



History

Interstates 90 and 94 between Washington and Wisconsin function as major corridors for commercial and recreational travel. Extreme winter weather conditions, prevalent in the northern states within this corridor, pose significant operational and travel-related challenges. Idaho, Minnesota, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Washington, and Wyoming are predominantly rural, and face similar transportation issues related to traffic management, traveler information, and commercial vehicle operations.

Recognizing the value of coordinated, cross-border collaboration for Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) deployment to address these issues, the Minnesota Department of Transportation (DOT) initiated a meeting in 2002 with representatives from each of the states within the corridor. The group established itself as a Transportation Pooled Fund in 2003 through the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

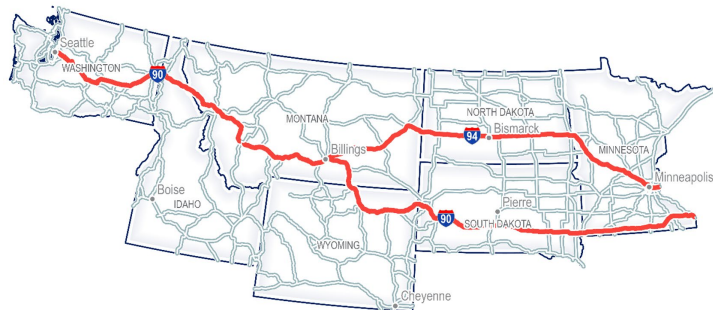
The North/West Passage Corridor has developed an ITS Integrated Strategic Plan and has successfully implemented seventeen work plans. Currently the group is working on its twentieth work plan consisting of seven projects. Complete details on previous work plans and individual projects are available through the program web site at www.nwpassage.info.

Contact

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Member States

- Idaho Transportation Department
- Minnesota DOT
- Montana DOT
- North Dakota DOT
- South Dakota DOT
- Washington State DOT
- Wyoming DOT



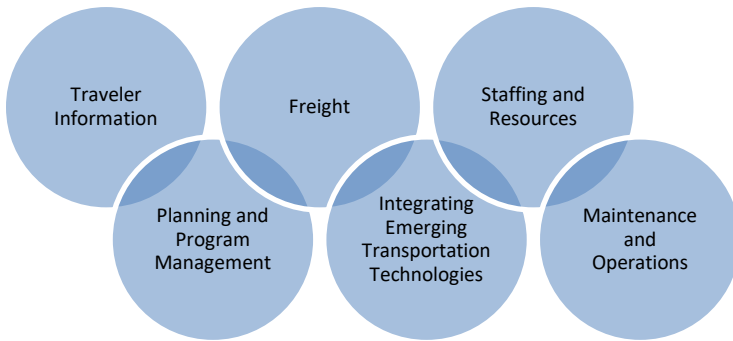
Vision

The vision of the North/West Passage (NWP) Corridor is to focus on developing effective methods for sharing, coordinating, and integrating traveler information, operational activities, and emerging technologies across state and provincial borders. The vision provides a framework to guide the states' future projects in the corridor.

Website

A program website (www.nwpassage.info) was created to provide easy access to North/West Passage information and to communicate and educate users about the pooled fund study. The website contains an archive of all project reports and provides a history of the corridor.

North/West Passage Focus Areas



Accomplishments

Following are a key accomplishments of the North/West Passage since it was established.

- Best of ITS Rural Award Winner
- Established a MOU for traveler information coordination signed by all member states
- Developed operations guidelines for coordinating traveler information
- Multistate Corridor Operations and Management Program (MCOM) federal grant recipient
- Successfully submitted a project statement to the National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP)
- Established an Operations Task Force and Freight Task Force
- Hosted a Regional Operations Forum
- Created a Transportation Management Center (TMC) operations coordination webpage
- Deployed a corridor-wide traveler information website
- Conducted numerous workshops and peer exchanges on topics of interest to members
- Present project results at conferences
- Conduct an annual technician's forum

Recent accomplishments:

- Assessed how DOT events are displayed on third-party applications
- Assessed how information is shared and coordinated between member states during winter weather closures
- Provided an understanding of different approaches for automating the process of creating and updating traveler information
- Defined a multi-state regional project the members could collectively pursue to advance the goals for sharing event and condition reports, between members and with private company navigation applications

Member Benefits

The North/West Passage member states have identified many benefits they have gained from participating in the pooled fund.

- Important contacts in member states.
- Issues on a topic were discussed with members before moving forward with a project.
- Exchange of traveler information with neighboring states.
- Peer exchanges of information to share ITS experiences as well as operation and maintenance experiences.
- Data sharing between state agencies and public safety.
- Closer working efforts with border states.
- Program website resource that shows decision makers the benefits for continued financial contribution to the program.
- Opportunity for increased participation during monthly and annual meetings with quality, focused meeting agendas and topics.
- Webinars that allowed other staff to get involved in program and project efforts (e.g., workshops), expanding knowledge of other state efforts as well as extending networks internally.
- Project ideas for consideration and the technical resources and contacts to pursue them.

