



## NETC Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, August 6 , 2024, 1:00–2:00pm ET

### Attendees:

Ulrich Amoussou-Guenou, MaineDOT	Emily Parkany, VT AOT
Brian Hirt, CTC & Associates	Jeff Pulver, MaineDOT
Devon Kleebatt, CT DOT	Austin Sanders, MassDOT
Matt Mann, UMTC	Kirsten Seeber, CTC & Associates
Ashlie Mercado, VT AOT	Melanie Zimyeski, CT DOT

### Open Project Review (August 2024)

Project # and Title	PI, Organization AC Liaison CTC Project Manager TC Chair	Update	End Date Budget
<a href="#">21-3: Initiating Seed Production for Effective Establishment of Native Plants on Roadsides in New England</a>	Julia Kuzovkina, UConn D. Nash K. Seeber Arin Mills, NH DOT	<p>The contract extension to 8/20/24 is finalized. The TC met to discuss the draft deliverables on 7/17/24. The TC provided additional comments by 8/1/24. Adam Boone, CT, did not provide comments as he is on leave.</p> <p>The research team will send a revised final report along with the poster and fact sheet to the TC on 8/9/24.</p> <p>The TC will provide final comments by 8/16/24. The research team will finalize by 8/20/24.</p> <p>The project webinar is scheduled for Wednesday, 9/25/24 at 9:00am. Kirsten will send an invitation to the full NETC mailing list by 8/9/24.</p> <p>Jeff talked to Gus Nothstein, Roadside Vegetation, who is interested in this project. Kirsten will send Gus the webinar invitation and a link to the final report.</p>	8/20/24 \$200,000

## Implementation/Tech Transfer

- TAAC members to report on any implementation activities for recently closed projects.
- Check in on the implementation of the last project, 21-3: Initiating Seed Production for Effective Establishment of Native Plants on Roadsides in New England.
  - ~ VT's TC member likes the final report. She expects to use the project results and further test the identified seed mixes on some of their construction projects. "The study supports what we have been working on related to pollinators over the past 5 years well and sets us up to continue improving/learning this effort in the future."
  - ~ Others?

## Topical Discussion Events

- A series of virtual in-depth Topical Discussions designed to bring together SMEs from the New England transportation agencies around specific topics.
  - ~ Animal Vehicle Collision Avoidance
  - ~ Advanced Air Mobility Regional Plan
  - ~ Geotech
- **Action item: Kirsten is working on posting the materials on the NETC website.**
- Time has run out to plan an additional Topical Discussion.

## Other Business

- 508-compliance for final reports from this phase of the pooled fund
  - ~ CTC remediated the final reports for the following research projects: 18-1 (report only), 18-2, 18-3, 19-1 (report and guidelines), 19-2, 19-3, 20-1, 20-2, 20-3, 20-4 and 21-1.
  - ~ Kirsten sent the remediated final reports to ROSA P.
  - ~ Kirsten will finish submitting the remediated reports to TRID, FHWA Library, National Technical Information Services (NTIS) and Turner-Fairbanks Highway Research Center.
- Website – Options for the website at the end of the pooled fund:
  - ~ CTC to continue hosting for three years for a total cost of \$2,700.
    - FYI - The domain name renews in August. CTC will renew it and put it on the August 2023 invoice at \$23.17. The secure certificate (SSL) renews in mid-November for \$200. CTC will only renew the SSL if CTC continues to host the website.
    - CTC would back up the website and put it on a hard drive, flash drive or upload it to its new location, free of charge. The website is currently on a MAC-based server so if it needs to be translated
    - to Word, CTC would either charge for that work or the IT staff on the receiving end would do the work.
  - ~ MA DOT takes over hosting the website.
    - The Advisory Committee sent Nicholas the following questions for MA GIS staff. MA GIS answers follow.
      - What platform is the MassDOT website built on? The current NETC website is built with WordPress.
      - Can the website be replicated as is? Or would this be a storing of documents and recordings only?
        - Depends on the need for changes to the website going forward. We have never worked

with WordPress, but it seems like it is a free and open-source web management system. We can investigate installing on our AWS web servers to evaluate this.

- Brian – WordPress is free at basic level, but CTC has paid options to give the website some of the functions it currently has.
- How would we get to the NETC info? Will a redirect from [www.newenglandtransportationconsortium.org](http://www.newenglandtransportationconsortium.org) always work?
  - Would it be possible to acquire the certs and NETC domain to use on our web server? We have done this in the past for similar reasons. Otherwise, whoever is maintaining the NETC.org server will need to ensure it continues running and has a redirect to our server [www.gis.massdot.state.ma.us/NETC\\_WEBSITE\\_NAME](http://www.gis.massdot.state.ma.us/NETC_WEBSITE_NAME)
- Would the NETC information look similar to the current website? Or would it be less intuitive and require some digging to get to information?
  - Depends, if we build from scratch or just copy over the WordPress files and project (which seems like the simplest solution).
- Will the links to pages and files change? Or could it be made so that any links that are currently on other websites and point to the NETC website would still function?
  - This would be based on question 3. Regardless of if we take over the domain or not, we can certainly update the links on the website to be relative and point to their intended destination on the new server.
- How long would the info be available on the MassDOT site? [The offer from CTC is hosting and maintenance for three years so we would need at least that long from MassDOT.] At the end of the “available on MassDOT” period, will the materials be sent to a repository? Who will send the materials and who will help document/fill out repository forms describing the materials?
  - This would be an ongoing thing while we maintain our GIS and web hosting services. It is possible that EOTTS or MassDOT IT may wish to make changes to our existing set-up and isolated GIS environment in the future. For example, there has been a plan to switch our environment from the [gis.massdot.state.ma.us](http://gis.massdot.state.ma.us) domain to a [mass.gov](http://mass.gov) domain.
- At the end of the “available on MassDOT” period, will the materials be sent to a repository? Who will send the materials and who will help document/fill out repository forms describing the materials?
  - This can be decided when and as needed.
- Nicholas is thinking long term about the NETC website materials. Austin or Nicholas can get more information on costs associated with MA hosting the website. Austin doesn’t feel that Nicholas is expecting contributions from NETC members long term, only looking to preserve the website after the three years (if CTC continued to host).
- Brian – Two costs associated with moving the website to MA: labor on the MA side and labor on the CTC side. CTC will provide the support MA needs to get the website and running. Long term costs would be maintenance on their end and the domain name. He feels it would be good to memorialize the website/materials on a government website using NETC money to make that transition.
- The website doesn’t need to work exactly as it is now. Some interactive pages could be a table instead. Essentially we need to ensure the website information is available in some form.
- The materials the Advisory Committee would like to preserve moving forward are all research task reports, final reports (associated guides, appendices, etc.) posters, fact sheets, webinar presentations and webinar recordings for at least 3-5 years. In addition, the materials associated with symposiums and topical discussions should be preserved. There was a question about whether project quarterly reports are necessary to keep.

- Brian – The best page to replicate on the MA website is the [Complete Research Project Reports](#). This page consists of a table that lists the projects by category, project information and links to project materials.
  - Redesign the page so it’s always expanded.
  - Project materials that are not currently in the table would be added prior to moving this to the MA website.
  - Sections for symposiums and topical discussions can also be added.
- Website decision
  - Austin will go back to Nicholas and GIS staff about what we want, mainly a simplified option with a page that has the project tables on it, which is a more limited deliverable.
  - Is this something MA could do on its own platform. Can they support a page like that if CTC provides the files? Austin – It will be a yes or no from GIS. They can come back to CTC with questions.
  - The Advisory Committee has confidence that it will be a smooth transition to the MA website with the table option.

• NETC Budget Review

<b>NETC Transfers</b>		
ME (Carry over)	\$	30,485.66
NH	\$	461,201.66
RI	\$	428,196.00
VT	\$	502,637.98
MA	\$	475,205.45
CT	\$	436,532.00
<b>Total Transfers</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>2,334,258.75</b>
Current Project WIN Funding	<b>\$</b>	<b>2,600,000.00</b>
Communicated Project Funding	<b>\$</b>	<b>2,734,258.75</b>
Maine contribution (not including carry over)	\$	265,741.25
Maine owed	\$	134,258.75
Maine contribution after transfers	\$	430,485.66
NETC Contract Obligations	<b>\$</b>	<b>2,668,453.54</b>
Predicted Remaining Funds After Contracts	<b>\$</b>	<b>65,805.21</b>
State	Percent of Project Contribution	Estimates Remaining Funds Returned to Each State
ME	15.7%	\$ 10,360.47
NH	16.9%	\$ 11,099.71
RI	15.7%	\$ 10,305.36
VT	18.4%	\$ 12,096.95
MA	17.4%	\$ 11,436.74
CT	16.0%	\$ 10,505.98

• NETC Research Peer Exchange (CT, ME, NH)

- ~ The draft final report is written and is with CTC’s editor. CTC will send the report to the host state participants the week of 8/12/24. The rest of the participants will receive the report after host state comments are incorporated.

- ~ Kirsten is processing reimbursements. CTC will put them on the June invoice for MaineDOT's review and approval and then send checks to attendees.
- Suggested ways to use the remaining funds in the CTC contract to assist the NETC states before the pooled fund ends:
  - ~ Remaining funds through 5/31/24 = \$113,861.
  - ~ Remediation work for individual states – Okayed by ME Contract Procurement Office
  - ~ Best practices for webinars – Okayed by ME Contracts Procurement Office
    - See NCHRP 20-44(28): [Guide for Implementing Technology Transfer](#), Chapter 3: Creating a Webinar, which provides information on developing and executing webinars. Would this satisfy the Advisory Committee's needs or is additional information needed?
      - Emily – This may be enough information and don't have to do this one.
  - ~ Sharing fact sheets and poster templates among the states. Put them on the NETC website for members to access.
  - ~ Highlighting the impact research has on people by sharing stories on a couple of NETC research projects.
    - Choose a few projects that were implemented by multiple states and had a warm response. The two related MASH projects (18-1 and 20-1) were suggested. Briefs and possibly an article.
  - ~ Extend the CTC contract beyond 9/30/24 to complete these activities?
    - ME Contract Procurement Office okayed a CTC contract extension if the Advisory Committee approves.
    - The ME Contract Procurement Office is okay with any additional activities that pass the "sniff test" for the contract. Activities for individual member states would be valuable to those states using their own NETC funds.
      - Emily – The activities should serve the NETC goals of regional research or sharing research. Jeff – Any tech transfer activities would fall under sharing research.
    - There is no restriction on how long the CTC contract can be extended. The contract will be extended for one year. If the activities end sooner than one year, then ME will wrap up the pooled fund.
    - Jeff suggests asking the Advisory Committee members, via email, for the activities they want to CTC to work on.
      - The questions will be "What activities would you like CTC to assist you with?" and "What NETC projects should be featured in a written piece that tells the stories of those projects?"
      - Request responses by 9/15 and extend to 10/15, if necessary.
      - Let each state know how much is left after the remaining core work still being done by CTC is complete. Divide the remainder by six and to get the amount each state will have available to spend on activities for their state. This eliminates the need for group approval on spending the remaining funds.
        - Emily – What if RI or NH don't use their money? Spend that money on group activities.
        - Brian – Will Research get any money that is transferred back to the states, or will it end up in the general fund? If the money goes to the general fund, then it may be better to get value out of additional activities.
        - Draw down the CTC contract and if other activities come out of it, e.g. a video brief, then that's okay.
    - Suggested projects:
      - Final report remediation – CTC will request reports from each state (pdf and Word versions

needed) and provide an estimate for the number of hours for each report.

- Stories about NETC projects. If an individual state wants story about a project, that's fine. This could also be a group activity if there are funds available.
- Jeff – If someone proposes a group activity, then have to have a group consensus.
- **Action item: Jeff will request start the contract extension request at ME.**
- **Action item: Jeff will figure out how much each state would get back, so they know how much they have to spend.**
- **Action item: Kirsten will draft the email and send to Jeff and Emily for feedback.**
- Pooled fund final report
  - ~ The Advisory Committee can discuss this further in the future since the contract is being extended.

### **Adjourn**

**Next meeting:** Tuesday, August 27 from 11:00am – noon ET.