break		
3:30 pm	Brainstorming Sessions	Chris Strong, WTI Steve Albert, WTI	▪ Two breakout groups – transit and ITS ▪ Inventory concerns about transit and ITS ▪ Discuss ideas regarding system design/function
4:15 pm	Breakout Groups Report		▪ Volunteers summarize each group's discussion
4:25 pm	Summary and Next Steps	Gary Danczyk, Glacier NP	▪ Discuss next steps ▪ Discuss opportunities for future involvement

APPENDIX B: OVERVIEW OF REGIONAL EFFORTS PRESENTATION

Overview of Regional and National Park Efforts

Steve Albert
Director

GTSR Rehabilitation
Transit/ITS Stakeholder Meetings
October 26-27, 2004

Western Transportation Institute 1

Overview

- Overview of Traveler Needs
- Select National Park Projects
- Overview of State and Regional Projects

Western Transportation Institute 2

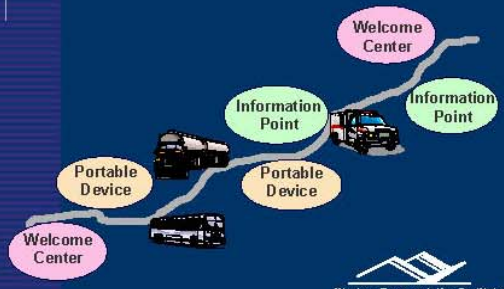
Opportunities / Challenges

- Increasing demand
- Increasing congestion
- Traveler information (pre-trip & en-route)
- Vehicle capacity vs. carrying capacity
- Resource preservation and protection

Photo: National Park Service

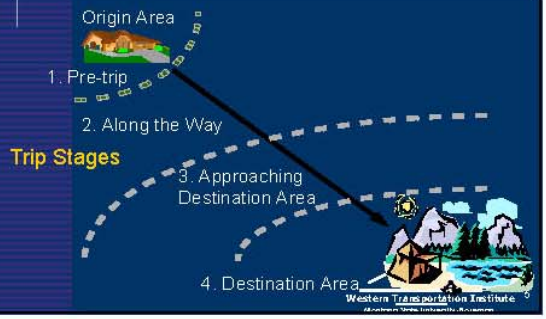
Western Transportation Institute 3

Vision: Seamless Approach



Western Transportation Institute 4

Traveler Information



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Types of Traveler Information

- Tourist Attractions
- Lodging
- Weather
- Incidents
- Highway Conditions
- Road Closures
- Transit

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Accessible

- Pre-Trip Information
  - On-line
  - Telephone
  - Mail
- En Route
  - Kiosks
  - Cellular telephone
  - On-board navigation
  - Variable message signs
  - Highway advisory radio

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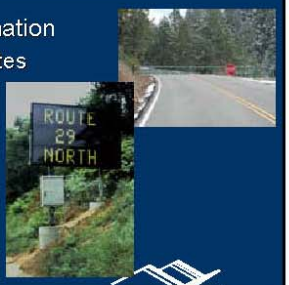
Timely

- Current Information
  - Regular updates
- Forecasted Information
  - Seasonal
  - Long-term
  - Short-term



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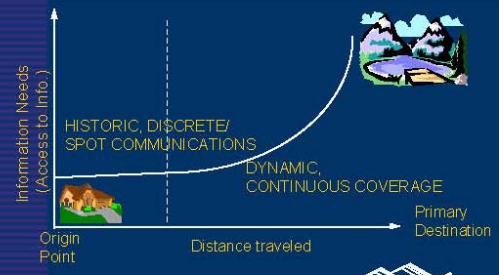
Traveler Information Needs Model



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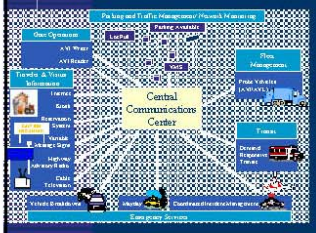
Coordinated



- Transportation
  - Transit Operations
  - Traffic Management
- Travel/Tourism
- Emergency Management
- National Parks

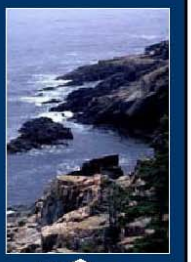
Western Transportation Institute 10

Understand Alternatives

Western Transportation Institute 11

Acadia National Park

- Acadia FOT
  - Island Explorer shuttle bus AVL
  - Voice communications for transit and incident management
  - Traveler Information System



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Concept of Operations

- Vehicle Location
  - Each vehicle has a GPS and DGPS receiver
  - Integrated into Mobile Data Computer (MDC)
  - MDC uses GPS position to trigger on-board equipment and periodically send position to central operations management system

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Concept of Operations

- Real-time Stop Departure Signs
  - Variable signs at selected stops display estimated departure time of next bus
    - Village Green transfer center
    - Destinations (Jordan Pond, Sand Beach, Visitors Center)
  - Departure time estimate based on current schedule adherence status

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Maine 511 IVR System "Know Before You Go"

511 Travel Info
www.511Maine.gov

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Gateway NRA

- Among top ten most visited national parks
- 17,000 vehicles on peak weekend days
- 4,100 parking spaces
- Traffic can back up for miles

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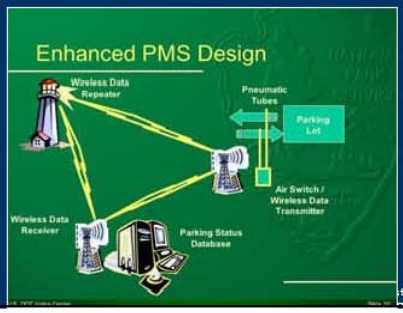
Sandy Hook PMS Design



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Great Smoky Mountains NP

- Bi-state park (TN, NC)
- Seasonal congestion (esp. Cades Cove)
- Traveler information

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Sequoia and Kings Canyon NP

- Share use of VMS with Caltrans
  - Road closures
  - Chain requirements
  - Fire hazards
- Radio systems
  - Each highway to park

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Zion NP

- Zion Canyon Drive is closed to private vehicles April to October
- Free shuttle service from Springdale



Photos: National Park Service

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Regional Efforts

- Greater Yellowstone Rural ITS Corridor
- Montana 511
- CANAMEX
- Regional Tour District
- GYT Clean Cities Coalition
- Montana TMC

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Greater Yellowstone Rural ITS Priority Corridor

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Corridor Information, Management and Control

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Yellowstone/ Grand Teton

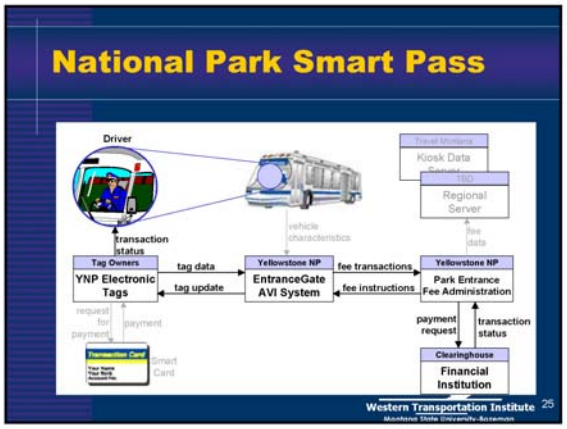
- Incident Management Plan

- Smart Pass (AVI) at 3 gates

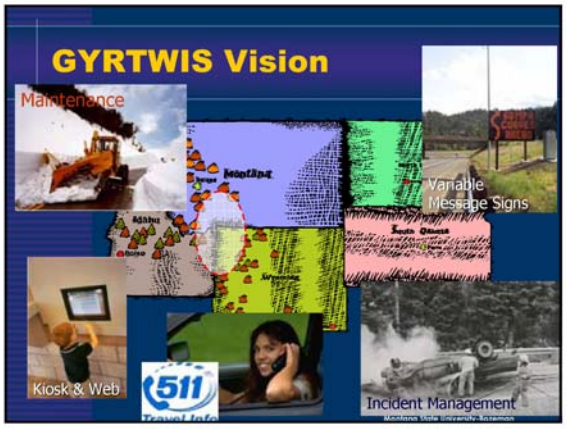
- Dynamic Message Signs for Advance Warning

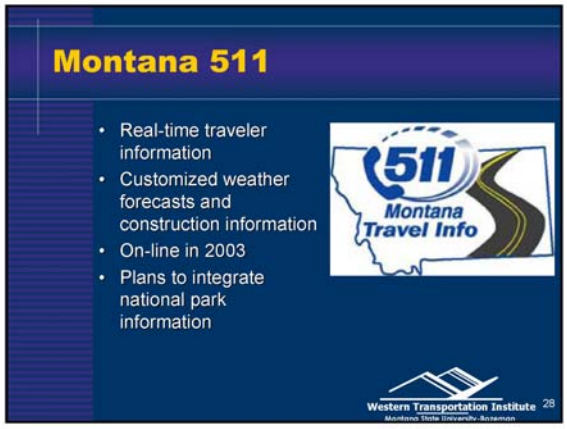
- Kiosks

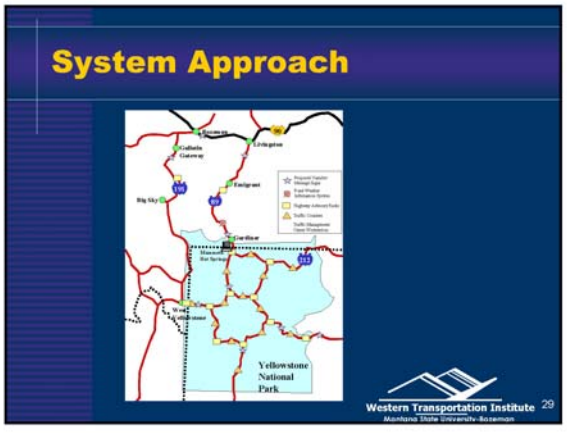
Institute 24


National Park Smart Pass
Driver
Kiosk Data
TBD
Regional Server
transaction status
vehicle characteristics
fee data
Tag Owners
YNP Electronic Tags
tag data
tag update
Yellowstone NP
EntranceGate AVI System
fee transactions
fee instructions
Yellowstone NP
Park Entrance Fee Administration
request for payment
payment
payment request
transaction status
Transaction Card
Smart Card
Clearinghouse
Financial Institution
Western Transportation Institute
25


Greater Yellowstone Regional Architecture
Travelers
Centers
Vehicles
Roadside
26


GYRTWIS Vision
Maintenance
Variable Message Signs
Kiosk & Web
511
Incident Management


Montana 511
Real-time traveler information
Customized weather forecasts and construction information
On-line in 2003
Plans to integrate national park information
511
Montana Travel Info
Western Transportation Institute
28


System Approach
Yellowstone National Park
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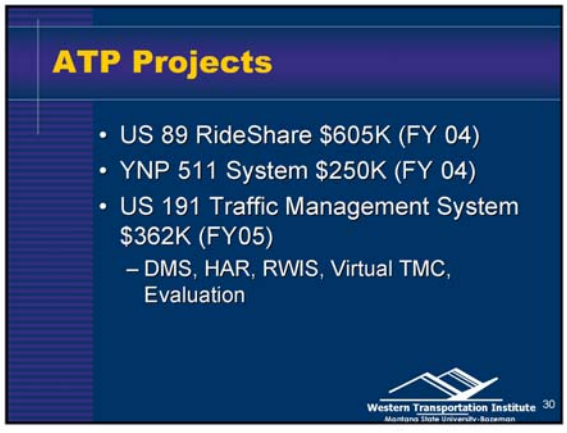
29


ATP Projects
US 89 RideShare $605K (FY 04)
YNP 511 System $250K (FY 04)
US 191 Traffic Management System $362K (FY05)
– DMS, HAR, RWIS, Virtual TMC, Evaluation
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30

CANAMEX: Smart Tourist Corridor

- Origin: NAFTA
- Coalition: AZ, NV, UT, ID, MT
- ITS Coordinators
- Goal: enhance rural economy
- Catalyst: promote tourism
- WTI: determine tourism needs develop ITS infrastructure develop 10 year program

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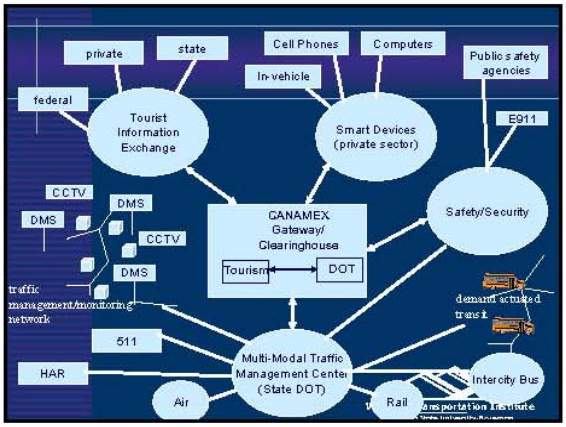
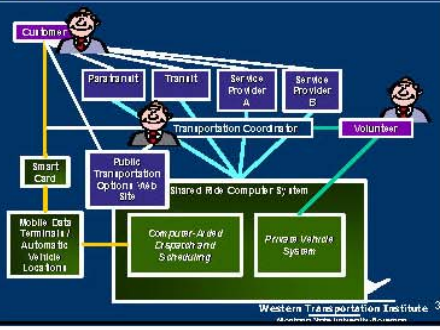


MT HHS Systems Change Grant



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Tour District Vision

- Integrated network of transportation providers across tri-state region
- Share resources and opportunities
- Vehicles owned by private and public entities
- Coordinate vehicles and services where appropriate
- Provide information and service to travelers in cohesive manner

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Selected Tour District Components

- Traditional and new vehicles
- Real-time arrival information
- Maximum headways
- Web site
- Share vehicles with other users
- Attractive to point-to-point hikers
- Start small, then build the system

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Greater Yellowstone–Teton Clean Cities Coalition

- U.S. Department of Energy program
- Public-private partnerships
- Deploy alternative fuels vehicles
- Build support for alt fuels infrastructure
- Began in Idaho Falls
- Designated September 2002

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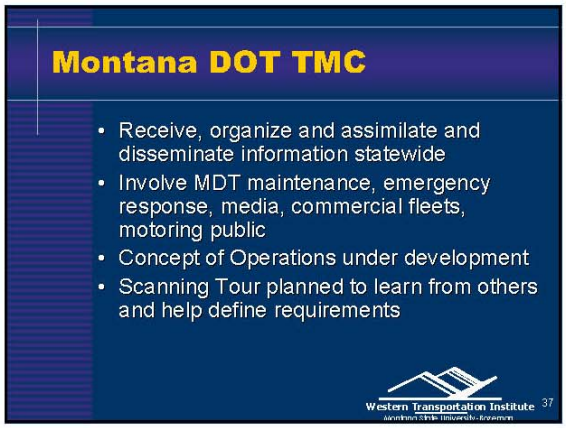
Montana DOT TMC
• Receive, organize and assimilate and disseminate information statewide
• Involve MDT maintenance, emergency response, media, commercial fleets, motoring public
• Concept of Operations under development
• Scanning Tour planned to learn from others and help define requirements
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Topic Areas
• Introductions – what is the key to success?
• Traveler needs – info, types, location
• How to enhance visitor experience?
• What are the transit solutions? (amenities, services, access locations, advanced technology)
• Partnership opportunities
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APPENDIX C: MITIGATION UPDATE PRESENTATION

Going-to-the-Sun-Road Rehabilitation Project
Mitigation Update

GTSR Rehabilitation Project –
Mitigation Update

Transit & ITS
Stakeholders Meeting

October 26, 2004

Gary Danczyk, Susan Law, and Valerie Rodman

Going-to-the-Sun-Road Rehabilitation Project
Mitigation Update

Glacier – A Special Place

- National Park
- Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park
- World Heritage Site
- Biosphere Reserve

Going-to-the-Sun
A Special Road

- 52 miles
- National Historic Landmark (1997)
- National Civil Engineering Landmark (1985)
- National Register of Historic Places (1983)

Going-to-the-Sun-Road Rehabilitation Project
Mitigation Update

Like all
special things
the road needs
special care

Going-to-the-Sun-Road Rehabilitation Project
Mitigation Update

How do you ensure a special vacation experience for our visitors while fixing the road?

Going-to-the-Sun-Road Rehabilitation Project
Mitigation Update

Road rehabilitation is tied to citizen involvement

- Montana Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) advised to ensure construction did not shut down the road during Rehabilitation.
- EIS & Record of Decision (ROD) supported keeping the road open
- Rehabilitation will include mitigation measures to limit the loss of visitors to 6.4% fewer annual visitors (-$90M for Montana) versus "No action" over 50 years (-$2.5B for Montana)

Going-to-the-Sun-Road Rehabilitation Project
Mitigation Update

Mitigation is incorporating lessons learned from many experiences

Other National Parks including: Yosemite, Zion, Acadia, Denali

Other concepts: Schedules, Financing, Increasing Ridership

Glacier's history: Rail, Jammers, Sun Tours

Going-to-the-Sun-Road Rehabilitation Project Mitigation Update

Mitigation reduces economic impacts through

- Enhanced transit system
- Increased efficiency of construction during visitor season
- Traveler information about construction delays and travel options
- Creating new visitor opportunities

Going-to-the-Sun-Road Rehabilitation Project Mitigation Update

Mitigation Requirements

How many people are we talking about?

- Approaching 2 million visitors in 2004
- High volume months: July & Aug - 0.5million per month
- Average Jul / Aug daily visitors: 16,000
- 60% enter West side 10,000
- 40% enter East side 6,000

Going-to-the-Sun-Road Rehabilitation Project Mitigation Update

Mitigation Goals

- Voluntary processes, during rehabilitation that take advantage of lessons learned from earlier efforts
  - Limit visitor losses to 6% or less
  - 10 – 20 % of congestion removed from GTSR
  - 1500-3000 visitors / day
- Involve our Gateway Communities
  - Identification & leveraging existing MT programs
  - Linkage to tourism and information processes
  - Distribute the ownership of key resources

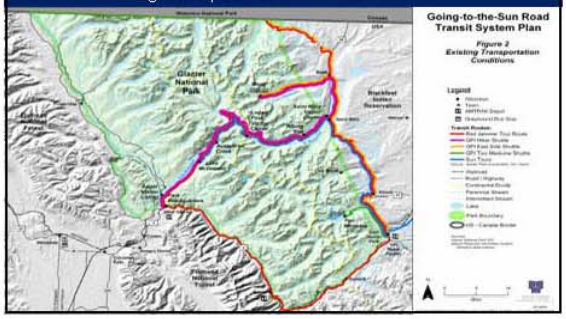
Going-to-the-Sun-Road Rehabilitation Project Mitigation Update

Transit System Plan

David Evans & Associates (DEA)

Going-to-the-Sun-Road Rehabilitation Project Mitigation Update

Existing Transportation Conditions



Going-to-the-Sun-Road Rehabilitation Project Mitigation Update

Transit System Plan

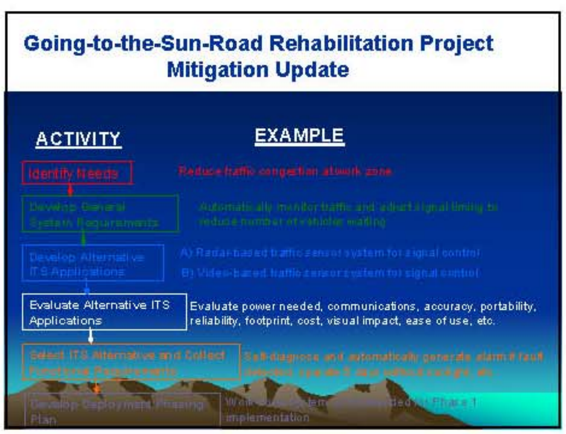
- Examine existing transit systems
- Primary focus GTSR route
- Look at West side and East side feeder loops & Hwy 2 options
- Compliment existing tour experiences (GPI, Sun Tours)
- Identify a bus that works for the park & on the road
  - Alternate fuel
  - Meet length & width, overhangs
  - Comfortable / ADA accessible
  - Integrate with ITS System


Going-to-the-Sun-Road Rehabilitation Project
Mitigation Update
Two Transit Centers - Apgar (new) & St Mary (remodel)
• Apgar Site located
• Survey completed
• Apgar primary transit operations
• Temporary facilities in 2006 to full operating system in 2007


Going-to-the-Sun-Road Rehabilitation Project
Mitigation Update
First look at transit stops
Going-to-the-Sun Road Transit System Plan


Going-to-the-Sun-Road Rehabilitation Project
Mitigation Update
Intelligent Transportation System (ITS)
Science Applications International Corporation
SAIC


Going-to-the-Sun-Road Rehabilitation Project
Mitigation Update
Goal: Develop ITS Applications to Mitigate GTSR Rehabilitation Activities - Maintain Quality of Visitor Experience
Focus Areas:
Work Zone Management/ Contractor Performance Monitoring
Traffic Management
Visitor Information
Transit Operations/ Visitor Impacts
Focus on Existing Infrastructure and Proven Technologies and Approaches


Going-to-the-Sun-Road Rehabilitation Project
Mitigation Update
ACTIVITY
EXAMPLE
Identify Needs
Reduce traffic congestion at work zone
Develop General System Requirements
Automatically monitor traffic and adjust signal timing to reduce number of vehicles waiting
Develop Alternative ITS Applications
A) Radar-based traffic sensor system for signal control
B) Video-based traffic sensor system for signal control
Evaluate Alternative ITS Applications
Evaluate power needed, communications, accuracy, portability, reliability, footprint, cost, visual impact, ease of use, etc.
Select ITS Alternative and Collect Functional Requirements
Develop Deployment Phasing Plan


Going-to-the-Sun-Road Rehabilitation Project
Mitigation Update
Next Steps
• ITS / Transit / Transit Center / Visitor Services along the road
• Understanding baseline road & major trail usage in 2005
• Ready to provide ITS and Transit in 2006 (some facilities will be temporary)
• Understanding the impact of mitigation on our visitors
• Mitigation ahead of road project


Going-to-the-Sun-Road Rehabilitation Project
Mitigation Update
Questions & Comments