



STATE AND FEDERAL FUNDS IN LIMBO

Legislative activities in Lansing and Washington leave many unanswered questions on the future of transportation funding.

Once again, Congress has let the federal highway program lapse. Beginning March 1, state and local road agencies will not be able to be reimbursed by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). Although several options to extend the highway program before the end of this week exist, political differences could delay action.

A 30-day extension passed the House and is currently before the Senate. Unfortunately a hold has been placed on this legislation by Senator Bunning (R-KY).

Another possibility is for the House to pass the Jobs Bill voted out of the Senate last week. House leaders are working to secure votes for the legislation but there are several obstacles—including a debate over how to handle earmarks contained in the extension.

The Jobs Bill, referred to as the Hiring Incentives to Restore Employment (HIRE) Act, would extend transportation funding authorization through December 31, 2010. The legislation transfers \$19.5 billion from the general fund to the Federal Highway Trust Fund, which is projected to become insolvent in the near future. The transfer is intended to repay interest to the Trust Fund, which has not been credited since 1998. The legislation also repeals the rescission of unobligated highway program contract authority and includes an expansion of the Build America Bonds program for state and local infrastructure.

Until a temporary extension is passed, federal payments to state and local transportation agencies are halted indefinitely.

While the fate of federal funding hangs in the balance, Michigan prepares for the first time to send \$475 million in fuel taxes collected in Michigan back to Washington due to the lack of matching funds.

The Governor's recommended FY 2011 Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) budget proposes total funding of \$2.7 billion in state and federal restricted funds. The budget anticipates a 3 percent reduction in Michigan Transportation Fund (MTF) revenues distributed to MDOT, road commissions and cities/villages.

MDOT has proposed to reduce operations expenses by \$20 million to allow them to match \$100 million in federal funds—this budget also includes a 3 percent reduction to the maintenance line item.

Even with this change, MDOT anticipates not being able to match \$475 million in federal funds.

The Governor remains supportive of the recommendations of the Transportation Funding Task Force (TF2) and blames a lack of legislative action for the unprecedented move by the State to return federal funds.

Michigan's transportation funding crisis has reached a point where lawmakers can no longer ignore the problem. Legislation has now been introduced to increase both fuel taxes and vehicle registration fees.

Beginning this month, the House Transportation Committee plans to hold a series of statewide public hearings on proposed cuts to the MDOT Five-Year Plan and the impact of the funding crisis

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GENESEE COUNTY ROAD COMMISSION MANAGER-DIRECTOR RECEIVES NATIONAL RECOGNITION

Genesee County Road Commission Manager-Director, John H. Daly III, Ph.D., was selected to receive a 2010 Jennings Randolph Fellowship.

The Jennings Randolph International Fellowship Program was established at the Eisenhower World Affairs Institute in 1987 and is administered by the American Public Works Association. Dr. Daly was selected for his experience in transportation, public works and infrastructure sustainability, and in part for his efforts on public works projects in Russia, Ireland and Israel, prior to his tenure with the road commission.

Dr. Daly will participate in Mexico's National Public Works Association Conference and complete one week of additional study. His experience will be documented in a future issue of APWA Reporter Magazine. He will be recognized at the APWA's 2010 Congress in Boston later this year and will participate in an educational session about his study project at the APWA's Congress in Denver in 2011.

CRAM congratulates Dr. Daly on this esteemed recognition.

**Visit www.drivemi.org
and sign the on-line
petition today!**

STATE AND FEDERAL FUNDS IN LIMBO

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on the State and local road agencies. The Committee Chair, Rep. Byrnes (D-Washtenaw), plans to use the hearings to build public support for a transportation funding increase.

When details of the hearings are confirmed, information will be shared in CRAM's Legislative Update. Please consider attending these hearings to share your road commission's story.

Coming weeks and months will bring significant discussion on transportation funding at both the state and federal level. CRAM will monitor the discussions and may call upon you to contact your elected officials or to respond to a survey. Please watch for action alerts—your participation is vital to our success as an Association. Our elected leaders want and need to know how their constituents will be affected by proposed changes.

NATIONAL WORK ZONE AWARENESS WEEK 2010

The 2010 National Work Zone Awareness Week is scheduled for April 19-23. The national kickoff event will be held in New York City on April 19. The theme for this year is "Work Zones Need Your Undivided Attention."

Visit www.workzonesafety.org to download free resources, or to order ribbons, wristbands, posters, or t-shirts with this year's theme.

*We are saddened to report the recent passing of two long-time supporters of michigan county roads . . .
Herb Bachelor (Hyde Equipment) and Milt Hoard (Shults Equipment).*

FIELD MANAGER USER'S GROUP MEETING

Join other FieldManager users for the 10th Annual FieldManager User's Group Meeting for Local Agencies, Private Firms, and Contractors.

WHEN & WHERE:

- * March 30, 2010
- * Comfort Inn & Suites Hotel and Conference Center
2424 S. Mission St., Mount Pleasant, MI 48858
989.772.4000

Rooms are available for \$65+tax for the night of March 29.

Make sure you mention the FieldManager User's Group.

AGENDA TOPICS INCLUDE:

- * FieldManager Status Report
- * FieldManager 4.5a Update and Patches
- * Contract Modifications, Approvals
- * Certified Payroll
- * Construction Documentation Guide
- * Prompt Payment
- * Searching and Extracting Data from Electronic Proposals and Plans
- * Transportation Funding Issues
- * MERL

COST & REGISTRATION:

- * \$95.00 (includes break and lunch)
- * Call the Center for Technology and Training at 906-487-2102 or email ctt@mtu.edu to register.

Join us to have your FieldManager questions answered and your comments & concerns heard. If you have any specific questions you would like addressed, contact the Center for Technology and Training at ctt@mtu.edu.

You may download a copy of the meeting brochure with the latest agenda at: www.michiganltap.org

FROST LAW WEB PAGE

CRAM is again maintaining a Seasonal Weight Restrictions page at:

www.micountyroads.org/weight.htm

The page includes a map, contact information and links to M.C.L. sections, as well as information on the Public Utility Vehicle exemption.

Legislation enacted at the end of 2008 now requires that road commissions post lists of roads affected by the restrictions on their Web site. If you provide your county's list in a .PDF format, or provide a URL for the location of that list, we will link that information to that which is already on our page.

Lists, links, and frost law status information should be e-mailed to teldred@localroads.net with as much advance notice as possible.

Please remember to keep the CRAM Office informed of the status of weight restrictions in your county. Thank you.

SEEKING INTERNSHIPS

Ferris State University may be able to assist your county road commission with your employment needs. Students in either the Associates Degree Program in Civil Engineering Technology, or the Bachelors Degree Program in Construction Management are looking for either summer or permanent employment opportunities.

Most students in these programs are already certified by MDOT in Density Control, Aggregates, and Bituminous Level 1. Many students wish to work in northern Michigan or the Upper Peninsula areas. If you would like to send a job description to be distributed to students, please contact Kelly Seitter, P.E., Professor at seitterk@ferris.edu or 231.591.2659.

FAILURE TO ADEQUATELY FUND ROADS STEMS FROM INACTION

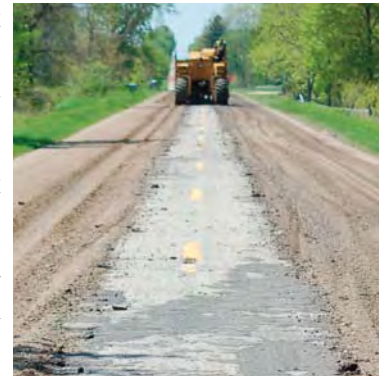
Legislative inaction has resulted in funding proposals that sit waiting for support. Let's not let this opportunity to increase funding for transportation fail.

We need you, your employees, and your families to call 888.719.3087 and tell each of your legislators to FIX MI ROADS! This may take a couple calls to reach each of your elected representatives, but the calls are free. Don't stop with the members of your family and staff...tell your township and county officials, as well as your residents, to call.



Since 2004 MTF funding has fallen as a result of drivers travelling fewer miles in more fuel-efficient vehicles. Funding levels for many counties are the lowest they have been in a decade and MTF dollars are expected to decrease again for this fiscal year. This isn't news to those of you involved in CRC finance, but it is not common knowledge among your legislators. Call them and tell them that between decreased MTF funding and skyrocketing costs of materials your county is feeling the pinch. Based on surveys, nearly 2/3 of Michigan's county road agencies have reduced or eliminated equipment purchases for more than three years—case in point, Alger CRC is running 19-year-old trucks on its plow routes. Sixty-eight counties report anticipating further delays in equipment/material purchases this year.

At one time in history there was a goal of paving all roads. We made great progress towards this goal as a State, until recent years. Over the last ten years, 36 road commissions have turned not only local roads, but some primary miles as well, back to gravel. Sixteen agencies report anticipating converting an additional 55+ miles of paved roads that have deteriorated past the point of being safe back to gravel. This short-term “solution” is a direct result of inadequate funding. Why not take a moment to call your legislators and media and explain to them how much it would cost to fund the maintenance required on your system and show them the pittance you are expected to work with!



While roads are being purposefully returned to gravel, our bridges are degenerating on their own. Approximately 1/6 of all bridges (crossings 20' or longer) on the county road system are closed or posted. The delays caused by these deficient bridges affect not only the movement of goods and services, but also public safety. Bridges take a two-fold hit in that they are not only expensive to build, they require many hours of expensive evaluation to determine their environmental impacts and obtain the required permits. How bad is the problem? According to data collected from MIS/CRAM, 16 out of 21 bridges in Crawford County are posted and 14 out of 30 are posted in Alger. The bad news is that it is going to get worse...48 counties anticipate reducing their bridge maintenance activities due to limited funding.

YOU ARE THE KEY

If you have been resting on your laurels and assuming that someone else has called and informed your legislators about the mess their failure to act is creating, **TAKE ACTION TODAY!**

CRAM, MDOT, and the MTT can only do so much to push legislators to the point of acting on the critical funding issues before us. We need your support on the issue. No matter how many times we show and tell the story, we hear that the people back home in legislative districts are not echoing our cries for help. Encourage your employees to call as well.

YOU have an opportunity during the Highway Conference to have a face-to-face sit-down meeting with your legislators. Whether it be at Wednesday's Legislative Reception, a separate meeting, or a visit to their office while you are in town (park free at the CRAM Office—just three short blocks from the House Office Building and five blocks from the Senate Offices).

If you are not attending the Conference, call 888.719.3087. Whether you are a road commission employee, Associate Member, or a member of RUSH-PAC, we need you to tell your legislators to **FIX MI ROADS!**

Without action on your part potholes, congestion, unfilled positions, and layoffs will continue to increase. The job you save by calling may be your own.

THE LACK OF FUNDING DIRECTLY AFFECTS YOU!

Your wallet is impacted. Legislators are used to hearing complaints related to increasing taxes, but what they need to know is the cost you are already bearing due to their inaction on road funding. The eight cent per gallon increase called for by the current funding proposal is a drop in the bucket compared to the cost of repairs made necessary by Michigan's potholed roads. County after county has been forced to seek greater levels of township participation in local road projects...75 road commissions have increased township shares of local road project funding, and 25 anticipate being forced to again this year.

Your safety is being directly impacted. In addition to the risks associated with crumbling bridges, 66 road agencies expect to further reduce service levels in 2010. These cuts are on top of those made in prior years to the same services. Which services are being targeted most often? Cuts in road maintenance and construction are anticipated in 64 counties; 62 counties anticipate reducing safety measures such as re-stripping, replacing signs and guardrail; and 53 anticipate reducing roadside brush/vegetation control activities.

Your job may be impacted. Seventy-five counties reported eliminating positions, or keeping open positions unfilled due to the lack of funding. Another seven counties anticipate further reductions in 2010. Additionally, many counties have reduced or eliminated summer help. Without substantial increases in funding, the situation is quite likely to worsen.

WITHOUT A FUNDING INCREASE, ROAD COMMISSION MTF DOLLARS ARE EXPECTED TO DECREASE BY ANOTHER 3% FOR FISCAL YEAR 2010-11

2010 DIRECTORY DISTRIBUTION TO BRING CHANGES

CRAM is modifying the manner in which Directories are distributed beginning with the 2010 Directory. These changes are part of an effort to reduce the cost associated with packaging and mailing copies and they come in light of recent changes in the rules and rate structures of the United States Postal Service.

Road commission offices will be mailed copies for their commissioners. Please make certain that your commissioners receive their copy in a timely manner. We will provide notice in the Legislative Update the week before mailing, as well as the week after, to remind commissioners and offices of this change.

In some cases, we will also be adjusting the number of copies mailed to road commission offices, Associate Members, and related agencies. A range of standardized quantities will be mailed and in some cases this may mean that your office will receive slightly more copies than you have in the past (in addition to the increased number to reflect the inclusion of commissioners in office mailings).

If you have any questions, or if you wish to adjust the number of copies your office receives, please contact Tom at the CRAM Office, teldred@localroads.net or 517.482.1189 ext. 10, as soon as possible.

2009 DIRECTORY CHANGES

CLARE	John Krchmar, Superintendent, replaces Richard L. Garver
GLADWIN	New e-mail address is info@gladwinroads.com
GOGEBIC	Roy T. Minkin, Commissioner, E13724 State Line Rd., Mareniso 49947, replaces Richard A. Bouvette
HOUGHTON	Kim Sohlden new extension is 13
INGHAM	James M. Benjamin, Director of Operations, replaces James L. Charles
LAKE	Jay Syrewicze, Superintendent, replaces Gary Truxton
MARQUETE	New Web site is www.co.marquette.mi.us/departments/road_commission/index.htm
OAKLAND	Pat Wierzbicki, Dep. Secretary/Clerk, replaces Deborah Mathews
SHIAWASSEE	Stephen A. Zemcik new phone number is 517.490.0250
WEXFORD	Delete P.O. Box

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Add:	Kubota of West Michigan LLC , 430 - 100th St. SW, Byron Center MI 49315, ph. 616.877.0800
Change:	Highway Maintenance & Construction new phone number is 734.591.7710 Rowe Incorporated becomes ROWE Professional Services Company VIP Truck Center , 39300 Schoolcraft Rd., Livonia MI 48150

"Sometimes when we are generous in small, barely detectable ways it can change someone else's life forever."

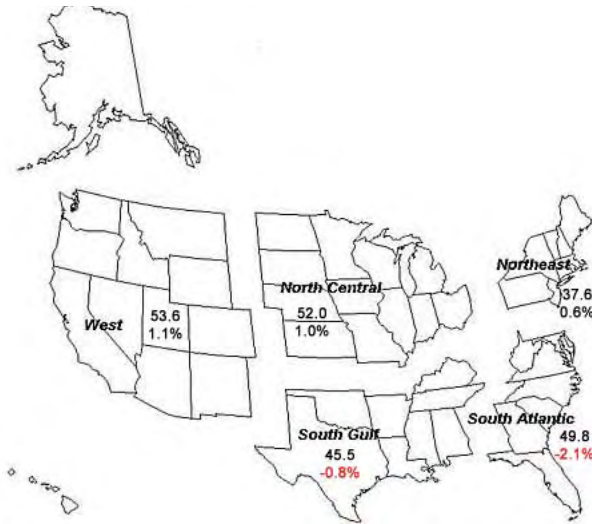
~Margaret Cho

DECEMBER 2009 TRAFFIC VOLUME TRENDS HOLD STEADY

For the first time in several months, FHWA released traffic volume numbers that are not substantially negative. Some highlights of the numbers are:

- Travel on all roads and streets changed by 0.0% (-0.1 billion vehicle miles) for December 2009 as compared with December 2008.
- Travel for the month is estimated to be 238.5 billion vehicle miles.
- Cumulative Travel for 2009 changed by 0.2% (6.6 billion vehicle miles).
- Cumulative estimate for the year is 2,932.4 billion vehicle miles of travel.

Below is a map of traffic volumes by region, for more information visit www.fhwa.gov



WINTER NOTE

With winter upon us, we would like to take a moment to remind you that the section of law that prohibits the piling of snow onto a roadway or in such a way as to obstruct the line of sight is MCL 257.677a. Complete text of this section can be found online by searching for the MCL section number at:

www.michiganlegislature.org.

LTAP ANNOUNCES 2010 PASER TRAINING SCHEDULE

Web Sessions -For new raters, or others that did not actively rate in 2008 or 2009:

March 11 1:00 PM

April 8 1:00 PM

Classroom Sessions

March 16

Kalamazoo CRC, Kalamazoo

March 17

Genoa Woods Conf. Center, Brighton, MI

March 18

Horizon's Conference Center, Saginaw

April 13

Knights of Columbus Hall, Gaylord

April 14

Delta CRC, Escanaba

April 15

Country Village Banquet & Conf. Center, Ishpeming

Complete training information can be found at:
http://www.michiganltap.org/workshop/2010_PASER.html

For more information or to register
call LTAP @ (906) 487-2102

MIS/CRAM

With fiscal year 2010 under way for many road commissions, it is time to remind everyone of the need to add your county's data to the MIS/CRAM system. A few road commissions have yet to enter the data for 2008 and 2007. Please do so at your earliest convenience. Those counties with 2009 data outstanding will be listed in next July's CRAM News. Thank you to those who have entered your data in a timely manner.



THE ROAD AHEAD



March

9-11 CRAM Highway Conference
Causeway Bay Hotel, Lansing

April

11-13 Commissioners' Seminar
Holiday Inn West Bay, Traverse City

25-29 NACE Annual Conference
Fort Worth, TX

May

3 37th Senatorial District Council
Audie's Restaurant, Mackinaw City

6 Great Lakes Highway Council
Baraga Lakeside Inn, Baraga

8 NMARC Skeet Shoot
Cheboygan Sportsman Club, Cheboygan

18-20 Finance and Human Resource Bus. Seminar
Holiday Inn of Marquette, Marquette

June

16-17 UPRBA Summer Meeting
Keweenaw Mountain Lodge, Copper Harbor

September

8-10 NMARC Annual Conference
Shanty Creek Resort, Bellaire

29- Oct. 1 SAM Annual Conference
Kewadin Hotel & Conv. Ctr.,
Sault Ste. Marie

December

6-8 ASMRC Annual Conference
Soaring Eagle, Mt. Pleasant

To post job openings or to include other items in CRAM News, contact Tom Eldred at the CRAM Office. Openings/information should be sent electronically to teldred@localroads.net no later than Wednesday of the last full week of the month before publication (i.e., openings to be included in the 4-2-10 edition would be due not later than 3-24-10).

CRASIF/MCRCSIP JOINT SAFETY WORKSHOPS

ALL Road Commission Managers, Employees and Commissioners are invited, and encouraged, to attend a Safety Workshop presented by CRASIF and MCRCSIP Loss Control Departments.

April 6 Big Rapids Dept. of Public Safety, Big Rapids
April 7 Ramada Inn, Grayling
April 27 Bavarian Inn, Frankenmuth
April 28 Causeway Bay Hotel, Lansing
April 29 Kalamazoo County Road Commission, Kalamazoo
May 3 Audie's Inn, Mackinaw City
May 4 Delta County Road Commission, Escanaba
May 5 Ojibwa Resort, Baraga

Please support a safer workplace. Look for registration forms and more information in the weeks ahead. Check the MCRCSIP Web site (www.mcrcsip.org) for a link to online registration form or call the MCRCSIP Office, 517.482.9166.