

TGCC

The North/South Appalachian Highway Project

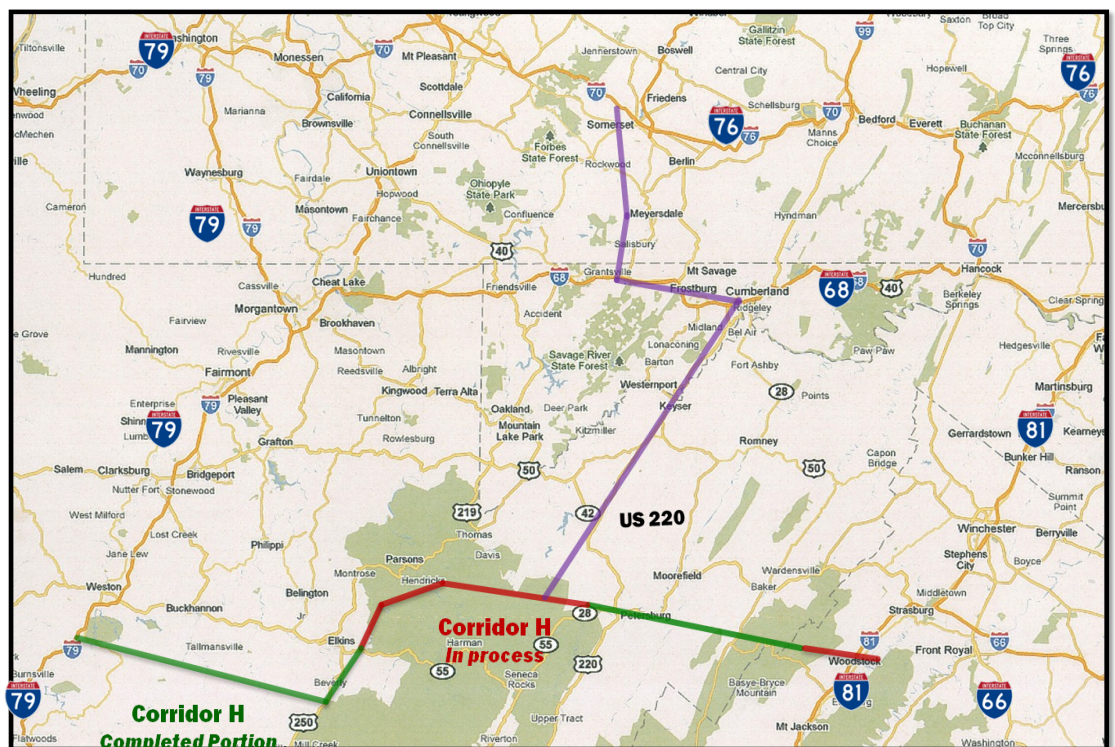
Phase 1 Final Report

"This has been the most fascinating project in my career. It's not just another road project. It's an economic opportunity project with unprecedented job creation value that has been substantiated by not one but TWO feasibility studies. And it is not just a road, but a commercial corridor traversing multiple states in Appalachia. Above all, this project—and the success we have had in championing it—represent what can be achieved if people choose to work together for the common good. The North/South Appalachian Highway is the poster child project of cooperation and the relentless pursuit of a goal designed to inspire economic vitality."

-Colleen T. Peterson

The North/South Appalachian Highway Coalition's Coordinators, Colleen Peterson and David Moe, created a nine-strategy action plan beginning in September 2011. The priorities are slated to conclude in December 2012.

In this issue of the *Coalition Newsletter*, we have outlined the Phase 1 Final Report, which covered September 2011—February 2012.



The North/South Appalachian Highway Project

Strategy 1—Educate elected leaders and appropriate government agencies, organizations &/or commissions regarding the economic value of the North/South Appalachian Highway.

1) Appropriate members of Congress, including House & Senate members representing MD, PA and WV and key Committee & Subcommittee members.

- Effectively “educated” all of the above elected and administrative officials. As a result, the corrective action required on the “toll credit” legislation is included in both the House & Senate versions of the transportation re-authorization legislation now pending. The legislation is pending in both Houses of Congress and both are being challenged with non-germane amendments.
- Neither the House or Senate bills have passed the review process from the Congressional Budget Office; each has been informed that the revenue source identified is insufficient. US Senator Tom Coeburn (R-OK) suggests raising the gas tax by 6 cents a gallon for the Senate’s re-authorization bill.
- The current version of the House bill would renew the Appalachian Development Highway System (ADHS) for five years at \$470 million per year. It would also permit the use of toll credits to satisfy the state match requirement. ADHS funds could continue to be used for access roads.
- Congress will need to resolve their differences into a single bill that can be passed by March 31st or pass another continuing resolution.

2) Appropriate representatives of the state departments of transportation in MD, PA and WV.

- January 12, Marvin Murphy, WVDOT Engineer in Charleston
- January 25, Melinda Peters—Administrator of the Maryland State Highway Administration in Annapolis
- January 25, Western Maryland Delegation in Annapolis
- February 2, Secretary Barry Schoch, PennDOT in Somerset

3) Appropriate state elected officials in MD, PA & WV, including a targeted focus on those individuals representing Allegany, Garrett, Mineral and Somerset Counties.

- January 12, PA State elected officials in Somerset County, including Senator Wozniak
- January 12, Mineral County Day in Charleston, WV
- January 25 & 26, PACE Reception in Annapolis MD
 - *Maryland Lieutenant Governor, Anthony Brown, cited the N/S Highway as the priority transportation project during his keynote remarks at the PACE breakfast. At the same breakfast, Senator Ben Cardin (MD) echoed these comments and talked about the needed corrective toll credit language in the next federal transportation bill.*

4) Appropriate local elected officials representing Allegany, Garrett, Mineral and Somerset counties and, as needed, local planning &/or development commissions.

- Seeking updated resolutions from the County Commissioners representing Allegany, Cambria, Garrett, Mineral and Somerset counties. To date (2/29/12), we have received updates from: Allegany, Cambria and Somerset Counties.
- Added Cambria County as a target community; met with the newly elected Cambria County Commissioners and secured a letter of support from them to PennDOT Secretary regarding this project.

Sub-strategy 1-A: Provide education on the current prohibition of using toll credits as a state match for ADHS projects

Sub-strategy 1-B: Prioritize the N/S Highway project in each affected county—it is now the #1 transportation priority in Allegany, Garrett, Mineral, Cambria and Somerset Counties.

Strategy 2—Update 2001 Feasibility Study: **DONE**

Strategy 3—Develop comparative economic impact analysis of similar N-S/E-W highway systems (I-81 & I-70 in Hagerstown and I-79 & I-68 in Morgantown)

- Received notice from FSU that they did not receive the grant to fund a comparative economic impact study; **will pursue in 2012**

Strategy 4—Monitor Draft Environmental Impact Study (DEIS) process in MD & WV

- Public workshops were held on September 13 in West Virginia and September 14 in Maryland; provided formal testimony at the September 14 public session

- Both Maryland DOT/ SHA & WVDOT Department of Highways submitted their Tier One (DEIS) to the FHWA in February 2011. FHWA approved that document in June 2011. Both agencies conducted public workshops & hearings regarding that document in September 2011. Additional public input meetings were held in Mexico Farms (MD) & Short Gap (WV) regarding Corridor “C”. Once both DOT’s have considered & processed those comments they anticipate identifying a Preferred Corridor(s) in the spring of 2012. Preparation of a final Tier One EIS in the fall of 2012, with location & design approval from FHWA in the spring of 2013. Then, if funding is available, the Tier Two process will move forward.

Strategy 5—Continue to build & inform the Coalition

- Organized the 2nd Annual N/S Appalachian Highway Coalition, held on October 28 in Meyersdale, PA, featuring project status updates by transportation representatives from MD, PA & WV.
- Added 6 Coalition members, including several from Cambria County as a new penetration area. Coalition currently has 165 members representing over 26,631 employees.
- Provided project update at the December 8 *Issues in Economic Development Series*, sponsored by the Somerset County Economic Development Council.
- Provided project update to the Cambria County Chamber of Commerce on January 17, 2012, resulting in endorsement from the Chamber to advocate for 219.

Strategy 6—Continue media & awareness campaign

- Met with the editorial board of the Johnstown Tribune in January & briefed them on the status of the project, including our focus on the corrective toll credit language in the next federal transportation bill. Based on this meeting and at the urging of the editorial board, Linda Thomson a meeting with the Greater Johnson Chamber of Commerce.
- TGCC continues to maintain an inventory of news stories on this project, which will have a prominent place on the website.
- Development of the website has been postponed until March. Development of the website with technical advice provided by the Garrett County Department of Information Technology
- 200 + news stories have been logged since TGCC adopted this as their priority project in 2009

Strategy 7—Develop appropriate relationship & coordination with other similar organizations, including Continental 1, I-81 Coalition and Route 50 Association (WV), and critical agencies (FHWA).

- A strong partnership has been developed with Continental 1, providing expansion of our efforts into New York

Strategy 8—Ensure Coalition members receive progress updates on the project

- Project update will be given at TGCC membership meeting on March 1, 2012 via Project Coordinators Colleen Peterson & David Moe



From left to right (front row): David Moe, Delegate LeRoy Myers, Melinda Peters (SHA), Commissioner Gregan Crawford (Garrett County), Commissioner Bill Valentine (Allegheny County), Colleen Peterson; (back row): Delegate Wendell Beitzel, Commissioner Mike McKay (Allegheny County), Doug Simmons (SHA), Delegate Kevin Kelly, Senator George Edwards - in Annapolis, January 2012

Strategy 9—Develop a transition plan that considers the best opportunity for this project to be completed

- Phase II, March—December 2012, to be reviewed and discussed by the Core Work Group and solicitation of support for Phase II to be in place by March 1. An allocation for Phase II has been secured from TGCC.



TGCC’s updated display, which was taken to Mineral County Day and PACE.

North/South Appalachian Highway Coalition

71 Baltimore Street, 2nd Floor
Cumberland, Maryland 21502

Phone: 301-722-0090
Fax: 301-722-0091
Email: dave.mojack@gmail.com



N/S Highway Core Work Group

Julianna Albowicz

Senator Barbara Mikulski's Office—julianna_albowicz@mikulski.senate.gov/301-797-2826

Ron Aldom

Somerset County Chamber of Commerce—raldom@somersetcountychamber.com/814-445-6431

Mallie Combs-Snider

Hardy County Rural Development Authority—mjcombs@hardynet.com/304-530-3047

G. Henry Cook

Somerset Trust Company—ghenrycook@somersettrust.com/814-443-9200

Matt Diaz

Allegany County Economic Development—mdiaz@allconet.org/301-777-5967

John Frick, Jr.

Senator Patrick Toomey's Office—John_Frick@toomey.senate.gov/814-266-5970

Commissioner Bob Gatto

Garrett County—rgatto@garrettcountry.org/301-334-8970

Jim Hinebaugh

Garrett County Economic Development—jimhinebaugh@garrettcountry.org/301-334-1921

Robert Johnson

Southwest Office of the Governor (PA) - rjohnson@state.pa.us/412-565-5700

Chris Koop

Congressman Mark Critz's (PA) Office—814-533-6626

Commissioner Janice LaRue

Mineral County—304-788-5921/janicelarue46@yahoo.com

Kim Leonard

Aircon Engineering—kim.leonard@airconeng.com/301-722-2269

Commissioner Mike McKay

Allegany County (President)—Commissioner.McKay@allconet.org /301-777-5912

Glenn Miller

VCS Group—gem@vcsgroup.net/814-445-4943

Chris Miltenberger

ATK—Chris.Miltenberger@ATK.com/304-726-5057

Mona Ridder

Mineral County Development Authority—info@wv-mcda.com/304-788-2233

Jeff Silka

Somerset County Economic Development—jsilka@scedc.net/814-445-9655

Ed Silvetti

Southern Alleghenies Planning & Development Commission—silvetti@sapdc.org/814-949-6513

Dr. Wayne Spiggle

Mineral County representative—wspiggle@mac.com/304-726-4868

Anne Stich

Southern Alleghenies Planning & Development Commission—astich@sapdc.org/814-949-6511

Robin Summerfield

Senator Cardin's Office—robin_summerfield@cardin.senate.gov/301-777-2957

Linda Thomson

JARI—lthomson@jari.com /814-535-8675 x110

Commissioner Pamela Tokar-Ickes

Somerset County (Secretary) - pti@co.somerset.pa.us/814-445-1400

Commissioner John Vatajuk

Somerset County (Chair)—vatajukj@co.somerset.pa.us/814-445-1400

STAFF

David Moe, Project Coordinator
dave.mojack@gmail.com/301-616-3448

Brenda Smith, TGCC Executive Director
bsmith@greatercc.org/301-722-0090

Juli McCoy, TGCC Assistant Director
jmccoy@greatercc.org/301-722-0090