

Study to Develop Method for Collecting Demand-Response Service Data

SURTC is launching a new project to collect better data on national demand-response transit coverage. Demand-response transit is a major source of mobility for older adults and people with disabilities in urban and rural areas, but current data collection efforts provide little information about actual coverage and level of service.

Lack of quality data presents challenges for transportation planners attempting to identify gaps in service coverage or unmet needs.

SURTC researchers Ranjit Godavarthy, Jeremy Mattson, and Del Peterson will identify data needs and develop a method for assessing national demand-response level of service. The study will examine methods for collecting information about



service area, frequency, and eligibility.

The method proposed in the study will provide more detailed service data than is currently available and in a format that can be visualized geographically using mapping tools. These data can be combined with

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Recent highlights from the SURTC Blog:

- VA Grants for Transportation in Rural Areas
- 2013 SURTC Research Digest
- Webinar: Methods for Forecasting Demand and Quantifying Need for Rural Passenger Transportation

Visit our blog at:
blog.surtc.org

Editors: Jeremy Mattson and Tom Jirik



www.surtc.org

Rural Transit Fact Book and Research Digest Published

SURTC has published its 2013 editions of the *Rural Transit Fact Book* and the *SURTC Research Digest*. Both can be downloaded at www.surtc.org/resources.

The *Rural Transit Fact Book* serves as a national resource for statistics and information on rural transit in America. It presents agency-level data from the Rural National Transit Database (NTD) and rural demographic and travel data from the American



Jeremy Mattson



Community Survey and the National Household Travel Survey.

The *SURTC Research Digest* provides articles discussing recently

completed research projects. The articles are non-technical summaries of the full studies.

Both reports can be viewed and downloaded from the SURTC website, and hard copies of the *Rural Transit Fact Book* are also available. For more information about these publications or to request a hard copy of the *Fact Book*, contact Jeremy Mattson at jeremy.w.mattson@ndsu.edu.

Message from the Director

Often summer is filled with vacation and relaxed schedules; however, that rarely happens at SURTC. We remain busy conducting research, developing and delivering trainings, and working with students. New projects begin, new academic courses are under development, and students are progressing. SURTC continues to progress as well. Beginning January 2014, we will share information primarily electronically. This is the next step in a process that began years ago with the launch of our web page shortly after SURTC was founded. We want to continue to be of service to you, so please continue to visit our website www.surtc.org and register to receive notices and information electronically if you do not already receive electronic notices from us. As always, thanks for reading.



Jill Hough

Ethics and Academics Course Under Development

Beginning Spring Semester 2014, Dr. Jill Hough will teach a one-credit semester long course on ethics and academic conduct for NDSU graduate students in the transportation program. The course will introduce students to ethical dilemmas they may face during their academic training as well as predicaments they may face in the workplace. The course will include how to identify such quandaries and the tools needed to contend with ethical problems. Through readings and case studies, students will foster an understanding of professional ethics. One outcome of the course is for students to establish their own personal ethical standards. The course is being funded by the Mountain-Plains Consortium at North Dakota State University.

SURTC Training Activities

SURTC continues to travel the country providing training courses to a variety of audiences.

In May, Keven Anderson, coordinator of training and outreach, and Al Abeson traveled to Truckee, CA, to present a course on *Limited English Proficiency* for the California



Keven Anderson

Association for Coordinated Transportation spring conference. Anderson also presented *Capital Asset Management* at this conference and again in Austin, TX, for the Texas DOT.

Anderson and Dr. Jill Hough conducted workshops at the Center for Urban Transportation Research in Tampa, FL, in June. Anderson's workshop was titled *Civil Rights and Title VI Training*, while Hough presented *How to Avoid Common Pitfalls in Writing and Choosing Your*

Attitude: Staying Positive Even in a Negative Environment.

Also in June, Dr. Jim Miller presented *Dollars and Sense* for the New Mexico Passenger Transportation Association in Santa Fe, NM.



Jim Miller

Anderson traveled to Casper, WY, in July to conduct a course titled *Financial Management for Transit Operators* for the Wyoming Transit Association.

SURTC is conducting two *Advanced Transit Management* courses this summer. Hough and Anderson presented this three-day course in Anchorage, AK, in July and will be conducting it in Dallas, TX, in August.

Contact Anderson regarding SURTC training at 701-231-8231 or keven.anderson@ndsu.edu.

Demand Response

(FROM PAGE 1)



Ranjit Godavarthy

Census data to identify geographic areas where service is not adequately meeting the demand.

SURTC researchers will test the data-collection method at a statewide level for

two different states by collecting information from all demand-response operators in these states.

The goal of the effort is to provide transit agencies, MPOs, and state DOTs with data that can be used to improve planning of demand-response service.

The U.S. DOT is funding the project

through the University Transportation Centers program. SURTC will begin the project this Fall and complete it by early 2015.

For more details about the project, contact Ranjit Godavarthy at ranjitprasad.godavar@ndsu.edu.

SURTC Studying Veteran Transportation

A SURTC study is addressing the rapidly growing need for more veteran transportation options. Many wounded veterans require mobility assistance for medical, employment, and life-essential activities.

SURTC is currently conducting surveys to gain a better understanding of when and where veterans are traveling and for what purpose. The lengths of trips along

with their frequency are also being considered. Based on survey findings, researchers will develop a simulation model to determine the most efficient and feasible transportation options available for veterans and



Del Peterson

their families. The costs associated with different transportation options will be estimated, and all available costs will be considered. Findings will allow both veterans and transportation providers to make better informed decisions regarding existing transportation options.

For more details about the project, contact Del Peterson at del.peterson@ndsu.edu



MATBUS in Fargo, ND, recently unveiled four new state-of-the-art hybrid buses. These 40-foot buses were on display at the "Buses in Black Ties" event May 23 in downtown Fargo.

Center for American Progress Roundtable

The Center for American Progress and The Leadership Conference Education Fund hosted a roundtable addressing "The High Cost of Getting Around" in Washington, DC, on June 20. Jill Hough participated in the event and shared SURTC's rural and small urban expertise in addressing barriers to transportation access.

Participants at the roundtable discussed how critical accessible and affordable transportation is to fighting poverty – through public or private means – as it connects low-income populations to key services and opportunities across geographic boundaries. The Center for American Progress and the Leadership Conference Education Fund are developing a report on transportation access and cost for Congress.

Mielke to Provide Administrative Support to UGPTI Director

Jon Mielke is transitioning to a new role with the Upper Great Plains Transportation Institute (UGPTI), reducing the amount of time he will devote to SURTC. Jon has worked with SURTC for more than nine years conducting research and providing input on various transit projects. He has played a key role in the coordination studies for North Dakota transit providers as well as tribal transit projects.



Jon Mielke

SURTC and we will miss his interaction with us on a regular basis" stated Jill Hough, SURTC director. However, Jon will continue to work with UGPTI on a part-time basis. He will reduce his hours beginning September 1 to half-time.

At UGPTI, Jon will provide administrative support for the UGPTI director in communicating with the advisory council, legislative committees, and clients. Jon will also coordinate UGPTI's various programs and efforts in tribal transportation and outreach. Jon will continue to assist SURTC on various projects as opportunities are presented.

"Jon made positive contributions and was an excellent team player with

Brett Korporaal Completes Degree, Begins Career



Brett Korporaal

SURTC graduate student research assistant Brett Korporaal completed his master's in transportation and urban systems in June 2013. Brett's master's paper explored the mobility

needs and public transportation options in the "oil patch" area of Williston, ND. Korporaal was hired by Kittelson & Associates, a consulting firm where he interned last summer. He returned to his native state of California to begin work for Kittelson & Associates this summer. At SURTC Korporaal assisted with studies and developed an expertise in GIS. We miss Brett and wish him the best.

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As of January 2014, you'll have to be connected to be connected to SURTC. We will discontinue our current newsletter and rely on our blog for providing information about our research, training, education, and events, as well as other SURTC news and important industry news and information.

If you're not already receiving this newsletter electronically, go to www.surtc.org and click on JOIN OUR E-MAIL LIST. By joining our email list, our blog articles will be sent directly to your email.

You can also read our articles at www.surtc.org or blog.surtc.org, and an RSS feed of our blog posts is also available.

Those who currently receive our newsletter electronically will continue to receive information from us through email. However, instead of receiving a quarterly newsletter, you will receive individual articles as we post them.



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