

# Ten Things You Ought to Know About *Transportation Research & Information Tools*

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Environmental Analysis in Transportation Committee (ADC10)

*Leading Edge Research & Information Tools*

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**Washington State  
Department of Transportation**

# 10. It's Been Going on a Long Time

## *The Beginning*

Transportation research by public agencies began with the creation of the federal Office of Road Inquiry in 1893 in the Department of Agriculture

The first library catalog system is thought to be from the Han Dynasty (206 BC to 220 AD).



State Route 20 in in the late 1800's.

# 9. There are Several Research Funding Programs

## Federal Programs

### Surface Transportation Environment & Planning (STEP) Cooperative Research Program

- Scope: environmental and planning topics of national interest
- Emphasis Areas in Implementation Strategy

<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/hep/step/index.htm>

### Strategic Highway Research Program (SHRPII)

- National interest
- 4 focus areas: Safety, Renewal, Reliability, Capacity
- Capacity is the primary focus area addressing environment and planning research
- *TRB Special Report 260* summarizes program intent

<http://www.trb.org/shrp2/>

### Corporate Advanced Research Program

- Seeks to transfer breakthrough technologies into the transportation sector
- Program in Development

<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/crt/>

### Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Program

- Aims to stimulate technological innovations
- Annual solicitation

<http://www.volpe.dot.gov/sbir/index.html>

## State & University Programs

### AASHTO's Quick Response Research Projects

- [CEOs](#), [SCOE](#), [SCOP](#), [SCOPT](#), [SCOH](#) have funding
- Projects intended to be accomplished in 6 -12 months
- Annual solicitation through AASHTO committee

### State Research Programs

- Due: Timing varies by state
- Contact your state DOT research director

<http://research.transportation.org/?siteid=55&pageid=857>

### Transportation Pooled Fund Program

- Requires at least two states or a state and FHWA to share a common interest and commitment to fund a research activity
- Can be initiated at any time
- Contact your state DOT research director

<http://www.tfrc.gov/site/active.htm>

### University Transportation Centers

- Theme and process vary by organization

<http://mtc.dot.gov/>

## Sources of Funding for Environmental and Planning Research

July 2007

## Transportation Research Board Programs

### Commercial Truck and Bus Safety Synthesis Program (CTBSSP)

- Topics Due: May 31

<http://www.trb.org/CRP/CTBSSP/CTBSSP.asp>

### Transit Cooperative Research Program

- Problem Statements Due: June 15
- Synthesis Topics Due: March 31
- Legal studies: February 15

<http://www.trb.org/CRP/TCRP/TCRP.asp>

### National Freight Cooperative Research Program

- Problem statements can be submitted at anytime by anyone.

<http://www.trb.org/CRP/NCFRP/NCFRP.asp>

### Hazardous Materials Cooperative Research Program

- Conducts the work of *TRB Spec Rpt 283*

<http://www.trb.org/CRP/HMCRP/HMCRP.asp>

### National Cooperative Highway Research Program

- Problem Statements Due: September 15
- Synthesis Topics Due: February 14
- Legal Studies: early July

<http://www.trb.org/CRP/NCHRP/NCHRP.asp>

### Airport Cooperative Research Program

- Problem Statements Due: April 15
- Synthesis Topics Due: October 12

<http://www.trb.org/CRP/ACRP/ACRP.asp>

### Innovations Deserving Exploratory Analysis

- Transfers technologies to transportation uses. 4 focus areas: High-Speed Rail; Transit;

Safety; NCHRP Highway

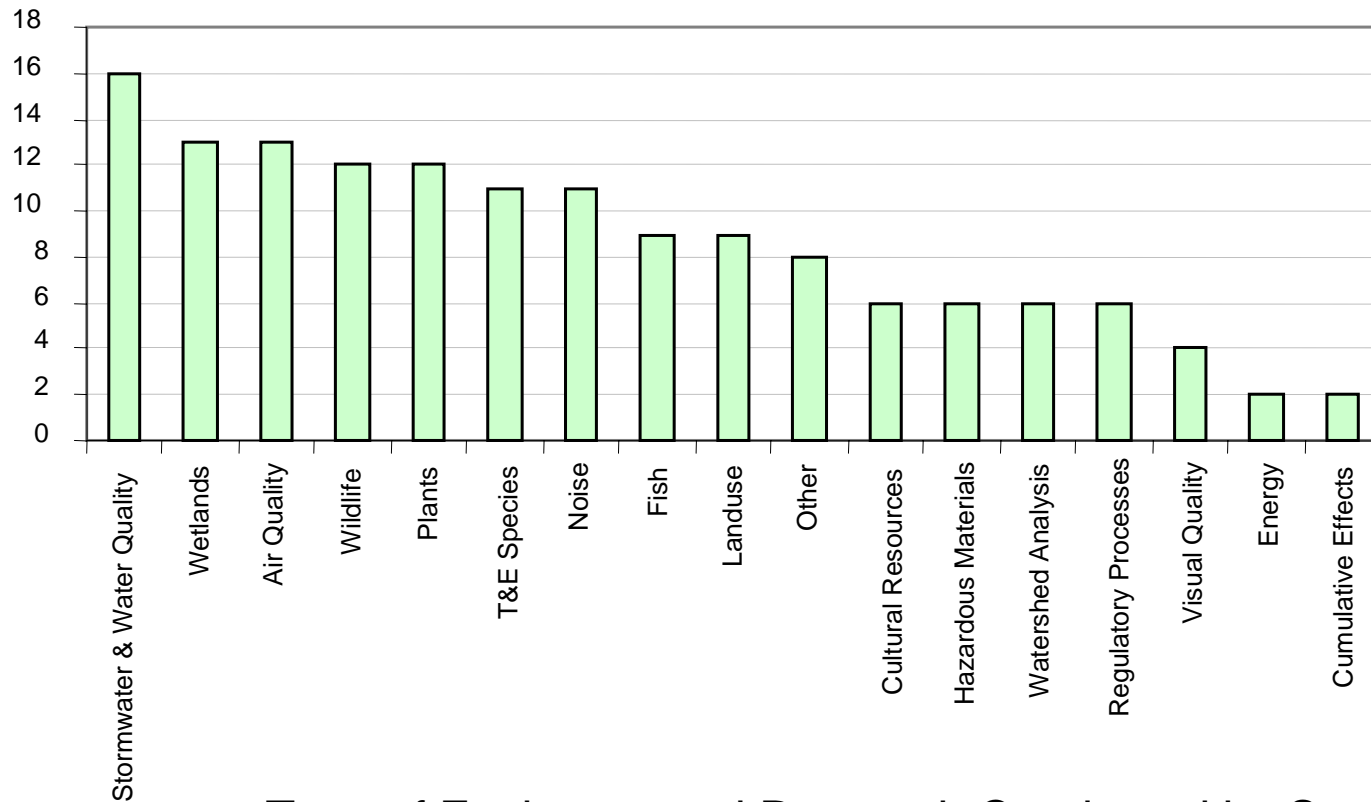
- Annual solicitation

<http://www.trb.org/Studies/Programs/IDEA.asp>

This includes only research funding available through transportation research programs. Additional research funding is available for environmental and planning topics from other government, academic, and private sources.



# 8. It's a Very Competitive Environment



Type of Environmental Research Conducted by State DOTs  
(2003 AASHTO RAC Survey, 19 states responding)

# 7. It's Important to Identify Clear Needs

- What are you trying to accomplish. Is it a topic research can help?
- What's the significance of the problem?
- Explain the problem and the consequences of no action (delivery delays, gaps in decision-making and what that affects, limitations on analysis, etc.)
- Write for a reviewer *not* an expert in the field – be succinct but informative

## 6. You Need to Do your Homework

- Conduct a literature review (TLCat, *TRIS Online*)
- Check for on-going projects on the topic (RiP)
- Explain the relationship of the requested work to these activities
- Identify potential partners or resources
- Know your timeline and which programs fit the need
- Tailor your submission for the specific program

# 5. Discussing the Idea with Your Peers Makes a Difference

- Builds an interested constituency
- Weeds out ambiguity or regional bias
- Helps identify and include related work
- Strengthens your submission by demonstrating common interest and/or partnerships

## 4. It's Never Too Soon to Plan for Implementing Results

- Be aware of how and by whom results will be used when writing the problem statement
- What will be needed for the result to be useful?
  - Who are the potential users that need ownership in the development?
  - Are there specific software programs, formats, etc in which the results will be used?
  - Are there likely to be costs for training or equipment purchase?

# 3. It's Important to Stay Involved

- Every project needs a committed champion
- Useful results come from:
  - Clear understanding of the need by the researcher
  - Good information resources throughout (do they need data/materials from you?)
  - Responsiveness to the researchers' requests
  - Timely review of draft materials and discussions on course correction
  - Attention to results/conclusions/recommendations,

## 2. Results Need to be Communicated

- Work with the researcher and funding organization to know how reports and findings are being published and circulated
- Develop briefing documents to communicate results and recommendations to decision-makers
- Present findings in technical and non-technical forums
- Submit publications to libraries for inclusion in the permanent record

# 1. The Story Needs to Be Told

- Document the use, benefits and impact of the funded research.
- Tell the story of your success – what has been accomplished and how did it help/who did it help?
- This helps research programs and, very likely, your next request for funding.

# Available Resources

- WSDOT Research Program: <http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/research/>
- WSDOT Library: <http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/Library/>
- TRB Conduct of Research Committee: <http://www.mrutc.org/COR/>
- Transportation Research Information Services (TRIS *Online*): <http://trisonline.bts.gov/search.cfm>
- Research in Progress: <http://rip.trb.org/>
- National Transportation Library: <http://ntl.bts.gov/>
- Transportation Research Board: <http://trb.org/>
- Transportation Environmental Research Ideas (TERI): [http://environment.transportation.org/teri\\_database/](http://environment.transportation.org/teri_database/)

# Contact Information

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