

June 5th 2012 PNS Open Meeting

Agency Representatives: Mike Miller, Justun Juelfs, John Buchanan, Greg Selstead, John Cullen, Monty Mills, Ron Wright, Tom Haines, Dan Bryant

Vendor Representatives: James Hibbs, Dave Wilkening, Greg Leist, Mike Bennett, Greg Swain, Kyle Brown, Jason Bagley, Tim England, Max Smith, Jim Hand, Mike Kadas, Josh Trujillo, Jerold Vincent, Lynn James, Craig Prete, Stan Binczewski.

Introductions:

Review of old minutes: December 13-15, 2010

- Establish toxicity and friction limits
- Phosphorus limits in Spokane, WA – unrealistic limits? Led by the City of Spokane could conflict with the acceptability of the current drinking water supply
- James Morin new environmental representative.
- PNS/CR partnership
- Personnel changes
- How to keep PNS identity – How to formalize PNS is it necessary.

Discussion of the PNS/APWA conference:

- Positive feedback about the conference in general. The vendors appreciated combining the two conferences into to one. This reduced time and expense of attending both conferences.

Discussion of the pooled fund inhibitor study:

- Research has concluded and will be posted to the PNS website.

Clear Roads/PNS Partnership:

- History of the PNS organization
- Conference every two years skipped a year and combined with APWA
- PNS future in question after the conclusion of the pooled fund corrosion inhibitor research.
- Clear Roads purpose defined as an ongoing pooled fund research project aimed at rigorous testing of winter maintenance materials, equipment and methods for use by highway maintenance crews.
- Took several years to figure out the partnership would look.
- 4 out of 5 states joined CR. Oregon is still at large.
- PNS was the top rated proposal during the March 2012 CR meeting.
- Moving ahead
 - PNS Website management is currently being competitively bid.
 - Use of CR funds (rules)
 - PNS conference
 - PNS meetings
 - Vendor interface has been very valuable.
 - Is there a process for creating a new category?

- Experimental category then develop category
- What's going on with regards to CR states and corrosion? Wilkening.
 - Cost Benefit for corrosion inhibition could justify its continued use.
 - Peer exchange indicated that corrosion to equipment and infrastructure was number 2 concern.
- Any changes on the PNS QPL process? Greg Leist
 - No changes to get products listed, although we are exploring a potential expiration of products to keep the QPL current.
 - May implement best buy for inhibitor categories.
- Bring additional Clear Roads members to PNS meetings to see value of the Vendor Interface.
- PNS budget discussion
- PNS Conference
 - Sometimes feels like a duplication of efforts.
 - Value in combining with other conferences.
 - Have to have enough attendees to make it worthwhile.

QPL Status:

- Review current list and what is currently marketed.
- States validating products through ongoing compliance testing will qualify for QPL update.
- PNS will recommend that Clear Road states use qualified products rather than submit info saying they meet the current specifications.
- How to deal with inhibitor submitted by third party.
 - Will have to submit each product independently for QPL consideration .

State Updates:

- OR
 - We are in the process of re-bidding the deicer contract this spring. Would like to have a contract for magnesium chloride deicer, and another contract for "cold weather modified" magnesium chloride deicer. Maintenance yards could then order the type of product they need, based on local climate conditions, time of the winter season (in areas with a large temperature variation), and historical needs.
 - We are also going to re-bid the deicer testing contract.
 - Two locations on US 95 in far southeastern Oregon will be participating in a salt pilot project, testing the effectiveness of sodium chloride (PNS Category 8B) material, when conditions warrant. This will be a 5 year study on the ION highway.

- Contract updates
 - Renewing Cat 1 contract in all divisions with the exception of Missoula
 - Considering bidding Cat 1 and Cat 9 in the Missoula Division and letting the products compete, will determine the appropriate performance factor to evaluate the bid
 - Rebidding salt brine inhibitor for next season
 - Starting the second year of a three year Cat 8 contract
 - Minimal anticipated usage of Cat 4 b product, not enough to justify a contract.
- 5 year review of MT winter maintenance material usage
 - Trend is showing a reduction in sand usage and an increase in solid salt usage as well as a reduction in MgCl₂ brine usage and increase in NaCl brine usage.
- 5 year review of the winter maintenance costs.
 - Fiscal year 2011 was a record year for MT with approximately 25 million spent on winter maintenance.
- Brief update on the struggle of recruitment and retention of qualified employees due to the influx of higher paying oil field jobs in North Dakota.

WA

- Sand decline in the past, now it's on the increase.
- Trying to use chemical to keep road bare. At times it was not reasonable. Using more salt/sand when it makes sense.
- Construction cycle peaking. Will lose some staff due to reduction in workload.
- Pressure to outsource to private sector.
- Moving into maintenance and preservation organization.
- 70 % AVL GPS equipped.
- Promoting slurry heavily.
- Moving away from brine in Western WA. Going back to MgCl₂ and CaCl₂. Using brine at twice the rate due to dilution.
- Renewing material contracts for two years. Will rebid in 2014.

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- Renewing current contracts.
- Salt brine with straight salt in districts except 2 and 3.
- Testing brine with Boost good feedback from operators so far. RWIS doesn't show that information.
- Restructuring, no more than 5 levels of supervision.
- Hired additional lab techs.
- Trying to eliminate sand due to environmental considerations.
- Mountain area's still using sand but exploring higher salt content.
- Span of control minimum of 5 people.
- Extra lanes added but no staff to cover.
- No furlough days, justify each vacancy.
- Freeze for hiring currently.

- Winter Maintenance Matrix
 - Creating a flow chart

Future Clear Roads Research:

- Toxicity limits currently in progress
 - Tied to dilution rate of the product
 - 1.5 year for completion
- Revisiting application guidelines TE – 28