

WISCONSIN MINNESOTA COLLABORATION REPORT

MARCH 31, 2009

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DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION

Department of Administration

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES:

I. INTRODUCTION

In the area of state government information technology (IT), Wisconsin and Minnesota share a similar vision. Both are striving to create an economical, reliable shared layer of information technology across the boundaries and divisions of government. This equally held vision permits and supports a new partnership between the states to maximize taxpayer resources and improve IT infrastructure and services.

Information Technology Ideas Inventory

A. Primary Ideas

Procurement of Information Technology

Project Description: The Minnesota Office of Enterprise Technology (OET) does extensive work via its IT Standards and Resource Management (ISRM) program towards IT hardware and software standards setting and combined procurement activities. The ISRM program is a component of and is conducted through the Minnesota Department of Administration's Cooperative Purchasing Venture (CPV).

The current ISRM program yields aggressive pricing for over 80 standard products by using high volume to negotiate with vendors. Program participation is voluntary for all government entities. The State of Wisconsin could become a participant of this program and benefit from the low prices negotiated.

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits:

- Wisconsin: The cost is minimal and benefit is immediate to leverage Minnesota's ISRM program pricing and terms on existing contracts.
- Minnesota: The cost is minimal and the benefit is tangible since Wisconsin's participation would increase the program's volume. High volume is a key factor in successfully negotiating current and future prices with vendors. Under the current program, Minnesota is projecting cost savings of \$150 million over a five-year time period that began in 2005. With additional Wisconsin volume, the savings would most likely exceed this amount.

Possible Barriers to Implementation:

- Wisconsin: None known.
- Minnesota: None known. Most current program participants are entities outside Minnesota's executive branch.

Timeline for Implementation:

Possibly within three months. Wisconsin could benefit from this program almost immediately.

To date, work has already been accomplished in pursuit of an IT procurement partnership, including:

- Sharing of existing IT contracts and comparison of terms.
- Comparison of hardware pricing for individual items that Wisconsin was interested in benchmarking.

- Registering Wisconsin into the Minnesota program.

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Mainframe Disaster Recovery

Project Description:

There is an opportunity for the states of Minnesota and Wisconsin to improve efficiency and to share costs by providing each other a mainframe and site location for biannual disaster recovery exercises, as well as a recovery site in the event of a disaster. Each state could offer the other a mainframe recovery center that meets the industry's best practice for a recovery location that is more than 25 miles away from the production data center. A more comprehensive analysis is recommended to determine the feasibility of such a partnership and to maximize the opportunity.

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits:

- Wisconsin:
 1. Wisconsin would achieve greater geographic separation of its primary and disaster recovery locations and eliminate the reliance on the same utility providers for critical facility services.
 2. Provides Wisconsin with a more resilient and reliable disaster recovery facility and the ability to eliminate a substantial portion of its existing aged facility.
 3. Enables Wisconsin to fully recover its full mainframe production capacity.
- Minnesota: A shared approach for each state to provide mainframe disaster recovery resources to each other provides the following opportunities:
 1. Recovery costs could be shared between the states and money saved, including the possibility of avoiding a contract with an outside vendor to provide a site for disaster recovery testing. Minnesota currently pays a commercial vendor \$400,000 annually for the site location and could avoid these costs when the contract expires at the end of 2011 or possibly sooner.
 2. Assuming that only the two states participate, there is potential for Minnesota to have reduced resource contention in an actual disaster. Minnesota currently contracts for "hot site" services with a commercial vendor that serves multiple customers. Use of the vendor's recovery facilities is on a first-come, first-served basis.

3. Minnesota could improve its mainframe recovery efficiency by having certain mainframe technologies running and maintained at the Wisconsin site. This could potentially save eight to ten hours in both recovery exercises and during an actual disaster thus reducing the RTO (Recovery Time Objective) by the same number of hours.

Possible Barriers to Implementation:

- Wisconsin:
 1. This proposal is based upon the assumption that fiber that is known to exist between St Paul and Madison is both available to the states and has sufficient capacity to handle the anticipated loads required. If this should prove to be inadequate, a substantial investment in fiber optics would be necessary.
 2. Each state would have to acquire or develop in-house technical expertise for each other's technology platforms to sufficiently assist technical staff during a recovery effort.
- Minnesota:
 1. Minnesota is under contract with a commercial vendor for a site to conduct disaster recovery testing. The contract expires at the end of 2011. If a Wisconsin-Minnesota mainframe disaster recovery partnership is desired prior to that time, Minnesota would have to review its ability to cancel or terminate the contract prior to the end of 2011.
 2. Each state would have to acquire or develop in-house technical expertise for each other's technology platforms to sufficiently assist technical staff during a recovery effort.
 3. Minnesota's current hot site contract provides "roll back" recovery coverage (geographically dispersed). There are two additional recovery centers available that meet Minnesota's configuration requirements that Minnesota could use should there be a regional disaster. This provides a defense in depth capability that would be lost with the two states sharing only their own facilities.

Timeline for Implementation:

A feasibility study would need to be undertaken over the next four to six months in order to analyze the total cost of ownership (TCO) of the shared sites and services and to determine the details around capacity and configurations for network, floor space, the environments and actual hardware.

Minnesota is currently preparing for its April disaster recovery exercise and is in the process of identifying needed configuration changes in hardware. An updated configuration will be provided to Wisconsin once this information is available.

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Data Center Disaster Recovery

Project Description:

Data center facilities house equipment for data processing, communication and storage. Minnesota is currently advancing an aggressive, multi-million dollar Governor's initiative to consolidate state executive branch data centers in order to strengthen the security of the state's information and systems, as well as improve efficiency and green IT. The initiative would result in a new leased primary data center space and a renovated current facility that will serve as a back-up disaster recovery site.

At the present time, Wisconsin has a high quality primary site, but lacks capacity for a comprehensive disaster recovery capability. Wisconsin is seeking a new disaster recovery site. It is possible Minnesota could offer disaster recovery site space to Wisconsin in either its new leased facility or renovated facility, assuming the Minnesota initiative is adopted by the legislature.

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits:

- Wisconsin: Wisconsin currently has a second data center that will require significant upgrades in order to serve as a backup site. Also, the geographic distance of this second center to the primary data center is not adequate in the event of a catastrophe that strikes the area. Wisconsin could save money in acquiring disaster recovery space either by exchanging space between Wisconsin and Minnesota data centers or by leasing shared space for both states to utilize. Minnesota could similarly save money by utilizing backup capacity for applications requiring geographic separation in either of the Wisconsin data centers. There is currently an opportunity to take advantage of Minnesota's plan to acquire new data center space, in that additional space could be added to the plan for Wisconsin's back-up configuration.
- Minnesota: Pending legislative approval, Minnesota will acquire new primary data center space and renovate a current facility to serve as a comprehensive disaster recovery "hot site." The marginal cost for Minnesota to serve this dual role will be significantly less than for Wisconsin to build or contract for such a disaster recovery capability; these marginal costs would be recovered by either management fees paid by Wisconsin or cost-sharing agreements between the states.

Minnesota might incur some costs in addition to its legislative initiative in order to acquire slightly larger data center space to accommodate Wisconsin's needs.

Possible Barriers to Implementation:

- Wisconsin: The partnership is dependent on the success of Minnesota's initiative at the legislature and Wisconsin's available funding to cover the management fees paid to Minnesota.
- Minnesota: The partnership is dependent on the success of Minnesota's initiative at the legislature. In addition, if Minnesota were to expand the primary facility or renovated facility, and the partnership with Wisconsin were to dissolve or decrease in scope, Minnesota could be left with unoccupied space.

Timeline for Implementation:

Assuming the Minnesota initiative is adopted by the legislature, Minnesota plans to occupy and move into new data center space at the beginning of calendar year 2010. The planning and/or movement of Wisconsin's computer and network equipment might take additional time, to be determined.

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CONCLUSION

There are a variety of opportunities for Wisconsin and Minnesota to partner together in the area of information technology. These collaborative opportunities are consistent with and will advance both states' vision for centrally-managed enterprise IT systems, while best utilizing precious taxpayer resources.

Review of Collaborative Purchasing Opportunity on Vehicle Tires

Project Description

This initiative explored the feasibility of leveraging the combined volume of Minnesota and Wisconsin's passenger vehicle, light and heavy-duty truck tires, to achieve price reductions for both states.

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits

- Both states' current tire contracts are expiring. There exists an opportunity to combine the tire volume of both states and approach the State of Utah (the lead state on the WSCA tire contract) to explore the possibility of obtaining better pricing.

Possible Barriers to Implementation

- None known at this time

Timeline for Implementation

- Participation on the WSCA contract will require signing a participating addendum. Estimated time frame for completion of this addendum is under 60 days.

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Wisconsin Department of Administration, Bureau of Procurement

Review of Minnesota/Wisconsin Ammunition Contracts

Project Description:

Evaluation/Comparison of Wisconsin Ammunition Contract #15-68004-301 and Minnesota Ammunition, Riot Control Equipment Contract #A-191(5)

Contract Comparison:

Wisconsin: **Ammunition**

- Rifle, pistol and shotgun ammo from two manufacturers: Winchester and Federal.
- Bid pricing on most frequently used types of ammo. No catalog discount for other items.
- Two vendors (\$302,000 annual spend)
- Minnesota: **Ammunition, Riot Control Munitions Equipment and Supplies**
 - 25% catalog discount for ammunition from two manufacturers: Federal and Speer.
 - Riot Control items include chemical shotgun cartridges, chemical grenades, aerosols, etc.
 - Also includes weapons and ammunition for training purposes (Simmunition brand).
 - Two vendors
 -

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits for Wisconsin:

- Wisconsin's ammunition contract is about to expire. The immediate benefit to Wisconsin from using the Minnesota Ammunition Contract would be the administrative savings realized by not conducting our own bid.
- Using MN contract would add Speer brand ammunition that is not in Wisconsin's contract.
- Wisconsin Ammunition Contract #15-68004-301 expires March 31, 2009; Minnesota's ammo contract **may** be extended thru June 30, 2012.
- Minnesota has catalog contract; broader range of ammunition available.

Possible Barriers to Implementation for Wisconsin:

- DOC has a restriction policy which states: The Department of Corrections is authorized to use only Remington, Winchester or Federal brands ammunition (Federal is the only brand that Minnesota and Wisconsin have in common.)
- The majority of Wisconsin's ammo spend (\$290,000) is for Winchester brand ammunition. Minnesota's contract currently does not carry Winchester brand ammo, however Minnesota has indicated a willingness to negotiate additional ammo brand coverage and pricing with their current contract vendors.
- If Minnesota cannot add the Winchester brand, DOC would have to switch to a different brand or Wisconsin would need to do a separate Winchester bid.
- Minnesota contract shipping policy is FOB Destination, Prepaid and add (same as Wisconsin). For heavy cases of ammo, the freight charge from Minneapolis ammunition vendor (located in Minneapolis) could be more than from Wisconsin vendors (located in Butler and Rockford, IL).
- A comparison of the six individual Federal brand ammunition cartridges that cross match between the two contracts shows that Minnesota prices currently are higher. However, leveraging both states' ammunition volume and standardizing on brands may reduce costs for both states.

Timeline for Implementation:

Estimate a matter of weeks to complete administrative tasks assuming issues surrounding the ammunition brands can be resolved.

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Wisconsin Department of Administration, Bureau of Procurement
Review of Wisconsin/Minnesota Shipping Services Contracts

Project Description:

Minnesota has a contract with Speedee Delivery for small package delivery services. Wisconsin does not have a statewide contract. However, a number of state agencies including DNR, DHS, State Lab of Hygiene and the DOR Lottery use Speedee delivery services for their agency needs. UW Madison has a contract with UPS for nationwide delivery services. A comparison of small package delivery rates was conducted to determine whether the Minnesota rates were more advantageous.

Contract Summary:

- Wisconsin/UW-Madison: Shipping Services Contract
 - Service area coverage is nationwide
 - UPS is the contractor and provides delivery services nationwide.
 - Contract is available to state agencies, UW campuses, municipalities and school districts when needed
 - Contract term: June 1, 2004 – May 31, 2007 with automatic renewal extensions to May 31, 2010 unless amended, cancelled or rebid

- Minnesota: Freight: Regional Carrier and Local Courier Services
 - Speedee Delivery services provides delivery services within the state of Minnesota only
 - Contract term: June 23, 2008 – August 31, 2009 with the option to renew up to 48 months upon agreement of both parties
 - Speedee picks up daily from 200 locations using this contract

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits:

- Speedee has verbally agreed to offer Wisconsin a regional rate structure identical to the State of Minnesota's contract.
 - An analysis was done using a First Class, one pound envelope. The results are as follows:
 - Speedee would cost \$3.38.
 - United States Postal Service's (USPS) cost is \$4.85
 - UPS's cost is \$7.66
 - Speedee's commercial weekly pickup charge per building is between \$6 - \$10; in the contract with Minnesota Speedee's government rate is \$4 per location

Possible Barriers to Implementation:

- None identified

Timeline for Implementation:

- Further analysis of contract terms and conditions and approval by DOA legal is needed. In addition, the regional rate structure needs to be finalized with Speedee. The process should be complete within 60 to 90 days.

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Department of Administration

GEOSPATIAL BACKUP AND RECOVERY SERVICE

Project Description:

The ability to map critical infrastructure locations, updated air photos, and locally derived information such as road closures and land use planning is extremely important and greatly assists emergency management professionals, first responders and law enforcement officials during any disaster response.

State Agencies require GIS to sustain a wide variety of programs. The Departments of Transportation, Natural Resources, Agriculture Trade and Consumer Protection, Health Services, Children and Families, Military Affairs, Revenue, and the Legislative Technology Service Bureau all have programs dependant on geospatial data and resources.

This project would investigate options, and implement those that can be practically implemented, for providing disaster recovery and backup services for Geographic Information Systems—including imagery, spatial vector data, and software—critical to Emergency Management operations, and state agency continuity of operations. The investigation will include reciprocal services, with each state providing backup and recovery support for the other.

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits

Wisconsin:

- Benefits:
 - According to the Wisconsin Homeland Security Council's Strategic Plan - We must ensure geospatial redundancy in the event of a catastrophic loss. A plan should be developed that includes alternate (secondary) locations that maintain both the system and geospatial capabilities. This work would meet that objective.
 - Interstate and Intrastate coordination would be aided through this service. Stakeholders in both states would benefit in the knowledge that their critical assets are protected and secure.
 - The cost of such a reciprocal service would offer substantial savings over the alternatives – Either private off-site hosting, or the construction of a facility to mimic what our respective agencies are already doing, providing geospatial delivery services.
- Costs:
 - If limited to off-site data storage, costs are likely to be minimal. If technology-based “warm site” or “hot site” options are pursued, then some investments will need to be made. Actual costs will need to be determined during the evaluation and planning stages of this initiative.

Minnesota:

- Benefits
 - Benefits are similar to Wisconsin in reducing the risk to emergency services and agency operations as a result of localized catastrophic failure.
- Costs
 - If limited to off-site data storage, costs are likely to be minimal. If technology-based “warm site” or “hot site” options are pursued, then some investments will need to be made. Actual costs will need to be determined during the evaluation and planning stages of this initiative.
 - Minnesota may need investments in storage, RDBMS, ESRI ArcGIS Server, and eSpender software to fulfill Wisconsin “warm-site” backup needs. More exact cost requirements will need to be determined.

Possible Barriers to Implementation:

- **Wisconsin:** None
- **Minnesota:** None for “cold site” backup. “Warm” or “hot site” backup will require planning and some investments in technology, which need to be determined.

Timeline for Implementation:

A “cold site” implementation can be implemented relatively quickly – probably within six months. The timeline for implementing “warm site” solutions would probably be closer to one year. Long range possibilities for a “hot site” – being an always available service environment, would require more planning, expense and staff.

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Department of Administration
Shared Interstate Geospatial Image Service Options

Project Description:

This project would investigate shared service opportunities between Minnesota and Wisconsin for the storage and reliable and high-speed access to imagery using Web Map Service (WMS) protocol standards adopted by the Open GIS Consortium.

The MN Geospatial Image Server, developed by the Land Management Information Center, supports a versatile one-stop shop that provides access to large raster (grid cell) datasets, such as air photos and scanned topographic maps that are important data for applications supported by geographic information systems (GIS). Currently, state agencies, local governments and others within Minnesota use this service extensively and report that it eliminates the need to download and store these very large files and provides faster display than using the same files on their own computer.

Several alternatives will be explored with Wisconsin for leveraging such a service. These include:

- (1) Hosting Wisconsin data in Minnesota
- (2) Helping Wisconsin implement the MN Geospatial Image Service as a part of the Wisconsin Geospatial infrastructure
- (3) Deploying the MN Geospatial Image Service in both Wisconsin and Minnesota locations as alternate sources for image services for both states – either as backups or to balance loads.

Details about the MN Geospatial Image Server are posted at:

http://www.lmic.state.mn.us/chouse/wms_image_server_description.html

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits:

Benefits to Minnesota include immediate real-time access to data across the state border with Wisconsin, which would be particularly important in the event of emergency situations. Under a negotiated cost-sharing agreement, both states may benefit through reduced costs. If states agree to deploy the MN Geospatial Image Server in both locations, with each location hosting data for both states, then both states would benefit by having access to either site, improving reliability and continuity of operations capabilities. Both states also would benefit from having immediate access to imagery needed to respond to emergencies that encompass border areas of both states.

Possible Barriers to Implementation:

Much of the data affected by these options is in the public domain, but some investment of time will be needed to investigate what would be needed to make data usable within the options presented. Investigating any transfer of technology to Wisconsin will need to examine costs, support, technical barriers and intellectual property rights. To the extent that data is encumbered by license agreements or access is limited in any way, then some work to authenticate users may also be needed.

Timeline for Implementation:

Not able to determine

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Department of Administration

ORTHOIMAGERY ACQUISITION PARTNERSHIP

Project Description

A Wisconsin / Minnesota digital orthoimagery partnership may improve the cost and quality of this resource for state and local government in both states. The Wisconsin Regional Orthophotography Consortium 2010 has made significant progress on behalf of state and local government throughout Wisconsin, plans a 2010 acquisition, and is working with state and federal agencies regarding the possible aggregation of additional supporting federal funds.

For economy of scale, WROC might be leveraged to include any portion of Minnesota. Shared coastal boundaries along the St. Croix and Mississippi Rivers could result in additional federal support for the partnership.

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits:

For both states:

- Benefits (from the WROC; refer to <http://www.ncwrpc.org/WROC/> for additional detail):
 - Cost savings – In 2005 members of the WROC consortium saw 30 – 40% cost savings.
 - Standards and data sharing – By working together we will have uniform data sets and the ability to get data from neighboring counties or municipalities.
 - Partnerships – As regional or multi-county data sets come together it makes it much more desirable for public and private partners to help share cost on projects.
- Costs: TBD per additional MN participants as above.

For Minnesota:

- Benefits: Leveraging WROC work to date could save Minnesota from repeating the effort (our understanding is that no comparable initiative is underway there).

Possible Barriers to Implementation:

- **Wisconsin:** Minnesota interests could raise new issues regarding: procurement practices, financial management, or technical requirements that would delay current work.
- **Minnesota:** The concept has only been discussed in passing with Minnesota; the Wisconsin/WROC model may not meet their state and local interests.

Timeline for Implementation

WROC is currently scheduling statewide orthoimagery flights for the spring of 2010. Investigation could begin immediately; pending WI/MN resource availability, a determination of viability should be possible within two to four months.

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Department of Administration
VEHICLE MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR

Project Description:

Wisconsin and Minnesota have discussed the possibility of participating in a joint procurement effort to acquire a vendor to manage state vehicle maintenance and repair costs.

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits:

- **Wisconsin:** Wisconsin has historically used a private vendor to provide this service. We are currently at the end of our contract creating an opportunity for potential cost savings by bidding jointly with Minnesota.
- **Minnesota:** Minnesota does not use a private vendor for this service. Minnesota may realize administrative savings and position savings by moving to this contract; however exact savings cannot be determined until the solicitation is complete.

Possible Barriers to Implementation:

- **Wisconsin:** None
- **Minnesota:** Minnesota needs to explore and resolve legal and HR issues before they can make a decision on whether or not they will participate in a joint solicitation. Until those issues are resolved, the Wisconsin development team will continue to include appropriate Minnesota staff in the development process to insure that they have input into the solicitation requirements.

Timeline for Implementation:

We anticipate the completion of the RFP and an award and a new contract by September 1, 2009.

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Department of Administration

ORACLE SOFTWARE

Project Description:

The GSA contract for Oracle Software provides for a deeper discount from list price than Wisconsin's current discount. Minnesota recently negotiated an agreement with Oracle that allows Minnesota to use the GSA contract and receive higher discounts. Minnesota started their negotiations with Oracle over a year ago. Minnesota has provided Wisconsin with a copy of their negotiated agreement with Oracle. We are using their contract as a template for Wisconsin to acquire the same discount.

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits:

- **Wisconsin:** Receive higher discounts on new purchases and maintenance costs (currently calculated at 22% of the purchase price). Annual maintenance costs are the greater portion of the Wisconsin spend with Oracle. Based on spend reports, the approximate savings on new purchases could be approximately \$130,000 a year.
- **Minnesota:** None

Possible Barriers to Implementation:

- **Wisconsin:** None.
- **Minnesota:** None

Timeline for Implementation:

- Wisconsin will re-negotiate a separate contract with Oracle Software to obtain GSA pricing as quickly as possible.

Program Contacts:

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- **Minnesota:** Not available.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, TRADE AND CONSUMER PROTECTION

Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection

INVASIVE PEST CONTROL – GYPSY MOTH AND EAB PROGRAM/PHYTOSANITARY CERTIFICATE ISSUANCE COORDINATION

Project Description

- Both states have cooperative agreements with USDA-APHIS for gypsy moth, emerald ash borer and other invasive pests. There are opportunities for sharing outreach materials and training. There are other opportunities for coordinating the issuance of phytosanitary inspections around the border region. Savings potential are modest (less than \$100,000) but coordination will increase program effectiveness.

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits

- Opportunities exist for cooperative efforts between Minnesota and Wisconsin to increase efficiency and cost effectiveness of invasive species outreach. Similarities between the two states coupled with fiscal resource scarcity justify exploration of cooperative outreach efforts. Similarities between the states include:
 - Both states are contending with many of the same invasive species issues (e.g., emerald ash borer, potato cyst nematode, gypsy moth, firewood movement, etc.);
 - Both states are protecting similar agricultural, natural and urban systems;
 - Both states are already conveying similar educational messages;
 - Both immediate and long-term savings could be realized through cooperative outreach efforts.
- Increased efficiency and cost effectiveness could be realized through cooperative product development (i.e., the thinking end of things) and product production (i.e., the printing, speaking end of things). Opportunities for increased effectiveness and cost savings include:
 - Sharing outreach message and materials between states, so resources are not wasted “re-inventing the wheel”;
 - Placing bulk orders for the printing of outreach materials or purchase of “air time” for both states;
 - Reducing duplication of effort when radio, television or printed outreach messages are distributed to areas that receive information from both states (border areas);
 - Allowing and facilitating the attendance of training sessions offered in one state by citizens, stakeholders, government employees of the other state, especially in border areas.
- Both states receive funding through cooperative agreements with the USDA Animal and Plant Inspection Service (APHIS). These cooperative agreements are unlikely to create a barrier to the success of a collaborative outreach program. In fact, USDA APHIS is considering moving toward more of a regional approach for some of the efforts it funds, so this seems to be a good fit for such a paradigm. Furthermore, other national level funding entities often look favorably upon multi-state efforts.
- There is a 60 to 80 mile corridor on either side of our shared border that could be serviced by either state to support greater efficiency and/or service in the performance of inspections. The net efficiency to our inspector network and time savings for industry would increase and benefit both the states and our producers. Both states already have the staff expertise and are using a common federal IT platform to issue certificates for nursery stock movement. Both states have seen a significant and consistent increase in the number of certificates issued annually. Cooperation between the states may provide additional program flexibility considering the resource limitations posed by state budgets.

Possible Barriers to Implementation

- No significant barriers exist to continued program coordination and joint issuance of phytosanitary certificates.

Timeline for Implementation

- State Fiscal Year 2010.

Program Contacts

- Wisconsin: Brian Kuhn – 608-224-4590
- Minnesota: Geir Friisoe – 651-201-6174

Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection

JUMP HIGH: JOINT UPPER MIDWEST PILOT TO HELP INTERSTATE GROWTH HAPPEN

Project Description

- The departments will work together to obtain nearly \$800,000 in federal funding for Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, North Dakota and South Dakota to bolster food safety measures for state-inspected meat processors. The combination of several states working together significantly increases the chances of receiving the federal funding. These states contain 25 percent of the nation's state-inspected plants. The Farm Bill language authorizing interstate meat sales includes a provision for USDA to provide assistance to states to help with the transition. This is a major priority to spur meat industry growth in specialty meats. Funds will be used to conduct plant assessments for food safety, to assist plants to plan for food safety improvements, to provide technical assistance and training including enhanced microbiological testing.
- Until recently, state-inspected meat plants could only sell their products in intrastate commerce. The 2008 Farm Bill will soon allow interstate shipment if processors meet certain conditions.
- Participants in the pilot are expected to include Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, North Dakota and South Dakota. Processors in these states constitute 25 percent of the 2,000 state-inspected meat plants in the United States.
- State-inspected plants planning to ship their products under Title V will need help interpreting and implementing new USDA Title V regulations that will soon be released. Plants will also need help in ensuring that they continue to meet the highest levels of meat product safety assurance.
- Consultants will be hired to help small state-inspected meat plants through services such as conducting food safety assessments, training, and assistance in implementing state-of-the-art meat safety assurance.
- The pilot project will provide the following services to interested state-inspected meat plants:
 - Initial Plant Assessments -- Comprehensive meat safety and regulatory assessments to determine the extent to which the plant meets Title V regulations, and has adopted best practices in meat safety;
 - Improvement Planning -- Development of improvement plans, used to identify any changes that the plant may need to make for compliance with Title V and best practices that should be adopted to achieve enhanced assurance of meat safety;
 - Technical Assistance and Training -- Training in such areas as Title V regulations, in-plant food safety control systems, using improved technology for meat safety monitoring and verification, and implementation of enhanced microbiological testing programs; and
 - On-going Consultation and Trouble-Shooting -- Assisting industry and regulatory personnel as they successfully adapt to the Title V program.

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits

The program will:

- Ease the transition of state-inspected meat and poultry plants into the Title V program;
- Allow processors access to larger markets;
- Ensure that state-inspected meat and poultry products meet the highest safety standards;
- Establish a national benchmark for other states to use to assist their state-inspected meat

- plants; and
- Enable USDA to use its resources more efficiently in implementing Title V.

Possible Barriers to Implementation

- Federal Funding must be obtained either through the appropriations process or through USDA grants.

Timeline for Implementation

- State Fiscal Years 2010 and 2011

Program Contacts

- Wisconsin: Steve Ingham – 608-224-4701
- Minnesota: Dr. Nikki Neeser – 651-201-6225

Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection

DAIRY AND FOOD INSPECTIONS/SHARING OF GIS TECHNOLOGY

Project Description

- Savings may be gained through reciprocity on milk tanker inspections, sharing software for licensing and tracking inspection, and using GIS applications to save costs in routing inspections. Some of the savings will be realized through sharing software applications and some through personnel and travel.

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits

- **Meat Inspection:** Creation of a standard meat inspection reporting system would enhance sharing of inspection tasks in the border regions of both states and result in improved efficiency of meat inspection. Use of GIS techniques could identify more efficient scheduling and cross-utilization of meat inspectors.
- Minnesota would be willing to share with Wisconsin a database system it developed for meat inspections. Minnesota has improved inspections and saved money on computer hardware costs by using this program.
- Technical staff in both state meat inspection programs could develop education, consultation, and enhanced verification programs for meat processors shipping products interstate. Savings would result from the synergy of having one group develop a program for two states rather than each state developing its own program.
- **Dairy Inspection:** Minnesota and Wisconsin personnel could share inspection and licensing of milk tankers and apply an inspection sticker that covers both states. Fee structures could be standardized and revenue could be allocated according to which state's personnel did the inspection. Joint coverage of laboratory certification, farm and plant ratings, and pasteurizer testing could be done in the border regions.
- Working together to reform the pasteurized milk ordinance in ways that allow flexibility for risk based inspection and for reduced inspection costs.
- Future opportunities may exist for Wisconsin to use Minnesota's Compliance Information System for Food, Dairy and Feed inspections. Paper-based inspection systems limit the amount of information that can be analyzed from the data captured during inspections. When completed, CIS will provide an efficient means of workflow management to increase process consistency, as well as a management solution that enables faster retrieval of documents that are generated and collected by DFID in the course of performing its functions.
- Wisconsin has ongoing department and state-wide coordination efforts to coordinate and promote the use of GIS technology. Wisconsin is investigating server GIS technology (ArcLogistics) for information delivery routing / logistics and delineating inspection territory technology for optimization of field staff work plans.
- The opportunity exists to exchange information on GIS implementation efforts.

Possible Barriers to Implementation

- State Programs must develop consistent standards and processes to be applied by both programs. Significant investment in inspection staff trained would be needed, along with software and hardware investments.

Timeline for Implementation

- State Fiscal Year 2010.

Program Contacts

- Wisconsin: Steve Ingham – 608-224-4701
Sue Buroker – 608-224-4740
- Minnesota: Dr. Nikki Neeser – 651-201-6225
Dr. Heidi Kassenborg – 651-201-6625

Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection

EMERGENCY RESPONSE COORDINATION

Project Description

- Emergency Response. Increased cooperation on emergency response benefits both states and improves our effectiveness in disaster response, planning and training. Potential cost savings are modest - less than \$25,000 - but the effort can significantly enhance our states' abilities to protect citizens from the impacts of disasters.

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits

Multi-State Partnership for Security in Agriculture: Both states are members of the Multi-state Partnership for Security in Agriculture (MSP) and as such are able to work together on projects funded by the MSP. MSP has funded training between the states, as well as providing forums for states to share experiences. Future MSP activities include risk communication and ICS training, as well as border-state exercises testing response plans.

Border-state training/exercises: Minnesota and Wisconsin (and Iowa) have participated in a tri-state training and exercise involving local emergency responders, industry, university extension agents, and other state and local officials in fall 2007. In particular, sharing ideas about more effective inclusion with local emergency responders and local emergency operations centers benefit all involved.

Border-state planning: Minnesota and Wisconsin will develop consistent plans and protocols regarding agricultural responses so that cross-border issues are minimized and response protocols are known. The MSP has already developed templates for several types of response plans and is working on a specific plan regarding movement of animals and animal products during a disease outbreak. As this plan template is finalized, each state should develop a response plan to be consistent with the template and ensure that plans are complementary.

Nuclear Power Plant Exercises and Response: Minnesota and Wisconsin will conduct joint trainings for the teams for the Prairie Island power plant, located on the Mississippi River. During the nuclear power plant exercise, the two states could coordinate on agricultural issues and be better prepared to respond to any contingency. Also, by combining training, the field sampling teams may conduct sampling more effectively.

Natural Disaster Responses: Most incidents that occur in our two states involve natural disasters. We will work together to prepare requests to the federal government for assistance; working with the federal government to share data; and developing consistent methods for assessing agricultural damages.

Listing of Technical Experts: Each state will identify key program contacts and technical experts who can be called upon by the partner agency when responding to emergencies. This listing should be shared between programs and the states to ensure both states can benefit from the other's relevant expertise.

Pandemic Planning: In the event of a pandemic or other major emergency, the two states will jointly develop a list of qualified, critical-function staff to provide assistance when one state has limited resources. This could include inspections, lab resources and response staff. In particular, the Wisconsin pandemic plan already estimates that there are several critical functions for which the state lacks adequately trained back-ups – in particular veterinarians, food inspectors and laboratory staff.

Possible Barriers to Implementation

- No significant barriers exist to continued implementation of emergency response coordination.

Timeline for Implementation

- State Fiscal Year 2010.

Program Contacts

- Wisconsin: Robin Schmidt – 608-224-5009
- Minnesota: Michael Starkey – 651-201-6286

DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Department of Children & Families
CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT – SHARED ACCESS

Project Description

The purpose of this initiative is to provide an exchange of access to the respective Minnesota and Wisconsin statewide Child Support Enforcement data systems, to facilitate handling of interstate child support cases between our two states. Approximately 12 county child support caseworkers in each state will be granted query access to the other state's system. A similar project between Wisconsin and Illinois child support programs has shown stunning success in increasing both federal incentive funding and increased child support payments to children.

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits

Minnesota and Wisconsin have about 10,000 shared cases. Collaboration between bordering states streamlines communications between our agencies and enables us to process cases more efficiently and to improve services.

In general, two-state cases are less efficient to administer. Each child support action in either state requires interstate communication and coordination. Automated or written inquiries seeking information about pending actions or status increases workload, delays case resolution, and frustrates customers.

In two-state cases, courts frequently adjourn and reschedule hearings if there is a dispute regarding recent child support payments and current balances due. Wisconsin and Minnesota caseworkers will now have the ability to review payment records and balances in the other state immediately before the hearing. Kenosha County child support workers report that having access to the Illinois system has reduced court adjournments by 90%, saving the court's time and speeding resolution of issues.

Two-state cases are frequently the subject of constituent complaints. Two-state processes take more time and coordination can be challenging for child support workers. The ability to view the other state's system will reduce customer frustration because workers will be able to provide real-time information to the customer about the other state's case activities. This is likely to reduce constituent complaints to legislators and the Governor's office.

Once the technical set-ups are complete, there is NO ongoing cost for this project. Staff from each state will train the other state's staff. Based on experience with Illinois, we expect to see a workload reduction effect of approximately \$40,000 per year on the Wisconsin side, and could potentially see a further impact of increased collections of around \$180,000, which would increase earned incentives by \$2,700.

Possible Barriers to Implementation

Our greatest concern is to ensure data confidentiality. We will need to develop formal written agreements to include measures to protect the confidentiality of all information on both systems from unauthorized access or disclosure. Because both systems are web accessible, there are no structural changes needed.

Timeline for Implementation

Implementation could occur within six months; the key factors are completion of the necessary agreements and development of security profiles.

Program Contacts

- **Wisconsin:** Susan Pfeiffer or Steve Buechner
- **Minnesota:** Ella Jensen

Department of Children & Families

COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT FOR CHILD WELFARE

Project Description

Good child welfare practice looks the same regardless of the state in which it is delivered. State borders currently present artificial barriers to effective and efficient use of resources that would improve the quality of child welfare services delivered in each state. For example, a child welfare worker in Eau Claire who needs to complete required training before assuming responsibility for children and families must now drive to Stevens Point or Milwaukee to get this training, despite the fact that similar training is available in St. Paul. A child welfare worker in MN who needs to place a child in a specialized residential setting that is only available in WI must do an onsite inspection of the facility, regardless of the fact that it is licensed and regularly inspected by WI regulatory staff. A Cooperative Agreement for Child Welfare would allow us to exchange resources and advance quality practice in child welfare that improves customer service and, ultimately, outcomes for children and families.

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits

Several initiatives in the areas of child welfare training and child welfare licensing have been identified for inclusion in a Cooperative Agreement.

Child Welfare Training Collaborative: Child welfare training provided by each state is currently not recognized by the other state, resulting in unnecessary staff travel and time away from practice as well as duplication of resources in curriculum development and delivery. The training partners in each state will assess similarities in curricula and work toward recognizing each others' training, increasing worker access to these opportunities and reducing travel and time away from direct practice. We will also identify opportunities to collaborate on curriculum development, reducing the costs of separately developing similar curricula. Finally, we will work jointly to design, develop and deliver child welfare training specific to the needs of tribal child welfare agencies in both states.

Adoption Agency Licensing: Both states license adoption agencies, and each has encountered problems with agencies that operate in both states. This initiative will close the loopholes that allow these problems to occur, increasing communication between the two states' regulators regarding agency operations and performance to allow for collaborative problem solving and better service for families in both states.

Inspection Results: This initiative will also close loopholes in agency oversight that occur when children from one state are placed across the border. The two states agree to regularly exchange findings of licensing monitoring visits to residential treatment centers that accept placements across borders, to assure the safety and well-being of children regardless of the state in which they're placed.

Children's Residential Facilities Oversight: Currently, when MN has a need to place children involved with its corrections system in private residential facilities in WI, MN statute requires an onsite inspection, regardless of the facilities' regulatory status in WI. This proposal will allow the two states to review, compare and, if indicated, align licensing standards to allow for placements without the over-regulation of duplicative inspections; may require amendment to applicable Minnesota statutes.

While no significant fiscal savings would be realized as a result of these initiatives, existing state resources – and in particular staff resources - may be more efficiently utilized, resulting in better services to and outcomes for children and families.

Possible Barriers to Implementation

No barriers to developing and implementing the Collaborative Agreement; however staff resources would be needed on an ongoing basis to carry out the planning, implementation and maintenance of this effort.

Timeline for Implementation

The MOU could be developed and signed immediately. Follow up activities would start as soon as possible after this.

Program Contacts

- **Wisconsin:** John Tuohy
- **Minnesota:** Christeen Borsheim (training) and Jerry Kerber (licensing)

Department of Children & Families

PROGRAM INTEGRITY INITIATIVE:

Project Description

This joint proposal with the Department of Health Services is for a pilot data-sharing initiative that would reduce the possibility of individuals receiving benefits from both states simultaneously and get needed benefits to eligible families in a timely manner. This would be accomplished by allowing eligibility workers in each state's border counties direct access to specific information in the other state's TANF and Income Maintenance (IM) eligibility data systems to confirm participation.

Currently, when families apply for TANF, Medicaid or Food Share benefits, they are asked whether they are currently receiving or have ever received these benefits in another state. If so, the worker in the state of application may need to contact the other state, particularly in the case of TANF, which has federal time limits for eligibility, to confirm any existing benefit status. This contact currently occurs by telephone or e-mail, as neither state has access to the other's data system. This initiative would reduce staff time spent to confirm cross-state participation, increase the timely processing of client applications, and reduce fraud. If sufficient savings are realized, the states will expand the initiative beyond the border counties. DCF will also investigate opportunities to add WI Shares to the query, as Minnesota providers in border counties receive WI Shares payments on behalf of enrolled WI children; Minnesota will determine whether child subsidy programs would benefit from doing likewise.

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits

Direct access to each other's data systems would reduce the time required for workers in each state to make and respond to calls regarding cross-state participation. It would enable eligible participants to access benefits more quickly. It could also ensure participants are not receiving benefits (cash, child care subsidy, food stamps, or health care assistance) from both states simultaneously.

Possible Barriers to Implementation

Efficacy would depend upon line workers' willingness and ability to learn to use a second eligibility system. Current workers in each state would need to be trained to use the other state's system, and the new worker training curriculum would need to be revised to incorporate this. We would need to establish data-sharing agreements between the states and set up new security roles to limit access to necessary data.

Timeline for Implementation

Dependent on the time required to complete data-sharing agreements, develop security roles, and roll out training. If access were limited to one or two staff per county (or a central unit in larger counties) implementation could probably be expedited.

Program Contacts

- **Wisconsin:** Janice Peters (DCF, for TANF and WI Shares);
Bob Martin (DHS, for Medicaid and Food Share)
- **Minnesota:** Norma Pearson

Department of Children & Families

SMARTCARD: TECHNOLOGY FOR MULTIPLE HUMAN SERVICES PROGRAM AREAS

Project Description

Participants in the State's human services assistance programs must maintain several benefits cards – for MA, Food Share and W-2, to name a few. In the same way that DHS created ACCESS to streamline access to benefits that children and families are eligible for, DCF and DHS propose to work together, in consultation with our MN partners, on the development of a "Smartcard," a single card that families could use to access benefits, provide increased accountability for the various benefit programs and reduce administrative costs. DCF's recent proposal to increase accountability in the WI Shares child care subsidy program by tracking attendance automatically offers a unique opportunity to assess the potential to move in this direction, as we know that high proportion (nearly 80%) of WI Shares participants also receive MA and Food Share benefits.

The recently released Request for Information (RFI) will allow DCF to gather information about available automated systems that could be used for recording attendance at child care facilities that serve WI Shares subsidy program participants. The RFI asks respondents to identify whether their system interfaces or has the potential to interface with other programs such as TANF, Food Share, the Child and Adult Care Food Program, and Child Support. DCF and DHS will use this information to inform its discussions.

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits

The benefits of a "Smartcard" could include: 1) improved customer service, as clients participating in multiple programs would not need to manage multiple cards; 2) a reduction in administrative costs, and 3) a reduction in fraud across all programs.

Possible Barriers to Implementation

This is a visionary proposal, and discussions as to possibilities have just begun. MN has committed itself to specific IT projects in the next biennium, and any joint work would need to take such timelines into account. DCF and DHS are committed to further exploration.

Timeline for Implementation

DCF released its RFI on February 20, with responses due on March 13, 2009. At that time, more will be known about whether or not this initiative can be used as an incremental step to developing the "Smartcard."

Program Contacts

- **Wisconsin:** Henry Wilde, Deputy Secretary, DCF
Bob Martin, CIO, DHS
- **Minnesota:** Tim Wilkins, Assistant Commissioner, DHS

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

**Department of Commerce
LICENSING SERVICES FOR MINNESOTA**

Project Description

Wisconsin is exploring the possibility that Wisconsin's Department of Commerce could perform back office licensing functions for Minnesota's Department of Labor and Industry. License applications would be mailed to Madison instead of St. Paul and processed accordingly. Minnesota would continue to enforce licensing requirements. Wisconsin would also move toward online renewals.

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits

Minnesota will need to invest millions to develop a licensing system while Wisconsin already has capabilities in this area.

- **Wisconsin:** Wisconsin would earn some portion of the revenues from Minnesota licenses. These costs would cover any variable costs from additional licenses and contribute toward fixed costs.
- **Minnesota:** Minnesota would avoid significant capital investments in complex IT systems and online applications.

Possible Barriers to Implementation

Wisconsin and Minnesota need to make sure that Wisconsin's system and process is compatible with Minnesota's licenses. Wisconsin and Minnesota will need to work through the complexities of their system to ensure that the details will result in good service and net benefit for both states. It is possible that some code or statutory changes will be required to allow the process to work.

Timeline for Implementation

This initiative is a longer term initiative that should help Minnesota avoid costs and generate positive revenue for Wisconsin within the next budget. In Wisconsin, it will generate program revenue which will help offset projected deficits in the Safety & Building area.

Program Contacts

- **Wisconsin:** Randy Baldwin, Bureau Director, 608-267-9152, randy.baldwin@wisconsin.gov
- **Minnesota:** Jayne J. Jones, Assistant to the Commissioner, (651) 284-5526, Jayne.Jones@state.mn.us

Department of Commerce

TESTING, TRAINING, AND CODE BOOKS

Project Description

Wisconsin's Department of Commerce and Minnesota's Department of Labor and Industry have identified several areas where the states can collaborate to reduce expenditures in the building trade regulatory area. Initiatives that are planned include:

- **Testing:** Wisconsin and Minnesota will collaborate to develop tests together to reduce time and improve integrity. The states will also create joint study testing guides where possible and explore development on online testing resources.
- **Training:** Many license holders employed by state government and the private sector require continuing education. Training programs are held around the country requiring travel. We will negotiate to bring trainers to our states, alternating each year. This will cut our travel costs and improve access to training for our license holders. An existing initiative with elevator inspection training can serve as a model.
- **Code Books:** Wisconsin and Minnesota have agreed to purchase technical code books together where possible to increase volume and reduce costs

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits

These initiatives should improve operations and reduce costs in both states. Tests will be stronger as a result of an expanded question universe. Training will be more accessible to Wisconsin and Minnesota license-holders. These initiatives will save money on a modest scale. The biggest opportunity is in conducting joint training for license holders in Wisconsin and Minnesota. By doing this, we could partially offset the cost of training and may even generate enough to totally offset our training expenditures (~\$50,000 per year) and actually profit modestly.

Possible Barriers to Implementation

The states should be able to implement the initial steps in these three areas. Purchasing code books will have to be done within the boundaries of state procurement law and the parameters set by organizations that sell code books. As the testing initiative develops, Wisconsin and Minnesota may wish to explore developing online access to tests if concerns about integrity can be overcome.

Timeline for Implementation

These initiatives can begin to be implemented in the short-term. Benefits will accrue over time as more and more training sessions are conducted and more code books are purchased.

Program Contacts

- **Wisconsin:** Randy Baldwin, Bureau Director, 608-267-9152, randy.baldwin@wisconsin.gov
- **Minnesota:** Jayne J. Jones, Assistant to the Commissioner, (651) 284-5526, Jayne.Jones@state.mn.us

Department of Commerce

AMUSEMENT RIDE INSPECTION AND ENFORCEMENT

Project Description

Many amusement rides are portable and travel around the country through multiple states. Wisconsin and Minnesota both have inspection programs in place. We are exploring the possibility that we can align our programs and share information about inspections of specific rides in order to improve safety coverage within existing resources. For example, if Minnesota has recently inspected a particular ride and found it safe, Wisconsin can focus on uninspected rides, rather than duplicating Minnesota's inspection. This initiative will not reduce costs in the short-term, but will improve our ability to collectively inspect more rides. It will also allow us to catch problem rides more easily. If safety can be dramatically improved through collaboration, it is possible that costs could be reduced in the future.

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits

This initiative will primarily improve the safety of amusement rides in both states without raising costs. There will not be cost savings in the near future.

Possible Barriers to Implementation

Wisconsin and Minnesota will need to develop methods for sharing information about rides and inspection histories. There will probably be no statutory or code barriers. The states may wish to modify their codes to allow enforcement actions based on the other states inspection history. Ideally, Wisconsin and Minnesota would have real-time access to each other's inspection reports for each ride. However, there could be significant program complexity to overcome in exchanging information. The states also have to address a program difference related to electrical inspection.

Timeline for Implementation

This initiative is a longer term initiative that will offer greater safety benefits as the programs become more entwined.

Program Contacts

- **Wisconsin:** Randy Baldwin, Bureau Director, 608-267-9152, randy.baldwin@wisconsin.gov
- **Minnesota:** Jayne J. Jones, Assistant to the Commissioner, (651) 284-5526, Jayne.Jones@state.mn.us

Department of Commerce

JOINT MARKETING PROMOTION

Project Description

Both Minnesota and Wisconsin have delegations that attend a variety of trade shows to promote the states and attract business. Minnesota and Wisconsin are talking about planning joint efforts for some of the shows of mutual interest as a way of amplifying the marketing message about the upper Midwest and reducing the cost.

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits

There are two primary benefits. First, by collaborating on marketing, Wisconsin and Minnesota may be able to make a bigger wave together than either could alone. There are a number of industries such as biotechnology and wind power where both states are trying to position themselves for business opportunities. Marketing together would be novel and could attract more attention. Second, by sharing space and staff at trade shows, the states could reduce the cost of attending these shows. Savings would depend on the number of show that the states collaborated on and the extent to which we reduce our individual footprint and could be in the thousands to tens-of-thousands dollar range.

Possible Barriers to Implementation

No significant barriers to implementation other than long lead times and already sunk costs for upcoming shows.

Timeline for Implementation

The first opportunity that Wisconsin and Minnesota will try to collaborate on is the BIO 2010 show in Chicago which will need to be planned beginning in spring of 2009.

Program Contacts

- **Wisconsin:** Mary Regel, Bureau Director, 608-266-1767, mary.regel@wisconsin.gov
- **Minnesota:** Not available.

Department of Commerce
JOINT EXPORT PROMOTION

Project Description

Wisconsin and Minnesota currently share a trade office in Shanghai staffed by a Hudson native with a Minnesota education. We have the opportunity to expand on this collaboration by planning or cross-promoting educational programming aimed at encouraging and teaching companies about exporting as a path to growth. Wisconsin and Minnesota are also discussing the possibility of collaborating on trade missions.

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits

The primary benefit of this initiative will be more effectiveness in reaching companies and drawing attention to export opportunities. For example, more Wisconsin companies may take advantage of export seminars offered in Minnesota. Joint trade missions may offer companies a wider variety of opportunities, draw more attention to participating companies, and increase benefits of scale.

This opportunity is likely to be revenue neutral.

Possible Barriers to Implementation

No significant barriers to implementation.

Timeline for Implementation

States can begin cross-promoting opportunities to companies in the short-term. Trade mission schedules are not set.

Program Contacts

- **Wisconsin:** Mary Regel, Bureau Director, 608-266-1767, mary.regel@wisconsin.gov
- **Minnesota:** Not available.

DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

Department of Corrections
INSTITUTIONAL FOOD MENU AND PROCUREMENT CONSOLIDATION

Project Description

The state of Wisconsin will follow Minnesota and increase standardization of food menus across institutions to the extent possible and synchronize those menus with those used by Minnesota correctional facilities. The states will then procure food products as a collective purchasing entity.

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits

- **Wisconsin:**
 - Reduce the number of food items purchased thus leveraging inventories and purchasing power on selected items
 - Reduce menu administrative and planning time
 - Improve consistency in meeting nutritional needs
 - Reduce the overhead of delivering and supporting medical and religious diets
 - Leverage the buying power of the combined state purchases
 - Improve compliance with Administrative Rules
- **Minnesota:**
 - Leverage the buying power of the combined state purchases

Possible Barriers to Implementation

- **Wisconsin:**
 - State food contracts will need to be terminated or modified to support a joint procurement effort
 - State Bureau of Procurement (DOA) has control over mandatory contracts and would need to investigate statutory impediments or policy interpretation hindrances
 - Institutional kitchens and serveries vary in the types of equipment available
 - Large numbers of medical and religious diet requirements
 - Institutions vary in their access to on-ground gardens
 - Opportunity buys vary greatly in timing and by geographic region

Minnesota:

- State food contracts will need to be terminated or modified to support a joint procurement effort
- State would need to investigate statutory impediments or policy interpretation hindrances

Timeline for Implementation

Work on the development of standardized menus can begin immediately and will take approximately 12 months to implement as consolidated menus are developed, current inventories are depleted and new menus are phased in. Contract changes will be coordinated with the end dates of existing contracts over the next 18 months.

Program Contacts

- **Wisconsin:**

Earl Fischer, Administrator, Division of Management Services, (608) 240-5400
earl.fischer@wisconsin.gov

- **Minnesota:**

Mike Hermerding, Mike.Hermerding@state.mn.us

Wisconsin Department of Corrections
PROVISION OF DAIRY PRODUCTS - MILK

Project Description

Milk from the prison industry's dairy farms can be provided to the Minnesota DOC for use within their institutions at a much lower price than their current vendor charges.

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits

- **Wisconsin:** Increasing customer base for additional product will yield between \$250,000 and \$300,000 annually for Badger State Industries gross farm sales.
- **Minnesota:** Benefits primarily by decreased cost of milk totaling same figure above – annual savings to Minnesota DOC on food budget between \$250,000 and \$300,000.

Possible Barriers to Implementation

- **Wisconsin:** Wisconsin must increase the size of its dairy herd to accommodate the poundage of raw milk necessary for this additional requirement of 5 ½ million half-pints annually by Minnesota DOC.
- **Minnesota:** None are known at this time beyond termination of milk acquisition from a private food service vendor. Minnesota would have to consider delivery scheduling and the business model they would use for either centralized distribution or short-term storage solutions.

Timeline for Implementation

Wisconsin is currently in the process of increasing herd size, but needs approximately 12 to 15 months (tentative kickoff date of June 1, 2010) to have mature heifers capable of delivering needed raw milk poundage to meet the demand.

Program Contacts

- **Wisconsin:** Craig Bresser, Farm Manager, (920)324-2759, Craig.Bresser@Wisconsin.gov
- **Minnesota:** Mike Hermerding, Health Services Manager, (651)361-7287

Wisconsin Department Of Corrections

PARTNERSHIP TO PURCHASE CANTEEN ITEMS

Project Description

Consolidated acquisition of canteen goods used by both states in the running of canteen/commissaries.

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits

- **Wisconsin:** Wisconsin is considering consolidating the purchasing of canteen items with Minnesota to maintain stock for sale to inmates by each institution. However, the two systems differ inasmuch as Wisconsin is not yet centralized. Wisconsin needs to centralize its canteen operations in order to benefit from this opportunity.
- **Minnesota:** Benefits are financial and tied directly to those proposed institutions (Stanley/Chippewa, New Lisbon, and Jackson) that Minnesota states it could service.

Possible Barriers to Implementation

- **Wisconsin:** Both states operate under a different business model, and until Wisconsin converts to a centralized canteen, the potential savings for both systems is marginal. Proposed by Minnesota, their desire is to service four northern facilities currently operating their own canteens. Many of the same primary vendors are used, but the items allowed within the Minnesota system are different than what Wisconsin allows, and thus the pricing structure is different as well. Standardizing a product-availability list for all four institutions would be required, and Minnesota has stated that at least initially, Wisconsin would have to buy from their current line list of offerings, and at their current pricing plus freight. Eventually they stated they could look at what the needs of the participating institutions may be and alter their list of items offered. In many cases, in attempting to make fair comparisons to items by size/weight/volume, pricing is sometimes higher in Minnesota without adding the delivery charges that would have to be incorporated in the price structure of all items. By adding freight/handling charges, prices could be even higher in comparison to what these institutions are currently experiencing, thus causing potential climate problems with the inmates, but a more detailed analysis is still required. Other considerations are working through WIDOC stakeholder requirements, i.e., Health Services requirements to offer certain products, or security issues tied to different items. All these issues would need to be completely reviewed.

There are technical hurdles to overcome with the ordering and inmate accounting processes, which is done with order sheets scanned or faxed to the Minnesota institution that would process them. The inmate account issues would require respective WIDOC business offices to verify inmate account balances for all canteen purchases before allowing inmates to submit their orders. Because the information systems used by the two states differ and are not compatible, this function could not be automated. With a WIDOC centralized canteen, this process becomes moot, as the Point-of-Sale auto-debits inmate accounts without the need to add extra verification steps.

- **Minnesota:** Additional revenue would be the expected outcome of adding any Wisconsin institutions to the overall gross sales of canteen items.

Timeline for Implementation

Minnesota has indicated that once all logistics are worked out as discussed above, it would take approximately six months to get the program running to those four institutions. That puts the responsibility on WIDOC to determine whether or not this is something worth pursuing at this time, and if it is, detailed analysis of WIDOC requirements for the participating institutions versus Minnesota offerings of items through canteen would have to be reconciled. Additionally, the logistics of the ordering and accounting processes would have to be examined.

Program Contacts

- **Wisconsin:** Tim Peterson, Director, (608)240-5201, Timothy.Peterson@Wisconsin.gov
- **Minnesota:** Guy Piras, Director, (651)361-7501, Guy.Piras@Minncor.com

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES

Department of Health Services

PROGRAM INTEGRITY INITIATIVE:

QUERY ACCESS TO WI/MN TANF AND INCOME MAINTENANCE SYSTEMS

Project Description

This proposal would allow eligibility workers in each state to directly query the other state's TANF and Income Maintenance (IM) eligibility system to confirm participation as required by the separate programs. When families apply for TANF, Medicaid, or FoodShare/SNAP benefits, they are asked whether they are currently receiving or have ever received these benefits in another states. If they respond affirmatively, the worker in the state of application may need to contact the other state(s) (response needed varies by program) to determine their remaining eligibility (especially with regard to federal time limits) as well as their existing benefit status, if any. This initiative could ensure that client applications are processed in a timely manner, getting benefits to eligible families more quickly, and would reduce staff time spent to confirm cross-state participation.

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits

- **Wisconsin:** Direct query access would reduce the time required for workers in each state to make and respond to calls regarding cross-state participation. It would enable eligible participants to access benefits more quickly. It could also ensure participants are not receiving benefits (cash, child care subsidy, food stamps, or Medicaid) from both states simultaneously. We propose a pilot project in the border counties of both states to determine whether there are sufficient savings to justify expanding the initiative.
- **Minnesota:** see above

Possible Barriers to Implementation

- **Wisconsin:** None. Training of eligibility workers in both states would be needed as would data-sharing agreements and new security requirements.
- **Minnesota:** see above

Timeline for Implementation

Implementation would be dependent on the time required to complete data-sharing agreements, develop security requirements, and roll out training. Limiting access to one to two staff per county or a central unit in large counties, would expedite implementation.

Program Contacts

- **Wisconsin:** Bob Martin, CIO, DHS; Robert.Martin@wi.gov; 608-266-0125
- **Minnesota:** Norma Pearson; Norma.Pearson@state.mn.us; 651-431-4061

Department of Health Services

PURCHASING FOR STATE INSTITUTIONS

Project Description

Wisconsin's Department of Health Services (WI DHS) operates seven institutions, four mental health facilities, and three centers for the developmentally disabled. WI DHS also oversees the Medicaid program, serving a monthly average of more than 900,000 low income senior citizens, children and families, and individuals with disabilities.

Minnesota's Department of Human Services (DHS) operates an array of campus and community-based programs serving people with mental illness, developmental disabilities, chemical dependency and traumatic brain injury as well as people who pose a risk to society. Currently, these services are provided at more than 200 geographically dispersed sites throughout Minnesota.

Minnesota's MA program, Minnesota Health Care Programs (MHCP), which is funded with both state and federal funds, provides coverage for low-income senior citizens, children and families, and people with disabilities.

Master contract areas of interest being addressed by the Minnesota and Wisconsin Departments of Administration include:

- Food
- Pharmacy
- Vehicles/fuel
- IT Technology
- Office supplies

Areas to be explored further by the MN Dept. of Human Services and the Wisconsin Dept. of Health Services (in coordination with DOA) include:

Potential for combining the contracts for commodities and services used by both state institutions as well as MHCP recipients, including:

- Medical supplies,
- Manual wheelchairs and other medical equipment, and
- Laboratory services

Conversations are also underway with DOC regarding the potential of including their food services.

Estimated Range of Potential Savings or Efficiencies

Unknown at this time. Reports are being compiled to better understand the scope of purchasing across the various locations and programs for Human Services in Minnesota and Wisconsin. Program experts in medical equipment, supplies and laboratory services from the area of Health Services and Medical Management (Coverage and Rate Setting) will be integral to the exploration of combining demand for these goods and services into potential master agreements. Savings may be greater if DOC purchasing for food is included.

FY08 Minnesota DHS institutional purchases totaled:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------|
| • SOS/MSOP Food | \$1,446,720 |
| • SOS/MSOP medical equipment/supplies | \$ 272,971 |
| • SOS/MSOP Lab Services | \$ 186,240 |

FY08 Wisconsin DHS institutional MHCP purchases totaled:

- | | |
|----------------------|-------------|
| • Food | \$3,349,500 |
| • Permanent Property | 955,700 |
| • Medical Services | 3,955,400 |
| • Medical Supplies | 1,992,800 |

FY08 Minnesota DHS MA purchases included the following:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------|
| • Medical supplies and equipment | \$57,488,012 |
| • Lab services | \$28,660,406 |

FY08 Wisconsin DHS MA purchases included the following:

- | | |
|--|--------------|
| • Medical Equipment and Medical Supplies | \$38,300,000 |
| • Lab Services | \$38,300,000 |

(Data is not complete due to billing lag)

Barriers or Structural Changes Needed for Implementation:

- The structure for multi-state collaboration already exists – and is in use related to pharmacy and medical supplies. This may serve as a model for additional groups of commodities.
- Inter-State Enterprise Agreements may require change in standard contract language, including possibly areas that might require statutory change in authority.
- Availability of distribution channels in Minnesota’s geographically distributed and community based model may present a challenge as compared with larger institutions in fewer locations.
- Legislation may be required for MHCP contract purchasing of lab services and medical supplies (statutory authority exists for medical equipment).
- Federal approval may be required for MHCP contract purchasing.

Timeline: Estimated 6-12 months to analyze demand, determine feasibility, develop RFPs, obtain bids and award contracts in commodities determined to be appropriate. Commodities should be prioritized based on the expiration of current contracts and estimated potential savings.

Program Contacts

- **Wisconsin:** Chuck (Charles) Wilhelm, Intergovernmental Relations/Contract Management; Charles.Wilhelm@wi.gov, 608-261-9326
- **Minnesota:** Linda Nelson, Management Services Director, Linda.Nelson@state.mn.us; 651-431-2205

Department of Health Services
Information Technology
Coordinated Electronic Laboratory Reporting (ELR)

Project Description

The CDC requires states to have the ability to securely compose, send, receive, process, and interpret electronic messages using standard protocols, formulas and terminologies in order to meet Public Health Information Network certification requirements. All US states are in various stages of implementing these requirements, most frequently by transmitting positive test results for notifiable conditions (e.g., TB, STDs) through electronic laboratory reporting to communicable disease surveillance systems.

The Minnesota Department of Health is currently receiving ELR messages from six laboratories, including the Minnesota-based Mayo laboratories, and the national laboratories ARUP and LabCorp and is in the progress of expanding this to other high reporting laboratories. The Wisconsin Department of Health Services is also receiving ELR messages from six Wisconsin laboratories, including the Wisconsin Laboratory of Hygiene, Milwaukee Public Health Laboratory, ACL Laboratories, and Dean Health Systems. ELR from the Marshfield Clinics is in the planning stage.

It would benefit all parties if a reporting facility/laboratory only had to send the information to a single state health department and have that health department pass on the report to other states as appropriate (i.e., Minnesota would pass on ELR reports from Mayo intended for Wisconsin to DHS, Wisconsin would pass on ELR reports from the Marshfield Clinics intended for Minnesota to MDH).

By creating a bi-directional link between the ELR hubs in Wisconsin and in Minnesota, positive lab results received into either system would be transferred to the correct state automatically. This exchange of information would facilitate a more focused and coordinated response to outbreaks with the goal of reducing additional infections. The project would have to include some modifications to the existing ELR feeds (such as including both Minnesota and Wisconsin cases in the same feed) but could be built on existing infrastructure using national protocols and standards.

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits

- **Wisconsin:** Wisconsin would not need to implement an ELR feed from laboratories Minnesota currently is receiving ELR reports from, resulting in both a more cost effective and faster implementation. When Minnesota recruits additional laboratories for ELR in the future Wisconsin would automatically receive ELR from these laboratories as well (if applicable). It might also be possible to extend this reciprocity to national labs further reducing the implementation cost.
- **Minnesota:** Minnesota would not need to implement an ELR feed from laboratories Wisconsin currently receives ELR reports from, resulting in both a more cost effective and faster implementation. When Wisconsin recruits additional laboratories for ELR in the future Minnesota would automatically receive ELR from these laboratories as well (if applicable). It might also be possible to extend this reciprocity to national labs further reducing the implementation cost.

Possible Barriers to Implementation

- **Wisconsin:** None. There would be an initial cost to set up the bi-directional transfer of information as well as some modifications to the existing ELR feeds to include both Minnesota and Wisconsin cases. Both states would avoid the cost of each state bringing all labs on individually.
- **Minnesota:** see above

Timeline for Implementation

Minnesota is in the process of establishing their Electronic Disease Surveillance System which should be completed by the end of summer 2009. Implementation of the bi-directional link should not take more than six months to complete.

Program Contacts

- **Wisconsin:** Tanya Oemig, WEDSS manager, (608) 261-6857, Tanya.Oemig@dhfs.wisconsin.gov
- **Minnesota:** Asa Schmit, MEDSS coordinator, (651) 201-5023, asa.schmit@state.mn.us

Department of Health Services
Information Technology
Electronic State-to-State Case Reporting

Project Description

As part of the National Electronic Disease Surveillance System initiative, all US states are in various stages of implementing information systems for surveillance and tracking of notifiable conditions. These systems include functionality that enables disease reporting from providers -- hospitals and clinics -- to the state. Currently both Minnesota and Wisconsin are reaching out to their provider communities, implementing tools and standards for electronic reporting as well as training the provider community in how to use these new tools.

It would benefit all parties if a reporting facility only had to send the information to their state's system, regardless of the patient's state of residence. The system would then automatically pass the information on to the patient's home state, (i.e., a hospital in Duluth would always send their cases to Minnesota, even if the patient resides in Superior. The Minnesota system would pass the patient's information to the Wisconsin system.).

By creating a bi-directional link between the Wisconsin Electronic Disease Surveillance System in Wisconsin and the Minnesota Electronic Disease Surveillance System in Minnesota, information on cases received into either system would be automatically transferred to the correct state. Public health officials in the state of residence would then be able to complete any follow-up required using their own state's system.

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits

- **Wisconsin:** Decreased reporting burden for Wisconsin facilities with a large number of Minnesota patients, e.g., providers would only have to use one system instead of two resulting in increased efficiencies.
- **Minnesota:** Decreased reporting burden for Minnesota facilities with a large number of Wisconsin patients, e.g., providers would only have to use one system instead of two resulting in increased efficiencies.

Possible Barriers to Implementation

- **Wisconsin:** There would be an initial cost to set up the bi-directional transfer of information.
- **Minnesota:** There would be an initial cost to set up the bi-directional transfer of information.

Timeline for Implementation

Minnesota is in the process of establishing a MEDSS program with implementation scheduled for late summer 2009. Wisconsin is in the process of making system changes. Implementation of state-to-state reporting needs additional research by both states.

Program Contacts

- **Wisconsin:** Tanya Oemig, WEDSS manager, (608) 261-6857, Tanya.Oemig@dhfs.wisconsin.gov
- **Minnesota:** Asa Schmit, MEDSS coordinator, (651) 201-5023, asa.schmit@state.mn.us

Department of Health Services
STATE HEALTH PLAN DEVELOPMENT

Project Description

Wisconsin DHS produces a state health plan every ten years via a strategic process involving numerous stakeholders throughout the state. MN's Department of Health has a similar process with their five-year state plan. This initiative would include joint planning with Dr. David Kindig of the UW Population Health Institute who has recently completed the "Healthiest State Project" which evaluates the strength of evidence and cost effectiveness of a broad array of public health prevention and intervention efforts. Similarly, Dr. Pat Remington in the UW Population Health Institute recently received Robert Wood Johnson Foundation funding to rank the health of every county in all 50 states. The respective state health plans can be strengthened by incorporating Dr. Kindig's research on evidence-based practices and the metrics that Dr. Remington will be using to rank the health of the population in counties in Wisconsin and Minnesota.

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits

- A recent United Health Foundation report indicated that the health of Minnesota's and Wisconsin's populations slipped when compared to other states. The change was attributed to increases in obesity, childhood poverty, high levels of binge drinking, significant health disparities and low investment in prevention efforts. A well-developed state health plan, built upon evidence-based practice and which includes well-defined performance metrics provides an opportunity to target limited resources resulting in significant improvements in population health and reductions in healthcare costs.

Possible Barriers to Implementation

- **Wisconsin:** None
- **Minnesota:** None

Timeline for Implementation

Wisconsin will be completing the State Health Plan by December 31, 2009

Program Contacts

- **Wisconsin:** Dr. Seth Foldy, State Health Officer, Seth.Foldy@Wisconsin.gov; 608-266-7333
- **Minnesota:** Debra Burns, Director Office of Public Health Practice, debra.burns@state.mn.us ; 651-201-3873

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER OF INSURANCE

Office of the Commissioner of Insurance

IT APPLICATIONS/PROJECT COORDINATION

Project Description

Wisconsin and Minnesota are reviewing their respective IT applications and future IT projects. If there are applications that both states can use, each state gains the benefit of increased scale for contracting software or achieves lower development costs for installing or creating a new IT application. Both states are still in the review process on this initiative.

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits

- **Wisconsin:** Larger scale achieved by combining with Minnesota may mean decreased costs to implement new IT applications or contracting for system software.
- **Minnesota:** Larger scale achieved by combining with Wisconsin may mean decreased costs to implement new IT applications or contracting for system software.

Actual cost savings on this project is difficult to estimate at this time.

Possible Barriers to Implementation

- **Wisconsin:** The state should review application of 66.0303 Wis. Stats. which relates to municipal interstate cooperation, as well as DOA procurement guidelines.
- **Minnesota:** Not available.

Timeline for Implementation

This project would be implemented over the long term.

Program Contacts

- **Wisconsin:** Kim Shaul, 608-267-9460
- **Minnesota:** Manny Munson-Regala, 651-296-4051

Office of the Commissioner of Insurance

CUSTOMER SERVICE COORDINATION

Project Description

Wisconsin and Minnesota are reviewing their respective customer facing units for complaint processing and agent licensing to determine if any benefit can be achieved through a form of resource sharing arrangement. Both states are still in the review process on this initiative. This project has some hurdles due to some regulatory differences in licensing and insurance rules. Minnesota also uses licensing staff for other purposes as their agency includes banking, real estate, weight and measures as well as insurance.

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits

- **Wisconsin:** Combining staffing resources with Minnesota may result in decreased FTE costs or additional resources for other work.
- **Minnesota:** Combining staffing resources with Wisconsin may result in decreased FTE costs or additional resources for other work.

Actual cost savings on this project is difficult to estimate at this time.

Possible Barriers to Implementation

- **Wisconsin:** OCI should review application of 66.0303 Wis. Stats. which relates to municipal interstate cooperation, as well as DOA procurement guidelines and OSER guidelines.
- **Minnesota:** Not available.

Timeline for Implementation

This project would be implemented over the long term.

Program Contacts

- **Wisconsin:** Kim Shaul, 608-267-9460
- **Minnesota:** Manny Munson-Regala, 651-296-4051

Office of the Commissioner of Insurance

VENDOR CONTRACT COORDINATION

Project Description

Wisconsin and Minnesota are reviewing the outside vendors used by each agency. If there are service vendors that both states can use, each state gains the benefit of increased scale for contracting – generally resulting in lower cost. Both states are still in the review process of this initiative.

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits

- **Wisconsin:** Larger scale achieved by combining with Minnesota may mean decreased contracting costs.
- **Minnesota:** Larger scale achieved by combining with Wisconsin may mean decreased contracting costs.

Actual cost-saving of this project is difficult to estimate at this time.

Possible Barriers to Implementation

- **Wisconsin:** OCI should review application of 66.0303 Wis. Stats. which relates to municipal interstate cooperation, as well as DOA procurement guidelines.
- **Minnesota:** Not available.

Timeline for Implementation

This project would be implemented over the long term.

Program Contacts

- **Wisconsin:** Kim Shaul, 608-267-9460
- **Minnesota:** Manny Munson-Regala, 651-296-4051

Office of the Commissioner of Insurance

Sharing Of Actuarial Services

Project Description

OCI currently contracts for actuarial services on an annual basis. Minnesota has actuaries on the staff of their department. Minnesota is reviewing the feasibility of sharing the services of their actuaries on an ad hoc basis allowing for flexibility based on workload.

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits

- **Wisconsin:** The use of Minnesota actuaries on a no cost, or low cost, basis would allow an annual savings on contracted actuarial services up to \$50,000 per year.
- **Minnesota:** The sharing of actuarial services provides efficient use of resources along with dollars earned, if applicable, for use of actuarial services.

Possible Barriers to Implementation

- **Wisconsin:** OCI should review application of 66.0303 Wis. Stats. which relates to municipal interstate cooperation.
- **Minnesota:** May need legislative approval.

Timeline for Implementation

This could be implemented within a short time frame – likely within three months.

Program Contacts

- **Wisconsin:** Kim Shaul, 608-267-9460
- **Minnesota:** Manny Munson-Regala, 651-296-4051

OFFICE OF STATE EMPLOYMENT RELATIONS

Office of State Employment Relations

JOINT HEALTH INSURANCE COMPACT

OSER has raised the issue of looking into a joint health insurance compact between both states with OSER's Minnesota counterpart. Additionally, OSER is in initial stages of discussion with the Department of Employee Trust Fund (DETF) regarding the feasibility of creating a joint health insurance compact for the delivery of health insurance services to Wisconsin and Minnesota state employees and their families whose work sites and homes are along the borders of WI and MN.

SHARED COST SAVINGS FOR HRIS

In the initial conversation with Minnesota, OSER expressed interest in learning how Minnesota implemented its HRIS. Minnesota has been using Peoplesoft (version 8.3) as its main information system, recently upgrading to version 9.0. When Wisconsin moves forward with the Peoplesoft implementation, we will be working with version 9.1.

SHARED COST SAVINGS FOR ENTERPRISE TRAINING

Minnesota expressed interest in learning whether Wisconsin operated a centralized training system. OSER shared with MN some of our current mechanism, such as the State Training Council, as a method to share best practices and spread training costs across the enterprise. Minnesota was interested in a joint-funded personnel training conference that could attract a national speaker.

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits

- **Wisconsin:**
Joint Health Insurance Compact
Under the current health insurance system arrangement, some state employees find it a hardship to seek health care services because they typically are required to seek care in the state that they work in, not the community/state where they live. Similarly for Minnesota, they indicate there are many employees who commute across the border both in the Minneapolis/St.Paul and Duluth/Superior metro areas. A compact or reciprocity agreement could result in efficiencies through reduced provider negotiations and/or employer premium costs.

Shared Cost Savings for Enterprise Training

Wisconsin would be interested in sharing training cost with Minnesota as it relates to topics of mutual interest. Wisconsin will continue to explore with Minnesota opportunities available for shared training cost.

- **Minnesota: Unknown**

Possible Barriers to Implementation

- **Wisconsin:**
Joint Health Insurance Compact
Both Wisconsin and Minnesota would need to determine if their respective healthcare providers under their respective state contracts can develop provisions to allow these employees to receive medical care in their community rather than at providers located near their work sites.

Shared Cost Savings for HRIS

Availability of resources.

Shared Cost Savings for Enterprise Training

In order to proceed, both states should identify common areas of training needs and then determine the potential fiscal efficiencies. At this point, both states will need to also identify any potential policies that restrict providing training services outside of their respective states, such as travel restrictions.

- **Minnesota: Unknown**

Timeline for Implementation

Joint Health Insurance Compact

OSER anticipates that discussions and agreements would need to take place between Wisconsin's Department of Employee Trust Fund and Minnesota's counterpart. Subsequently, any significant changes would extend beyond the six months.

Shared Cost Savings for HRIS

OSER anticipates that multiple discussions with other stakeholders would need to occur before any concrete project idea would be implemented. Therefore, implementing any components of the shared cost would extend beyond six months.

Shared Cost Savings for Enterprise Training

OSER would need to involve the State Training Council and other stakeholders to discuss the feasibility of the concept. Any significant changes related to sharing training cost would not happen until those topics are fully identified and discussed. We anticipate the timeline would extend beyond six months.

Program Contacts

- **Wisconsin:** Yer Vang, 608-266-9820,
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- **Minnesota:** Judy Plante, 651-201-8008
Judy.Plante@state.mn.us

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

NATURAL RESOURCES & ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Summary of Recommendations

In response to executive orders by Governors Doyle and Pawlenty, WI DNR Secretary Matt Frank and Commissioners Mark Holsten, MN DNR, and Paul Eger, MPCA, recommend the following action items

- **Water quality improvement on the St. Louis River** – The St. Louis River, flowing between Duluth and Superior into Lake Superior, is slated for clean up of contaminated sediments, bacterial contamination and related problems. Minnesota and Wisconsin will complete a single federally-required clean-up planning process, saving on the order of \$1 million in staff time and contract costs over the seven to eight year planning timeframe. Planning team leaders have been named and will develop an MOU.
- **Specialty license plate printing** - Minnesota Department of Corrections will produce Wisconsin endangered resources specialty license plates. Wisconsin projects revenue of \$1.3 million to protect rare species from offering a colorful, full plate license design. Wisconsin saves \$1,000,000 by purchasing plates from Minnesota rather than investing in the flat plate production technology. Potential net Wisconsin fiscal impacts along with impacts on prison labor are being assessed. Wisconsin and Minnesota Corrections, Transportation and Natural Resources agencies met March 3, 2009 for detailed logistics planning and to define necessary transactions to cover in an MOU.
- **Trout stream habitat improvement** – Minnesota and Wisconsin both have work crews in business to improve trout angling by reducing stream bank erosion and restoring fish habitat in the southeast and southwestern parts of the respective states. Minnesota expects a near term opportunity to contract with WI fisheries work crews to do trout stream work. Over time, Wisconsin may have opportunities to use Minnesota crews. An MOU and contract mechanism will be developed.
- **Fish production for stocking** - Wisconsin has a strong program for the production of small fingerlings while Minnesota has a strong program for the production of large fingerlings. Currently, each state has shortfalls in what each wants to stock, Minnesota would like to target an additional 400,000 small fingerlings and Wisconsin would look to acquire 40,000 larger fingerlings in return. This exchange as a start saves \$10,000 for Wisconsin and \$100,000 for Minnesota, but potentially leads to additional savings with subsequently planned projects for consolidated stocking of lake trout in Lake Superior as well as joint procurement of fish food and similar items for fish production facilities.
- **Fisheries equipment procurement** – Nets and other specialized gear are used by both states to survey fish populations for angling and water quality management purposes. Minnesota fisheries staff no longer builds nets but have an inventory of unused materials with retail value of \$250,000. Wisconsin staff continues to build nets and can build nets for itself and for Minnesota using the available materials, saving Minnesota contract costs and Wisconsin materials costs. An MOU will document the work and materials exchange.
- Additional areas are slated for long-term collaboration, for example:
 - Spill response
 - Ballast water discharge control
 - Tree nursery stock exchange
 - Wildfire detection and fire fighting equipment procurement
 - On-line fishing and hunting license sales service procurement

Department of Natural Resources

AIR POLLUTANT FORECASTING

Project Description

WI DNR would provide a numerical forecast of the Air Quality Index (AQI) for the Minneapolis area and Rochester, MN. The forecasts would be year-round for fine-particles and during the summer for ozone. The forecast would include a forecast for the same day, the following day and an extended forecast for up to 5 days for each city. The forecast would be accompanied by a short, two paragraph discussion of meteorology and air quality conditions. Additionally, the WI DNR forecast staff would be available by phone to discuss the forecast or changing air quality conditions with MPCA staff.

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefit

- **Wisconsin:**
Wisconsin DNR does in-house air quality forecasting. Wisconsin's forecasters could provide their services to Minnesota. This extra effort for Wisconsin DNR does not appear to be a significant additional workload beyond the forecasting that is done for Wisconsin. In fact, DNR forecasters often closely watch what is happening in Eastern Minnesota to improve the forecasts for Western Wisconsin.

We estimate the total work effort described above for WI DNR would take approximately 120 to 160 hours per year, split among four forecasters in the Regional Pollutant and Mobile Source Section in the Bureau of Air Management. Workload in this unit is variable, and can be assimilated without impacts on other work.

- **Minnesota:**
Minnesota currently contracts with a consultant to provide air quality forecasting for Minneapolis and Rochester at a cost of \$65,000/year. Minnesota could save much of the \$65,000/year and the time it takes to manage the contract. MPCA could make a payment of some amount to Wisconsin for a beneficial use or contribute a portion of this savings to the Lake Michigan Area Directors Consortium (LADCO), which would have indirect benefits for both Wisconsin and Minnesota.

Possible Barriers to Implementation

- **Wisconsin:**
There are no barriers, policies or impediments that would hamper or prevent WI DNR from providing this service to MPCA.
- **Minnesota:**
There are a few file management and data analysis services that MPCA's consultant provided to Minnesota that WI DNR would not. However, these "extras" appear to be a small part of the effort that MPCA could pick up on their own.

Timeline for Implementation

MPCA's contract with their consultant runs out at the end of April, 2009. WI DNR believes that we could begin forecasting for Minneapolis and Rochester sooner than that. We would need a few additional meetings or calls to finalize forecast protocols. The MOA and all protocols and procedures should be in place before the end of MPCA's contract with Sanoma Technologies expires at the end of April. As a backstop, MPCA could proceed with a contract extension for Sanoma Technologies, but they would need to begin the contracting process by the end of February.

Program Contacts

- **Wisconsin:** Larry Bruss, 608-267-7543, larry.bruss@wisconsin.gov
- **Minnesota:** Rick Strassman, 651-757-2760, Rick.Strassman@state.mn.us

Department of Natural Resources

ENDANGERED RESOURCES LICENSE PLATE

Project Description

Wisconsin would contract with Minnesota to produce and potentially distribute a new license plate supporting WI DNR's Endangered Resources Program.

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits

- **Wisconsin:** Wisconsin anticipates new revenue of approximately \$1 million to protect rare species from sale of an additional specialty license plate with a colorful, full-plate design. Minnesota's popular natural resources plates are made by flat-plate technology. Buying the flat-plate technology is expensive. According to Minnesota Corrections, the flat-plate technology costs \$1,000,000. Die sets and print heads are consumed during the production process at a cost of \$180,000 for die sets and \$8,000 for print heads. Contracting with Minnesota would save Wisconsin the cost of flat-plate technology, including the machinery.
- **Minnesota:** This proposal would help Minnesota pay for the cost of purchasing, operating, and maintaining the flat-plate machines. The reason to contract with MN Corrections to produce the plates is because they employ state-of-the-art flat-plate technology that allows colorful, full-plate design license plates to be produced that are highly visible on the road. Current embossed plate technology does not provide the visibility needed by law enforcement. MN Corrections indicates that they have the capacity to take on this work. They can make the font size larger or smaller as needed; change colors of the letters, numbers, and month as needed and can provide a fog effect in the design behind the identifying numbers and letters.

Possible Barriers to Implementation

Wisconsin:

- Calculate net fiscal impact to Wisconsin, including costs and revenue at all Wisconsin agencies
- Evaluate and address WI DOC labor issues
- Pass budget with new Endangered Resources plate authorization.
- Develop MOU with WI DNR, WI DOT, MN DOT, and MN Corrections to determine printing, distribution, and cost of services.
- WI DNR, WI DOT (including WI State Patrol and perhaps Wisconsin county sheriffs), MN Corrections work together to ensure that plates meet visibility requirements. Minnesota and Iowa use plates produced with flat-plate technology and have full-plate, four-color, background (scenery type) designs that meet their law enforcement requirements for visibility.
- WI DOT approves license plate design per administrative code.

Minnesota:

- Develop MOU with WI DNR, WI DOT, MN DOT, and MN Corrections to determine printing, distribution, and cost of services.
- MN Corrections must have the capacity to increase production and potentially distribution of license plates.

Timeline for Implementation

This proposal could be accomplished within less than one year of a budget bill passing, which would allow WDNR to pursue development of a new license plate. Design of a new license plate and work on an MOU between WDNR, WDOT, MNDOT, and MN Corrections could commence once the budget bill has passed. WDOT will need some time to approve the license plate design and to implement selling the new license plate.

Program Contacts

- **Wisconsin:** Signe Holtz, Wisconsin DNR, 608-264-9210, Signe.Holtz@Wisconsin.gov
- **Minnesota:** C. B. Bielander, Minnesota DNR

Department of Natural Resources

ST. LOUIS RIVER WATER QUALITY PROTECTION & IMPROVEMENT

Project Description

The two states have a strong history of working together on the St. Louis River and Lake Superior for more than 20 years. This partnership in the area watershed work and remediation has resulted in better environmental protection as well as resource savings. Three new focus areas can produce cost savings and help leverage federal funds if we go to funding sources as a collaborative effort of the two states.

- Develop a shared contaminated sediment database and GIS evaluation / prioritization process for the St. Louis River.
- Do one TMDL on the St. Louis River. Both states have listed the St. Louis River for impairments – toxics, bacteria and turbidity rather than have each state approach this project, it make much more sense to do one TMDL. This is a very complex TMDL that will likely take seven to eight years to complete.
- Share Minnesota Emergency Response staff to protect the St. Louis River Watershed in Wisconsin. Currently Wisconsin does not have an emergency response coordinator in the Superior area where 30% of the spills in the northern region generally happen as a result of the types of industry and transportation in the Superior/Duluth area. It currently takes five hours of mobilization time for a Wisconsin emergency response contractor to get to a spill in the Superior area. The Duluth office has a spills expert who is knowledgeable about the Superior area as a result of multi-agency spill response exercises and general planning. He could get to spills quickly and get contractors on the scene or manage appropriately.

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits

Wisconsin: Dollar savings to Wisconsin are estimated at \$500,000 over the seven to eight year life of the project.

- One TMDL for St. Louis River – Creating a single team and operating a single process for both states would save a substantial amount of money in planning, contract management, project management, GIS work, and stakeholder processes.
- Shared Emergency Response – The Minnesota ER staff would assist in Superior spill response and coordination. Savings are estimated at \$20,000 per year as a result of saving eight hours drive time and expenses for WI staff traveling from Spooner.
- Shared Database and GIS system – This will help both states manage data and work towards the same goals for sediment clean up and habitat restoration. If this is not done together, effort will be duplicated by each state.

Minnesota: Dollar savings to Minnesota are estimated at \$500,000 over the seven to eight year life of the project.

- One TMDL for St. Louis River – Creating a single team and operating a single process for both states would save a substantial amount of money in planning, contract management, project management, GIS work, and stakeholder processes.
- Minnesota will receive staff services from Wisconsin on the database, GIS system and TMDL work in exchange for the spill response work.
- Shared Database and GIS system– This will help both states manage layers of data and work towards the same goals for sediment clean up and habitat restoration. If this is not done together, each state would end up doing it separately and less efficiently.

Possible Barriers to Implementation

- Need to incorporate Minnesota staff into Wisconsin spill response system
- Need to set up a process for using contractors/billing reimbursement associated with a shared contract for emergency response in the Duluth/Superior area.

Timeline

States could sign initial shared services agreement within 90 days.

Program Contacts

Wisconsin:

John Robinson, Remediation & Redevelopment Supervisor – 715-365-8978

Tom Jerow, Regional Water Leader – 715-365-8901

Nancy Larson, Basin Supervisor – 715-395-6911

Minnesota:

Suzanne Hanson, Regional Manager – 218-723-4665

Pat Carey, Watershed Supervisor – 218 -723-4744

Doug Beckwith, Remediation Supervisor – 218-529-6267

Department of Natural Resources

TROUT STREAM HABITAT IMPROVEMENT

Project Description

Minnesota and Wisconsin both have work crews in business to improve trout angling by reducing stream bank erosion and restoring fish habitat in the southeast and southwestern parts of the respective states. Minnesota expects an immediate opportunity to contract with Wisconsin fisheries work crews to do trout stream work. Over time, Wisconsin may have opportunities to use Minnesota crews. The joint effort will begin with Wisconsin biologists training Minnesota staff and contractors. An MOU and contract mechanism will be developed.

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits

Wisconsin: Wisconsin trout crews would have the capacity to perform up to \$160,000 of trout habitat work in Minnesota under contract in a normal year. Wisconsin can benefit from joint training, in particular as a cadre of trained contractors develops. Over time if Wisconsin needs staff assistance, Minnesota crews can be contracted to work in Wisconsin.

Minnesota: Extensive flood damage in 2007 in southeast Minnesota streams has created a need for additional habitat improvement work that is beyond the capacity of the Lanesboro crew. Increased funding for habitat improvement projects is available through the Lessard Outdoor Heritage Fund and LCCMR, but the bottleneck is the lack of staff in Minnesota with stream habitat improvement experience. Minnesota could save long-term staffing and training costs by using Wisconsin expertise and work capacity.

Possible Barriers to Implementation

Availability of staff time among authorized positions in each state may limit the ability to contract. The training initiative can help develop a cadre of private contractors.

Timeline

Both states' agencies could sign an MOU on procedures for shared services within 90 days.

Program Contacts

Wisconsin: Larry Claggett, Coldwater Fishery Ecologist 608-267-9658,
lawrence.claggett@wisconsin.gov.

Minnesota: Mark Ebbers, Trout and Salmon Program Consultant, 651-259-5205,
mark.ebbers@dnr.state.mn.us

Department of Natural Resources

FISH PROPAGATION FOR STOCKING

Project Description

Wisconsin and Minnesota fish hatchery programs are involved in the collection of eggs, broodstock-holding and fish-rearing to meet fish stocking needs. The two state programs duplicate the hatching of eggs, the rearing of fish for stocking, and the procurement of fish food and forage needed for this activity. Some of these activities appear to have a high degree of overlap and may be candidates for collaboration to ultimately save money, staff effort and facility development and maintenance costs for both agencies. Wisconsin has a strong program for the production of small fingerlings while Minnesota has a strong program for the production of large fingerlings.

The four activities identified include:

- The rearing of walleye at the small fingerling stage (fryling) and large fingerling stage (extended growth) for inland stocking;
- The stocking of lake trout in inland and Lake Superior waters;
- The coordination in the placement of orders for delivery of manufactured fish food;
- Coordination of access to sucker spawning populations.

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits

Wisconsin:

Walleye stocking - Wisconsin looks to acquire 40,000 larger fingerlings. Wisconsin could save an estimated \$ 10,000.

Lake trout - Both states stock Lake Superior and inland waters of their respective states with lake trout. Access to suitable genetic stocks of disease-free eggs is a significant issue for both states. We will assess each state's health requirements and stocking needs and compare these to each state's production capacity to find a best fit for both states.

Coordination of manufactured fish food order delivery and timing to minimize shipping costs - Common manufactured fish food vendors are located out of state and add to the cost of the fish food to cover shipping costs. Both states could save on the cost of fish food as potentially reflected in lower contract costs for the fish food. These savings are not significant.

Coordination of access to sucker spawning populations - Wisconsin and Minnesota rely of the collection of sucker eggs to produce forage for use in our hatchery programs. In addition, both states provide access to sucker runs to help private fish farmers meet their forage needs. The opportunity for collaboration is in helping each state meet their needs for sucker eggs and possibly help private fish farmers access their sucker needs as well.

Minnesota:

Walleye stocking - Minnesota would like an additional 400,000 small fingerlings B. Lake trout stocking activity analysis Minnesota could avoid the cost of constructing new pond infrastructure at a cost of up to \$100,000.

Lake Trout - Wisconsin and Minnesota both stock Lake Superior and inland waters of their respective states with lake trout. We will assess each state's health requirements and stocking needs and compare these to each state's production capacity to find a best fit for both states.

Coordination of manufactured fish food order delivery and timing to minimize shipping costs - Common manufactured fish food vendors are located out of state and add to the cost of the fish food to cover shipping costs. Both states could save on the cost of fish food as potentially reflected in lower contract costs for the fish food. These savings are not significant.

Coordination of access to sucker spawning populations - Wisconsin and Minnesota rely of the collection of sucker eggs to produce forage for use in our hatchery programs. In addition, both states provide access to sucker runs to help private fish farmers meet their forage needs. The opportunity for collaboration is in helping each state meet their needs for sucker eggs and possibly help private fish farmers access their sucker needs as well.

Possible Barriers to Implementation

Access to suitable genetic stocks of disease-free eggs is a significant issue for both states in exchanging fish stocks or producing fish for each other.

Timeline

- Walleye stocking activity analysis
Wisconsin and Minnesota staff would meet before the end of July, 2009 to work out the details, issues and logistics of this proposal so that a pilot project could be started the spring of 2010.
- Lake trout stocking activity analysis
Wisconsin and Minnesota staff would meet before the end of June, 2009 to work out the details, issues and logistics of this proposal so that a pilot project could be started the fall of 2009.
- Coordination of manufactured fish food order delivery and timing to minimize shipping costs
Wisconsin and Minnesota staff would meet before the end of March, 2009 to work out the details, issues and logistics of this proposal so that a pilot project could be begun at the earliest date allowed by our respective contracts.
- Coordination of access to sucker spawning populations
Wisconsin and Minnesota staff would meet before the end of March, 2009 to work out the details, issues and logistics of this proposal so that a pilot project could be started the spring of 2009.

Program Contacts

Wisconsin: Alfred Kaas, Statewide Fish Propagation Coordinator, 608-267-7865,
alfred.kaas@wisconsin.gov

Minnesota: Roy Johannes Acting Coldwater hatcheries Supervisor, (651) 259-5213,
roy.johannes@dnr.state.mn.us

Department of Natural Resources

FISH SAMPLING EQUIPMENT

Project Description

Fisheries staff in both Minnesota and Wisconsin use nets and electrofishing boats/gear to sample fish populations. Specifications for the sampling gear often vary between the states based on established protocols. However, short term savings can be realized in net procurement and, longer-term, by consolidated purchases of similar equipment.

Nets are purchased from vendors or built by staff using materials purchased from various net supply companies. Minnesota recently closed its net-making facility and relies entirely on a vendor contract for nets. However, Minnesota has a supply of materials that needs to be liquidated. Wisconsin staff fabricates nets using materials purchased from vendors. Potentially, Wisconsin could purchase materials from Minnesota at a cost less than retail. Also, it's possible Minnesota could contract with Wisconsin for the construction of specific nets.

Vendors for electrofishing components or fully constructed boats are limited. The states could consolidate orders gaining leverage in prices.

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits

Wisconsin: Minnesota's inventory of unused material would retail for approximately \$250,000. Wisconsin saves in purchase of net material.

Minnesota: Minnesota can sell unused inventory of net materials to Wisconsin or save money by exchanging unused material for nets constructed by Wisconsin technicians.

Possible Barriers to Implementation

None.

Timeline

Meet to identify net needs and materials inventory in April, 2009.

Set a time for annual identification of planned purchases to determine consolidated orders.

Program Contacts

Wisconsin: Pete Segerson, 715-284-1447, peter.segerson@wisconsin.gov

Minnesota: Al Stevens Lake and Stream Survey Consultant, 651-259-5239, al.stevens@dnr.state.mn.us

PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

**Public Service Commission
TRAINING FOR SERVER VIRTUALIZATION TECHNOLOGIES**

Project Description

Both Wisconsin and Minnesota are consolidating servers and moving towards a more virtual server environment. However, these vital technology evolutions necessitate the continued training of both states' IT staff. Most training for this effort is out-of-state, the closest being Chicago. Minnesota IT employees would also have to travel to Chicago for this training. By working with a Microsoft-certified training provider to hold a training session near our states' borders (such as in Eau Claire) instead of in Chicago, IL, employees from both Wisconsin and Minnesota could obtain this training with far fewer travel expenses and with greater efficiency.

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits

By working collectively with a Microsoft-certified training provider to hold training sessions near our states' borders (such as in Eau Claire), employees from both Wisconsin and Minnesota could obtain this training with far fewer travel expenses.

- **Wisconsin:** While a training session in a mutually desirable, centrally located site (such as Eau Claire) may not result in saving travel miles driven or time for Wisconsin employees, a Wisconsin city like Eau Claire would be less expensive overall for our employees' hotel stays. Additionally, the opportunity to hold a training conference such as this one in Wisconsin may offer additional business for our state's hotels and restaurants in the chosen community.
- **Minnesota:** The cost savings of a near-border training site may be more substantial for Minnesota, as this project may eliminate a flight for every employee who would have otherwise flown to Chicago for training. Employees may be able to reach the training in less travel time than it may have taken to maneuver through the departure and arrival airports and the flight itself, capturing work time efficiency for Minnesota. Lodging and meal costs at a site such as Eau Claire should result in lower Minnesota employee travel costs than would be seen if employees boarded and dined in Chicago for this training.

Possible Barriers to Implementation

Barriers for both Minnesota and Wisconsin for this particular concept would be similar, as follows:

- Both states need to agree on the type of training involved. While there are only a handful of virtual server programs, a consensus is needed in order to identify the appropriate training provider.
- Both states and the trainer must all agree on a mutually acceptable site as an alternative to Chicago.
- The chosen site must have the technology capabilities that the trainer needs to successfully instruct the class and afford our state employees a learning experience similar to the Chicago training.
- Obtaining a commitment from a trainer to travel to Wisconsin or Minnesota and offer the training at a price that is comparable to the Chicago fee (note: a training fee that is higher for a Wisconsin or Minnesota training may void other savings and should be avoided).

Timeline for Implementation

As server co-location for the state of Wisconsin is set to be completed by the end of 2010, and the end of 2009 for the PSC, the need for training is imminent.

There are several national companies devoted to IT and business training. They will work with a customer (in our case, Wisconsin and Minnesota) to choose when, where, and how they want to receive training programs and learning services. While this would be cost-prohibitive for one agency, or even one state to do, the option to have a training program customized to both our state's needs, with the cost split, make it a more reasonable venture.

Program Contacts

Wisconsin: Sarah Klein, DAS Administrator, 608-266-3587, sarah.klein@psc.state.wi.us

Minnesota: Ed Valencia, Enterprise Technology Office, 651-556-802, Ed.Valencia@state.mn.us

CAPX TRANSMISSION LINE ROUTE COLLABORATION

Project Description

CapX 2020 is a proposed series of transmission lines that will cross the Upper Midwest region and will be built, if approved, in four stages. One of the stages will involve crossing from Minnesota over the Mississippi River towards the greater La Crosse area. The proposed lines are intended to increase service reliability to utility customers in this multi-state region, improve congestion and ease of deliverability of renewable energy within the region and ultimately, strengthen the current grid in this area.¹ The multi-state nature of this large construction project provides collaboration prospects and efficiency opportunities between Minnesota and Wisconsin in the review and selection of an approved route upon which the transmission lines will be built.

The first step to streamline this routing process will involve staff from the respective state Commissions sharing information about project timelines and considering the synchronization of the timelines. While differences exist between the Minnesota and Wisconsin project review processes, more efficiency opportunities exist if the applications are cooperatively timed on each side of the river. While greater opportunities for joint analysis or collaboration on this project exist if the states are sharing a similar timetable, there may be opportunities for Wisconsin and Minnesota staffs to share information and collaborate for maximum efficiency, regardless of timing. Project elements the two states may collaborate on include, but are not restricted to, the following: sharing needs analysis information, distributing information for their respective Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) reports or coordinating on a joint EIS, working collaboratively with federal agencies on river crossing options and exploring opportunities to work together at scoping meetings or hearings.

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits

Generally speaking, a good working relationship and similarly timed project review process between Minnesota and Wisconsin could streamline this effort and garner a faster and more mutually acceptable result for both states. While it is unclear at this time what level of efficiencies we can expect through coordination on this project in its entirety, it does seem that the public and decision makers could be well served by coordination within the environmental review process, which constitutes an important component of the routing process. Working collaboratively on this project may capture staff efficiencies in both of our agencies over the next year. Coordination at the staff level also might lessen the possibility of conflicting decisions by the two states.

The opportunities for how Minnesota and Wisconsin might collaborate in this instance lie within similar processes at work in the respective states, which are summarized in the following list.

- Both states require preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).
- Both processes require the applicant to put forward at least two routes.
- Both states have an EIS public scoping process that includes identification of alternatives.

Possible Barriers to Implementation

Coordination possibilities will likely be maximized if the two states are working through their respective examinations of this application at approximately the same time and considering their process differences. Below is a list of timing and process differences both agencies should consider in their initial discussions to work through possible project barriers:

¹ “CapX2020 Frequently Asked Questions”, available at: <http://www.capx2020.com/faq.html#1>

- Wisconsin's hearings take place after the final EIS is issued. Minnesota's hearings occur after the draft EIS is issued, with the final EIS entered into the record shortly after the hearings end.
- The time frame for application considerations is similar, 360 days, but Wisconsin's is more stringent. In Wisconsin, applications are assumed approved if action is not taken in 360 days.
- Wisconsin's CPCN (Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity) covers both need and route. Whereas, the Certificate of Need (CN) assessment is considered separately from Minnesota's Routing Permitting process and EIS. Minnesota's CN process has already been completed through the hearing processes.
- Wisconsin's routes are specific alignments, down to pole placement. Minnesota's routes can be as narrow as the width of the right-of-way or as wide as a mile and a quarter; engineering specifics are developed and reviewed after the permit is issued as part of permit compliance.

Timeline for Implementation

Initial contact between Minnesota and Wisconsin Commission staff members should take place during March of 2008 to explore collaboration and information sharing possibilities.

Program Contacts

Wisconsin: Scot Cullen, 608- 267-9229, scot.cullen@psc.state.wi.us
 Dan Sage, 608-267-9486; daniel.sage@psc.state.wi.us

Minnesota: Deborah Pile (OES), 651-297-2375; deborah.pile@state.mn.us

FILING JOINT MISO / FCC / FERC COMMENTS

Project Description

Wisconsin and Minnesota are states that face similar energy challenges in the future. Both states have a reliance on coal that must be curbed, hold similar GHG emission rates that must be reduced and have similar transmission and energy infrastructure decisions to make in the near-term. Both states also have a limited number of staff without a state budget that supports hiring additional workers to meet these near-term energy challenges.

The focus on sharing staff resources is the basis of this particular idea. The likeness of our states from an energy profile perspective may result in similar or identical positions on larger regional or federal energy / transmission issues within the organizations each of our states belong, such as the Midwest Independent Transmission System Operator (MISO). Both states have limited staff resources within their Commissions and other energy offices, yet often submit individual state comments and feedback to the regional or federal organizations to which they belong. In the event that our state positions are similar or identical, this proposal suggests our respective staffs work together to trade responsibility for drafting comments and submit them jointly where possible.

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits

At the heart of this issue is staff time and efficiency. State workers in both Minnesota and Wisconsin are asked to do more and monitor increasingly complex energy issues as the energy industry become more complicated. Staff representatives in both states work hard to not only monitor energy initiatives at the regional and federal level, but spend a significant, yet necessary, amount of time drafting state positions and entering state input on issues that may be highly similar in both states. When our positions are similar, the advantage of trading off on the responsibility of drafting one set of comments to represent both states on any particular issue could save a large amount of staff time and resources each year.

Possible Barriers to Implementation

The largest barrier for either state in submitting joint comments to regional organizations or federal agencies is that our respective states may not see eye-to-eye on a given issue. The opportunity to collaborate and realize staff efficiencies must be decided on a case by case basis. To get around this barrier, the lines of communication must be open between key staff representatives in both states about intent to file comments and planned positions early for each opportunity to identify where the states can work together to file one set of representative comments.

Timeline for Implementation

Realistically, given that Minnesota and Wisconsin have occasionally worked on collaborative comments or positions in the past, there is some current familiarity between the staffs which work on MISO or federal issues in both of our states. Once further contact information is shared, this collaboration can be further extended and utilized immediately. For example, Minnesota OES has recently completed drafting FERC intervention comments regarding transmission proposals that would impact both states. Minnesota OES plans to offer this draft to both Commission staffs for their consideration regarding joining OES in filing a joint intervention.

Program Contacts

Wisconsin: Randy Pilo, 608-266-3165, randy.pilo@psc.state.wi.us.

Minnesota: Nancy Campbell, 651-296-1346, nancy.campbell@state.mn.us

EXPLORATION OF COLLABORATION ON PIPELINE SAFETY INSPECTIONS

Project Description

Wisconsin and Minnesota enjoy successful border partnerships on a variety of issues. Border bridge inspections provide one example of a working partnership between our respective Departments of Transportation. Shared inspection responsibility is detailed through Memorandums of Understanding between our two states. Shared responsibility for inspections of natural gas pipelines may be another possible border partnership for our state agencies to explore. Our in-state inspectors cover a large area, and working together to create a more dense, efficient inspection area for each inspector may result in greater staff efficiencies by reducing travel time to inspection sites. One example of a possible division could involve Minnesota inspectors covering both the northern half of Minnesota and some of the northern border areas of Wisconsin. Alternatively, Wisconsin inspectors would continue to range across the lower half of Wisconsin, but may be able to inspect lines in the southern half of Minnesota, as well.

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits

If shared pipeline inspections were able to be divided in equal portions, the key opportunity within this initiative would be to cut down inspector travel time and capture near-border efficiencies.

Possible Barriers to Implementation

Barriers for this project would be similar in both states. First, our respective state offices would need to work with federal agencies to pursue such an initiative. Secondly, staff resources in both states would need to be evaluated further to examine if staff sharing is feasible. Next, the states would have to identify possible sites or areas to share or exchange to maximize inspection efficiencies. Lastly, MOUs would likely be needed for each shared inspection site, service area or region to outline inspection responsibilities and provide details about any other shared liabilities, expenses, etc.

Timeline for Implementation

This initiative would likely not be a short-term idea. Necessary MOUs and approval from federal agencies to cooperate on inspections would be expected to take one year or longer.

Program Contacts

Wisconsin: Tom Stemrich, Public Service Commission of Wisconsin, 608-266-2800,
Tom.Stemrich@psc.state.wi.us

Minnesota: Jerry Rosendahl, Director, Office of Pipeline Safety, 651-201-7230,
jerry.rosendahl@state.mn.us

SHARING ELECTRONIC MAPPING RESOURCES

Date 2.23.09

Project Description

Wisconsin and Minnesota have worked collaboratively in the past to share electronic Geographic Information Systems (GIS) concepts and data. In our near future, there may be at least two key opportunities where our states can collaborate on GIS projects. First, in reviewing mapping capabilities within our Commissions, both states are currently exploring ways to expand their mapping capabilities and potentially increase the availability of utility-based data on the World Wide Web. In the near future, Wisconsin and Minnesota can continue to communicate on near-term project plans and explore potential data or skill-sharing possibilities to advance the data display capabilities in both states. Second, the Broadband Data Services Improvement Act of 2008 and the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act of 2009 directs the U.S. Commerce Secretary and the National Telecommunications and Information Agency (NTIA) to award grants to eligible entities on a competitive basis to assess, identify and track broadband service deployment in each state. Wisconsin will consider partnership opportunities with Minnesota and/or other border states to capture efficiencies and to enhance our states' ability to obtain federal funding to map broadband deployment.

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits

Coordination between Minnesota and Wisconsin may result in maps, such as utility service territory maps, with increased accuracy near our borders. Combined Wisconsin and Minnesota transmission line and substation data may enhance regional transmission planning efforts. Furthermore, working together to share or compare existing data or learn from each others' mapping successes may result in staff efficiencies. If future GIS mapping initiatives are required that require the help of an outside vendor, working with a border state such as Minnesota to contract jointly may result in overall cost project savings.

Possible Barriers to Implementation

As both states explore how to increase access to utility data through public means such as the Internet, security may be a concern and a barrier. Data sharing or exchange may also not be possible due to data incompatibility and confidentiality. Such barriers would need to be addressed on a project-by-project basis.

Although Minnesota and Wisconsin have broadband access maps, Minnesota's mapping project was conducted through a third-party vendor, Connected Nation, and is more detailed than the work done so far in Wisconsin. Opportunities to work together or in tandem with one another may be further limited if Minnesota's project is basically complete, and if Wisconsin needs to do additional work on its mapping project to achieve the same level of granularity seen in Minnesota's maps. However if Minnesota needs to complete additional or revised broadband maps, there may be an opportunity for Minnesota and Wisconsin to use the same vendor to capture financial economies of scale.

Timeline for Implementation

Many of the Minnesota and Wisconsin staff who work on GIS projects and with supporting data already know each other and work cooperatively on a variety of issues. Their continued effort to work together could be immediate and ongoing.

Discussions between the states on how to write and apply for a NTIA mapping grant may be useful even if Minnesota and Wisconsin decide to submit separate grant applications.

Program Contacts

Wisconsin:

For Energy and Gas Mapping: William Fannucchi, Public Service Commission of Wisconsin, 608-267-3594, William.fannucchi@psc.state.wi.us

For Broadband / Tele Mapping: Gary Evenson, Public Service Commission of Wisconsin, 608-266-6744, : gary.evanson@psc.state.wi.us

Minnesota:

For Energy and Gas Mapping: Norman Anderson, EUSA Project Manager, Land Management Information Center, 651-201-2483, norm.anderson@state.mn.us

For Broadband / Tele Mapping: Diane Wells, Department of Commerce, 651-284-4213, diane.wells@state.mn.us

DEPARTMENT OF REGULATION AND LICENSING

Department of Regulation and Licensing Minnesota/Wisconsin Project

Minnesota's system of regulating professional licenses is structured differently from that in Wisconsin. In Minnesota, there is not one single agency that is primarily responsible for regulating professions. Rather, professions in Minnesota are regulated by a variety of different agencies. The Department of Regulation and Licensing has learned some best practices that can be incorporated in Wisconsin from Minnesota. Below is a description of two projects:

CONSUMER RESPONSE TEAM IN DIVISION OF ENFORCEMENT

Development of a consumer response team in the Division of Enforcement that would be in place of our current intake system. The team would be empowered to resolve complaints through a less formal resolution process, rather than proceeding immediately to a formal adjudication process.

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits

The actual savings are unknown at this time. Minnesota has indicated that up to 50% of cases can be resolved at this stage. This would result in significant cost savings for our department if implemented.

Possible Barriers to Implementation

The barriers would be the current structure of the Department. We may need to modify the classification of those currently in intake.

Timeline for Implementation

This is a current project that the Department is undertaking. It would take approximately six to nine months to implement.

Program Contacts

Wisconsin: Marvin Robinson, Division Administrator, Division of Enforcement

Minnesota: Robert Leach, Minnesota Board of Medical Practice

JOINT PURCHASING OF TRACKING SYSTEM FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION

Working collaboratively on a RFP to jointly purchase a tracking system for Continuing Education.

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits

Minnesota has a program through a private vendor to track continuing education, which Wisconsin does not have.

Possible Barriers to Implementation

There would be some upfront cost to purchasing such a system, but the savings and efficiencies would be recouped in the near future. It would certainly address the idea of fraud and ensure that licensees had completed their education before renewal of their license.

Timeline for Implementation

If provided the authority to move forward, it would take approximately 12-18 months to implement.

Program Contacts

Wisconsin: Cathy Pond, Division Administrator, Professional Credentialing,

Minnesota: Commissioner Glenn Wilson, Commerce

DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE

Department of Revenue
COMPLIANCE: REFUND INTERCEPTION/SET-OFF

Project Description

Agreement to exchange data and intercept tax refunds when a debtor exceeds either state's tax liability.

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits

Both states are advantaged by sharing information and intercepting refunds at the time of refund disbursement. It is far more costly and, often, impossible to collect debts owed to states after refunds are disbursed. This methodology takes advantage of income processing and data warehouse technology.

- **Wisconsin:** see above
- **Minnesota:** see above

Possible Barriers to Implementation

- **Wisconsin:** none
- **Minnesota:** none

Timeline for Implementation

Secretary Ervin and Commissioner Einess signed the Memorandum of Understanding on February 18, 2009. Implementation begins immediately, as soon as computer protocols, including data exchanges are complete.

Program Contacts

- **Wisconsin:**
Diane Hardt, Division Administrator, Income, Sales and Excise
diane.hardt@revenue.wi.gov
- **Minnesota:**
Terri Steenblock, Director, Collections
terri.steenblock@state.mn.us

Department of Revenue

INDIVIDUAL INCOME TAX: RESIDENCY AND HOMESTEAD

Project Description

Share data regarding residency and homestead in either state. This would allow us to identify individuals who:

- Claim homestead in both states;
- Work in one state and claiming residency in the other state and not filing income tax returns in either state (identify non-filers); and
- Claim as a renter/home owner (not as a dependent) in one state and being claimed as a dependent in the other state

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits

- **Wisconsin:** Improved tax compliance, additional revenue from audit
- **Minnesota:** Improved tax compliance, additional revenue from audit

Possible Barriers to Implementation

- Time and effort to extract information and/or read information and develop audit process. Both states would automate as much as possible

Timeline for Implementation

This can be done within the next six months.

Program Contacts

- **Wisconsin:**
Diane Hardt, Division Administrator, Income, Sales and Excise
diane.hardt@revenue.wi.gov
- **Minnesota:**
Pam Dahlstrom, Director, Individual Income Tax
pam.dahlstrom@state.mn.us

Department of Revenue

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY: SYSTEMS SHARING AND DISASTER RECOVERY

Project Description

Three, related projects: 1) Wisconsin and Minnesota use the same vendor for income processing systems. Both agencies are implementing the FAST Enterprises Gentax Integrated Tax system. Wisconsin's system is called "WINPAS". Although, the implementation phases are not identical in tax type, both states are interested in sharing information on system phases, will explore the potential for cost savings and will work together to ensure knowledge transfer; 2) Minnesota staff recently visited Wisconsin to learn about Wisconsin's data warehouse, strategies and phases. The states will work together when one is at a more advanced stage than the other state to ensure that benchmarking occurs. If there are ways to piggyback procurement, we will do so, and 3) disaster recovery – since both states are using Gentax and have data warehouses, staff will explore the opportunity to back up one another's data and develop an action plan.

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits

Not known at this time. We are exploring whether any efficiencies can be gained given that each state's systems/warehouse development phases are not completely in synch and the interest in disaster recovery. Staff believe there is a probability that infrastructure could be leveraged. Also, a "warm or hot site" on either end could greatly reduce the recovery time should a disaster strike.

- **Wisconsin:** see above
- **Minnesota:** see above

Possible Barriers to Implementation

Since the states are in different development phases for both systems and warehouse design and implementation, vendor contracts could constrain information sharing or piggybacking of phases. Both states would have similar challenges in contracting. We will determine whether barriers exist and, if so, how they can be overcome.

- **Wisconsin:** see above
- **Minnesota:** see above

Timeline for Implementation

Immediate. Staff have started working together.

Program Contacts

- **Wisconsin:**
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- **Minnesota:**
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Don Friedlander, don.friedlander@state.wi.us

DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM

Department of Tourism

International Traveler Joint Marketing

Project Description

Given the current weakness of the U.S. dollar, as well as the halo effect from the recent presidential election, travel to the U.S. from abroad is of high interest, particularly in Europe and Japan. While this audience is currently a target for both Wisconsin and Minnesota, we plan to leverage our budgeted dollars by expanding our reach through more joint-marketing efforts.

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits

Wisconsin and Minnesota have participated for many years in collaborative marketing efforts to international audiences via the Great Lakes of North American organization and by co-hosting a variety of media and tour operator familiarization tours.

- **Wisconsin and Minnesota:** Cost to host an international familiarization tour would typically be in the range of \$5,000, and Wisconsin ideally hosts three tours per year. Assuming similar frequency for Minnesota, shared effort could result in a savings of approximately \$7,500 annually per state.

Possible Barriers to Implementation

- **Wisconsin and Minnesota:** Both states have committed to ongoing participation in the Great Lakes of North America (GLNA), an arm of the Governors Council of Great Lakes focused on international marketing. As budgets are scrutinized across all member states, the dues to GLNA, and thus the marketing power of the organization, may be diminished.

Timeline for Implementation

This work can be planned and implementation started within several months.

Program Contacts

- **Wisconsin:** Janet DesChenes, 608-266-7018, jdeschenes@travelwisconsin.com
- **Minnesota:** Leann Kispert, 651-297-4347, leann.kispert@state.mn.us
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Department of Tourism

Shared Destination Cross-Promotion

Project Description

Our two states share several geographic areas that are tremendous assets to tourism. Rather than competing in the marketplace, we could combine efforts to promote dual-state itineraries. Potential opportunities include the Mississippi River (Great River Road), Lake Superior and the St. Croix River.

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits

Both states currently have plans for marketing these regions. While we may achieve some efficiencies by combining media placements, the true financial benefit will be realized as revenue through increased consumer spending.

- **Wisconsin and Minnesota:** Both states are planning to discontinue membership in Mississippi River Country, a marketing arm of the Mississippi River Parkway Commission. This decision allows for the reallocation of \$15,000 per state towards more targeted and dual-state marketing of the region. Actual savings or additional market reach through the combined expenditure is yet to be determined.

Possible Barriers to Implementation

- **Wisconsin:** There are numerous non-profit organizations along the river with individual marketing plans and priorities. It is our intent to include these organizations as partners in any regional effort, however their level of interest in such an endeavor is as of yet unknown. It is important to note that sustaining the Joint Effort Marketing (JEM) grant program will be critical to efforts such as this one, as it provides us with a tangible way to incent the cooperative behavior that we seek. In 2008, for every \$1 of JEM grants awarded, Wisconsin received a return \$9 in traveler spending.
- **Minnesota:** Commitments have been made for several partnerships along the Great River Road. While marketing dollars could be leveraged to promote joint itineraries, budget is not available to support new organizational memberships.

Timeline for Implementation

Currents marketing initiatives and potential itineraries would be evaluated over the next several months, with initial implementation of tactics in the fall of 2009.

Program Contacts

- **Wisconsin:** Janet DesChenes, 608-266-7018, jdeschenes@travelwisconsin.com
- **Minnesota:** Leann Kispert, 651-297-4347, leann.kispert@state.mn.us

Department of Tourism

Regional Media Relations Outreach

Project Description

Many tour operators, media and consumers view Wisconsin and Minnesota as a travel region, rather than differentiating by state. We can take advantage of this approach by combining messages in certain areas to offer a broader range of destinations and attractions, hence drawing more media coverage overall.

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits

Media Outreach is measured in earned-advertising dollars, or the dollar value that would be required to achieve the same reach through paid advertising outlets. By creating more compelling stories for the media to cover we can reach more consumers, thus achieving greater returns on our media relations work.

- **Wisconsin and Minnesota:** Consumers highly value what reporters write about, as compared to paid advertising placements. Now, more than ever, achieving media coverage in new markets is imperative to extending the value of our media relations dollars. As an example, while Wisconsin alone might inspire a story in Golf Chicago magazine, a regional story could garner coverage in Golf Digest or on The Golf Channel. The national reach achieved through these outlets would exponentially increase the earned value of our work.

Possible Barriers to Implementation

- **Wisconsin and Minnesota:** The competitive nature of the tourism business may generate some hesitation for destinations to be included in stories that cover both states.

Timeline for Implementation

Work on two-state stories can begin as part of the summer 2009 media activities.

Program Contacts

- **Wisconsin:** Janet DesChenes, 608-266-7018, ideschenes@travelwisconsin.com
- **Minnesota:** Leann Kispert, 651-297-4347, leann.kispert@state.mn.us

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Executive Summary

Wisconsin DOT (WisDOT) and Minnesota DOT (MN DOT) managers have completed our analysis of potential savings through greater cooperation between our agencies. WI DOT and MN DOT cooperation is already standard practice in many areas including project management for border bridges, bridge inspection, and traveler information. Significant savings have resulted from these cooperative agreements. Therefore, additional savings from new cooperative agreements are likely to be modest.

Nevertheless, our analysis indicates opportunities for additional savings, both short-term and long-term, as well as opportunities for increased benefits to the public. We assessed 23 issues to determine whether increased interstate cooperation could improve fiscal and operational efficiency. Our conclusions are based on analysis by program experts, numerous telephone conversations between officials in the two states, and two face-to-face meetings between high-level managers in both agencies. It should be noted that because of differences in governmental structure, WisDOT worked with both MN DOT and the Minnesota Department of Public Safety, which administers Minnesota's State Patrol and its Driver and Vehicle Services.

We identified seven initiatives that should produce savings for one or both states:

- **\$120,000 (80% Federal) -- Savings to Wisconsin through pooling of research funding.** MN DOT's Transportation Engineering and Road Research Alliance (TERRA) effort collaborates on roadway research under the guidance of multiple state DOT's, industry representatives, and academics. Benefits for Wisconsin would include expanded use of federal research dollars, WisDOT participation on TERRA's board of directors, technology transfers, elimination of redundant research efforts, and increased uniformity in material specifications that could lower construction costs. Minnesota would share in many of these benefits. Because 80% of these savings are federal funds they would need to be used on other transportation initiatives.
- **\$10,000 (Federal) -- Sharing of geotechnical investigation equipment.** Both states conduct similar work when preparing design plans for roadway construction. Equipment for this work is expensive; savings are possible if the two states share equipment and expertise. Analysis indicates WisDOT could use MN DOT's Cone Penetrometer Testing equipment. MN DOT could use WisDOT's barge to position a drilling rig for complete subsurface investigations associated with bridge engineering. Cost savings would result from avoiding duplicate equipment purchase or hiring equipment and consultants to complete this work. Other benefits include sharing of geophysical investigation methods and expertise, as well as expanded team-based efforts on border crossing bridges.
- **\$2,900 per vehicle -- Savings to Wisconsin through the joint purchase of bridge inspection vehicles.** MN DOT is currently in the process of purchasing a new bridge inspection vehicle. WisDOT is just beginning the process of purchasing one. Allowing WisDOT to purchase vehicles off of the MN DOT contract could save considerable time by eliminating redundant specification development and bidding. Cost savings are estimated at \$2,900 per vehicle but it is not known whether the two states would receive a cost discount by joining their purchases.
- **Industry savings and convenience -- Streamlining cross-border permitting for oversize and overweight vehicles.** This would primarily benefit the motor carrier industry, especially those moving wind tower components and manufactured housing across state borders. We estimate annual industry savings exceeding \$2 million. Some financial savings for the two states may result due to efficiencies of multi-state permit issuance and staff redeployment. A long-term benefit could result if this effort becomes a catalyst for a larger Midwest permitting ability. Little or no modification of WisDOT's current practices would be needed; some modification of Minnesota procedures would likely be needed to adopt Wisconsin's more advanced permitting system. Cross-training of some staff in both states would be needed to support the cross-border process.
- **\$80,000 (Federal) -- Joint purchase of safety grant management software.** Wisconsin's Bureau of Transportation Safety (BOTS), in the Division of State Patrol, plans to purchase grants management software used in many other states. The two states would ask the software provider for cost-savings if they make joint-purchases. Any savings would be federal dollars, which could then be used to fund additional safety efforts.
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- **Cost savings and service improvements** -- Communication tower site sharing by the Wisconsin State Patrol and MN DOT. Sharing of communication tower site infrastructure and allowing for co-location on each other's towers would allow for more complete radio coverage. Utilizing existing towers on both sides of the border could augment current and future communications systems. Cost savings would result from not constructing new tower sites, which can cost between \$200,000 and \$900,000. The two State Patrols have identified eight to ten locations that could yield such efficiencies.
- **Improved rail funding opportunities plus cost and time savings** -- Coordination could improve chances for increased federal funding for the Midwest Regional Rail Initiative under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). Joint preliminary engineering and NEPA environmental work can lower costs and upfront coordination can reduce the need to redo work done independently. Coordination could hasten start of high-speed rail service in the Chicago-Milwaukee-Madison-St. Paul corridor.

TRANSPORTATION ENGINEERING AND ROAD RESEARCH ALLIANCE

Project description: The proposed area of coordination is in transportation engineering and road research. The Wisconsin Department of Transportation is proposing to participate in a unique alliance called Transportation Engineering Road Research Alliance (TERRA) that has been formed by the Minnesota Department of Transportation. The alliance is comprised of state DOTs, Industry Representatives and Academia. Participation is facilitated through a Federal Highway Administration Pooled Fund Study.

Opportunities for improved efficiency and/or financial benefits:

Wisconsin

- Combined research activities that yield valuable results for each agency;
- WisDOT's participation as a member of the TERRA board of directors;
- Technology transfer between the two agencies and ultimately within our own agency ;
- Financial benefits in the form of reduced expenditures are estimated to be approximately \$100,000.00 per year;
- Financial benefits in the form of improved efficiencies are estimated to be \$25,000.00;
- There are no service impacts to the constituents other than long-term performance enhancement of our highway infrastructure.

Minnesota

- WisDOT's participation cost of \$5,000.00;
- Gaining WisDOT's experiences with research, development and implementation;
- Financial benefits in the form of improved efficiencies are estimated to be \$25,000.00;
- Elimination of redundant research efforts, opportunities to cost share on research and implementation projects;
- Increased uniformity in construction material specifications that can lower construction costs and improve quality

Analysis: The efficiencies and benefits were determined through discussion between MN DOT and WisDOT personnel. A review of each agency's recently completed and in progress research projects revealed a similarity on ten projects. In addition both agencies continue to work on specification changes such as asphalt shingles in HMA pavements, high performance concrete pavement, next generation diamond grinding, etc. Improved efficiencies for both agencies working more collaboratively is estimated to be \$25,000.00 per agency. WisDOT's has estimated additional cost saving by not having to invest in a pavement test track section. WisDOT had recently received a quote of \$100,000.00 per year for installing a test track at another research facility. It should be noted that these funds would be coming out of each state's federal State Planning & Research appropriation at a participation rate of 80% federal and 20% state. These funds would not be turned back to FHWA and would be used to fund other transportation initiatives.

Possible barriers to implementation:

Wisconsin

- Out-of-State travel to Minnesota required to be an active participant.

Minnesota

- Lack of overall research and implementation funds and institutional resistance to change.

Analysis: Brief description of how these barriers were identified and evaluated. The barriers were identified based on past program restrictions and experience implementing new technology.

Confidence in achieving efficiency and/or financial benefits: High

Is this issue sufficiently developed for public discussion? Yes

Timeline for implementation: Immediately

Program contacts:

Wisconsin; Steven W. Krebs, (608) 246-7930, steven.krebs@dot.state.wi.us

Minnesota: Maureen Jensen, (651) 366-5507, Maureen.Jensen@dot.state.mn.us

GEOTECHNICAL INVESTIGATIONS

Project description: Geotechnical Investigations – Optimize resources through the effective use of new technology, equipment and personnel.

Opportunities for improved efficiency and/or financial benefits:

Wisconsin

- Potential use of MN DOT's Cone Penetrometer Testing (CPT) expertise and equipment.
- Potential sharing of geophysical investigation equipment, methods and expertise. Both states have differing equipment that can be used for different investigations.
- Continued practice of working as a team on "border" crossing bridges. Both DOTs have different, specialized equipment that offer advantages for subsurface investigations.
- Estimated financial benefit of equipment sharing \$10,000.00

Minnesota

- Continue the practice of working as a team on "border" crossing bridges. This includes optimizing the use of each state's equipment and expertise, i.e. Wisconsin barge, Minnesota Cone Penetrometer Testing equipment.
- Estimated financial benefit of using Wisconsin's barge \$40,000.00
- Support WisDOT's Cone Penetrometer Testing initiative. MN DOT uses the CPT as a routine part of its geotechnical investigation program. Minnesota would support Wisconsin's effort through technical guidance, training and pilot equipment demonstrations.

Analysis: Based on discussions with MN DOT and WisDOT personnel knowledgeable in these areas. The financial benefits are based on recent price quotes for equipment rental.

Possible barriers to implementation:

Wisconsin

- Potential conflicts with Out-of-State travel restrictions and operation of WisDOT equipment/fleet by non-WisDOT personnel.
- Costs associated with travel and training of MN DOT personnel on the use and safety of WisDOT equipment.
- Different types of drilling equipment and methods.

Minnesota

- Coordination and prioritization conflicts when working on border projects. Separate permit and licensing requirements can be an issue.
- Costs for support of CPT initiative including personnel and equipment.

Analysis: Based on discussions with MN DOT and WisDOT personnel knowledgeable in these areas.

Confidence in achieving efficiency and/or financial benefits: Medium

Is this issue sufficiently developed for public discussion? Yes

Timeline for implementation:

- Border projects are driven by project schedules. The I90 Dresbach Bridge was just completed in the fall of 2008. The next crossing projects will be at Winona (summer 2009), followed by Red Wing (2010).
- Individual project schedules will drive the shared use of geophysical equipment and investigations.
- WisDOT's CPT initiative is scheduled to start in the fall of 2009. Preliminary work including the sharing of information can begin in the summer of 2009 with pilot equipment demonstrations in 2010.

Program Contacts:

Wisconsin: Bob Arndorfer, 608-246-7940, robert.arndorfer@dot.state.wi.us

Minnesota: Glenn Engstrom, 651-366-5531, glenn.engstrom@dot.state.mn.us

JOINT PURCHASE OF BRIDGE INSPECTION SPECIALTY VEHICLES

Project Description: The Minnesota Department of Transportation (MN DOT) is involved in the same types of bridge inspection and subsurface exploration activities as WisDOT. MN DOT is currently in the process of purchasing a new bridge inspection vehicle to meet their needs, which are the same as WisDOT's. Allowing WisDOT to purchase vehicles and equipment off of the MN DOT contract, should they completely meet our needs, could save considerable time by shortening the bidding process. This process could also be used for the procurement of drill rigs.

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits:

Wisconsin

- By purchasing via a recent bid, the need for time to develop specifications and conduct bidding could be reduced by several weeks.

Minnesota

- Same as Wisconsin.

Analysis: Potential Opportunities were derived from conversations between procurement managers (Bob Ellingsworth and Steve Martinelli).

Possible Barriers to Implementation: In both states, because the need for specialty equipment is sporadic, contracts are not established; instead, solicitations for one-time purchases are conducted to fit the specific programmatic needs. To capture the savings, Wisconsin and Minnesota would need to validate that specific requirements overlap and that an efficient process for coordination exists that would allow modest savings to be captured.

Analysis: Potential barriers were derived from conversations between procurement managers (Bob Ellingsworth and Steve Martinelli).

Confidence in achieving efficiency: Medium

Is the issue sufficiently developed for public discussion? Yes

Timeline for Implementation: This could be implemented immediately upon approval to purchase a vehicle, assuming a recent solicitation to fit the same need has occurred in the other state.

Program Contacts:

Wisconsin: Steve Martinelli, 608-267-4480

Minnesota: Bob Ellingsworth, 651-366-5704

MN/WI INITIATIVES FOR HEAVY AND LARGE VEHICLE MOVES

Project Description: The supervisors of Oversize/Overweight (OSOW) permitting in Minnesota and Wisconsin would streamline cross border permitting of OSOW loads, especially permits for wind tower components and manufactured housing. They would:

- Prepare an interstate Memorandum of Agreement;
- Develop a detailed inventory of border crossing infrastructure and operations limitations;
- Assign staff from both states as cross-border move coordinators;
- Give permitting staff reciprocal authority to access, and training in use of, permit issuance and route evaluation systems;
- Identify opportunities for increased uniformity, in areas such as, private pilot car certification; frozen Road allowances, zones, and commodities; spring thaw restrictions, zones and process; and engineering involvement in permit process;
- Create with this two-state agreement the nucleus of a regional OSOW permitting process.

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits: The primary benefit of this coordination would be efficiencies for the motor carrier industry and some possible reduction in fees for the industry because the new process would minimize permit revisions and issue reciprocal permits for specified loads and roads. Efficiencies for the states will also be realized as certain processes may be streamlined.

Over time, there is potential for staff savings in the two states when new technology is introduced. When Wisconsin acquired new routing software, the OSOW unit reduced FTEs by 50% (from twelve to six processors).

There is a potential for small-time savings even without new technology if the number of revisions to permits can be reduced. Loads originating in Minnesota often require special case handling because of differences in conditions of permitting in Wisconsin. Authorizing MN DOT to use WisDOT's system would substantially reduce revisions. Small savings from fewer revisions would assist the work units in handling increases in OSOW loads related to wind tower component transportation.

Another additional benefit for both agencies would be the potential of developing joint grant applications to improve permitting technology in both states and become the nucleus for a regional electronic networking of permit issuance.

Analysis: About 31% of MN DOT permits are originating or destined for Wisconsin; about 35% of WisDOT permits are originating or destined for Minnesota. Modest savings are possible in permit fees for carriers. Larger savings may be found, however, in the efficiency of getting a clear and connecting route for two contiguous states with one application. An older national study estimated a \$1,000-per-day cost for delay to motor carriers. If this figure remains accurate, eliminating a one-day delay for 15% (2,225) of permit holders originating in Wisconsin and going to Minnesota would result in a savings of \$2,250,000 annually to these carriers.

The OSOW Permit Supervisors in the Midwest have been working with other jurisdictions in the Mississippi Valley to initiate multi-jurisdictional permitting. Because of the long-term working relationship of the Minnesota and Wisconsin OSOW programs, the supervisors agreed that they could begin work on cross border permitting through training of existing employees. While new technology would facilitate the permitting, employees will be able to begin permitting using the existing systems.

Possible Barriers to Implementation:

Wisconsin

- Little or no modification will be needed to authorize MN DOT staff as permit agents. Workload demands could prevent completion in the timeline planned. Staff travel to Minnesota will be required.

Minnesota

- MN DOT system may require modification before reciprocal permitting would be feasible. Workload demands could prevent completion in the timeline planned. Staff travel to Wisconsin, which is presently not allowed, will be required.

Analysis: Program supervisors were already familiar with each other's programs, including the statutes that govern permitting and the technology supporting permitting.

Confidence in achieving efficiency and/or financial benefits? Medium to High.

Is this issue sufficiently developed for public discussion? Yes

Timeline for implementation: OSOW supervisors would begin to train two employees from each jurisdiction on the other jurisdiction's system within 45 days of project start. Those employees plus the OSOW supervisor would be responsible for training others on their staff and beginning to issue permits across state borders.

Program Contacts:

Wisconsin: Kathleen Nichols, DMV, OSOW Supervisor

Minnesota: Ted Coulianos, MN DOT, Office of Freight & CVO Supervisor

SAFETY GRANTS MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE

Project Description: Combine our state's interest and future request for proposal on the purchase of a grants management software program. Each state has been exploring the eventual purchase of software programs designed to manage the high volume of federal highway safety grants that flow from their respective offices. These programs serve to manage the flow of funds, facilitate the development of grant contracts and agreements, greatly reduce paperwork, automate grant monitoring and audits, enhance grant management progress and promote real-time status updates and evaluations.

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits: For both states, combining the request for proposal (RFP) to encourage greater volume buying incentive to the qualified vendor(s). The central vendor contracted to provide this similar service to other state highway safety offices estimates starting costs at approximately \$800,000, with additional costs for customization to each state's needs. A combined purchasing bid may reduce the start-up costs to each state. Possible bulk incentive cost reductions of 10-20% (\$80,000-\$160,000 in savings per state.) Products would be purchased using federal highway safety funds, under Title 23 (no state funds), however, the savings could be applied to other critical highway safety projects within each state that would not otherwise be funded.

Possible Barriers to Implementation: For both states, purchasing rules may not account for multi-state bidding and limited vendors may require sole-source bid, therefore limiting the incentive of the vendor to reduce the start-up costs. Customizations costs would be each state's responsibility.

Is the issue sufficiently developed for public discussion? Yes, although there are concerns that publicizing this effort could jeopardize vendor negotiations.

Timeline for Implementation: Minnesota is approximately three months ahead of Wisconsin's timeline. Bids could be developed within nine to twelve months. Product delivery could occur by early to mid-2010. Both states may need to consider delivery of the product to coincide with the beginning of the federal fiscal year, Oct-Sept.

Program Contacts:

Wisconsin: Major Daniel W Lonsdorf, Director, Bureau of Transportation Safety, 608-266-3048, daniel.lonsdorf@dot.state.wi.us

Minnesota: Director Cheri Marti, Minnesota Department of Public Safety, Office of Traffic Safety, 651-201-7070 Cheri.Marti@state.mn.us

COMMUNICATION TOWER SITE SHARING

Project description: Sharing of communication tower site infrastructure along the Wisconsin and Minnesota border—allowing for co-location on neighboring state’s existing towers, which allows for radio coverage back in their home state. (Coverage along the river is problematic due to high bluffs)

Opportunities for improved efficiency and/or financial benefits:

Wisconsin

- Current communications (DSP voice and data), as well as future (WISCOM) systems could be augmented by utilizing existing Minnesota tower sites. This allows for cost savings from not constructing a tower site in the area of concern.

Minnesota

- The phased build out of Minnesota’s ARMER communications system could be augmented by utilizing existing Wisconsin tower sites. This allows for cost savings from not constructing a tower site in the area of concern.

Analysis: When designing statewide communication networks a river valley with high bluffs (and the associated terrain in the area) is a perfect example of geographical terrain that ends up causing the most difficulty to get radio coverage into. A tower on the bluffs of the Mississippi River in Wisconsin often leaves “coverage shadows” along the river at the base of the bluffs. Often, better results for Wisconsin systems can be produced by locating the communications tower on the other side of the river. If that tower already exists on the Minnesota side of the river, and we’re allowed to co-locate (share tower and equipment building space), potentially huge costs can be saved by NOT constructing a new tower site (tower sites range in cost from \$250,000 to \$900,000 depending on land acquisition, tower and building construction) in Wisconsin. An example of this already exists to some extent, as the Wisconsin State Patrol utilizes the WI Educational Communications Board (ECB) tower located in La Crescent, MN.

The same argument could be made for Minnesota, and we’re both at varying stages of building out statewide communications systems. If multiple sites could be identified during the design process the potential of huge savings could be realized by both states.

Possible barriers to implementation:

Wisconsin

- An area of need identified in Wisconsin needs to have a corresponding existing tower in Minnesota that has the capability of providing the coverage required. Examples of possible barriers if there is a tower identified: space on tower for additional antennas, equipment building space available, tower height, and possible interference issues.

Minnesota

- An area of need identified in Minnesota needs to have a corresponding existing tower in Wisconsin that has the capability of providing the coverage required. Examples of possible barriers if there is a tower identified: space on tower for additional antennas, equipment building space available, tower height, and possible interference issues.

Analysis: The identified barriers are issues the Wisconsin State Patrol/Bureau of Communications engineering staff are very familiar with, due to design and build-out of the current Voice Communications System and Mobile Data Communications Network (MDCN). The process of filling “gaps” in our radio coverage is a timely and often costly one. Whenever there is an opportunity to co-locate with another agency (be it a Wisconsin county or neighboring state in this case) to share infrastructure, time and money can be saved.

New agreements will have to be developed between Minnesota and Wisconsin as to the usage of the towers, many requiring joint agencies participation in each state. These agreements should be examined soon, so as not to delay the process of collaboration underway.

Confidence in achieving efficiency and/or financial benefits: High -- The amount of savings is still to be determined by the number of instances where existing infrastructure in each state already synchronizes with the needs of the other. In a conference call on February 24, 2009, organized through our joint DOT Facilities efforts, it has been determined that there are about eight to ten locations along the Minnesota and Wisconsin border that could yield efficiencies, both shared maintenance benefits, and coverage. Many ideas were put forth that will require additional investigation.

Is this issue sufficiently developed for public discussion? Yes, although it must be stressed that this is an issue for future consideration.

Timeline for implementation: Existing tower infrastructure, on both sides of the border, could be studying and potential sites identified for co-location in the short-term. After that the timeline would depend upon signing of an MOU, acquisition of needed equipment and scheduling for installation. If approved, some implementation could occur within the next 6 months.

As of February 24, 2009, the immediate need is to have face-to-face meetings between our technical personnel to work on the short term solutions to create efficiencies and begin the long term planning that will contribute to larger benefit both financial and efficiencies. The previously stated time line will still work.

Program contacts:

Wisconsin:

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Minnesota:

- Scott Wiggins, Director, Emergency Communications Networks
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651-201-7546
- Tim Lee, Assistant Director, Electronic Communications
Tim.Lee@state.mn.us
651-234-7963

INTERSTATE COORDINATION OF PASSENGER RAIL PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION ACTIVITIES

Project Description: Coordination with the State of Minnesota on the development of Midwest Regional Rail Initiative passenger rail service in the federally-designated Chicago-Milwaukee-Madison-St. Paul Corridor.

Potential future activities include: 1) Coordination of short-term Stimulus project funding requests, 2) Joint Preliminary Engineering and NEPA environmental work for future service. 3) Coordination of related on-going planning and engineering work in the Minneapolis-Duluth/Superior Corridor

Opportunities for improved efficiency and/or financial benefits:

Wisconsin

- Joint planning and engineering work can have lower costs than two independent studies;
- Coordination upfront can reduce the need to redo work done independently.

Minnesota

- Joint planning and engineering work can have lower costs than two independent studies;
- Coordination upfront can reduce the need to redo work done independently.

Analysis: WisDOT and MN DOT rail staff have jointly participated on the MWRRI Steering Committee since 1996. We also communicate by conference calls and meet regularly. Our last joint meeting was in Eau Claire on January 29, 2009.

Possible barriers to implementation: For both states, lack of federal funding, lack of state funding if match is required.

Analysis: They were identified based on discussions between the two DOT's.

Confidence in achieving efficiency and/or financial benefits: Medium to High confidence that there will be efficiency and/or financial benefits.

Is this issue sufficiently developed for public discussion? Yes, although this issue will require on-going agency staff discussions.

Timeline for implementation: Continued discussion with WisDOT and MN DOT rail staff between now and June 17 deadline for publication of federal recovery funding guidelines for passenger rail projects. Actual joint planning and project implementation work could continue for several years. The current MWRRI schedule indicates that with adequate federal and state funding, service to St. Paul could be initiated during the 2015-2016 time period.

Program contacts:

Wisconsin: Ron Adams, (608) 267-9284, ron.adams@dot.state.wi.us
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Minnesota: Mike Schadauer, (651) 366-4161, mike.schadauer@dot.state.mn.us
Bill Gardner, (651) 366-36654, william.gardner@dot.state.mn.us
Tim Spencer, (651) 366-3702, timothy.spencer@dot.state.mn.us

WISCONSIN HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

MULTI-FAMILY ASSET MANAGEMENT;

Performance Based HUD Contract.

Both the Authority, and our sister agency Minnesota Housing Finance Agency, have extensive asset management duties overseeing HUD multi-family properties. Those duties include annual visits to the various HUD properties to assess the condition of the property and other compliance matters. This requires our respective staffs to have significant travel schedules and, therefore, costs. It would be beneficial if the Authority and the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency could “share” staff to undertake these asset management functions on properties along the border.

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits

Under the current HUD contracts, potential benefits for the Authority and the Agency range from more efficient use of staff time by rationalizing geographical coverage areas to savings of personnel costs—both in travel reimbursement as well as potential reduction of staff through sharing of resources between the two entities. These savings should be able to be achieved with no decrease in the services provided to the residents of our respective states. Savings would consist of potential savings both in travel cost as well as ultimately, personnel.

Additionally, HUD is in the process of re-writing the existing contracts and anticipates rebidding this work nationally within the next 18-24 months. A primary objective of HUD is reducing costs associated with the asset management requirements. By beginning potential partnerships with other states and private entities now, the Authority and the Agency are likely to better position ourselves to successfully win a rebid of these contracts in the future, protecting our income stream.

Possible Barriers to Implementation

The Authority doesn't believe that there are any statutory barriers in implementing such an initiative. However, both the Authority and the Minnesota Housing Finance Authority would need to receive sign-off from HUD to allow such a sharing of personnel under the HUD compliance contract.

Timeframe for Implementation

Overall, the implementation of this initiative could happen relatively quickly. It would require extensive discussions both internally as well as between the two state agencies to determine the most effective way to coordinate the asset-management function. It will take longer to capture some of the potential cost savings if this initiative is implemented as staffing efficiencies would occur most likely through natural staff attrition.

Program Contacts

Wisconsin: Rae Ellen Packard 608-266-6622 and Chris Gunst 608-261-5930

Minnesota: Bob Odman 651-296-2172

SINGLE-FAMILY AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT; FINANCIAL EDUCATION AND HOME BUYER OUTREACH SEMINARS.

A core component of both the Authority's, as well as the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency, is to provide homebuyers financial education throughout our respective states. We do this through live seminars as well as video conferencing in order to provide these services statewide. With the growing availability of video technology, both housing agencies have already increased the frequency of homebuyer educational seminars particularly in rural areas while maximizing current staffing levels and reducing travel and other costs associated with these events.

Both states have a Workforce Housing outreach which allows counseling agencies, lenders and real estate professionals to create housing teams and reach out to employers on the value of providing solid financial literacy skills, homebuyer education, credit counseling and often down payment assistance to their employees. In the geographic areas near our borders, it makes sense to collaborate with these employer visits and presentations so employees in either state can benefit.

WHEDA is looking to expand the use of Community Land Trust homeownership model within the state by presenting regional outreach and training to local municipal leaders. Some of the municipalities that have expressed interest and need are along the MN/WI border. Minnesota has a longer history of encouraging and implementing CLT models. Again, perhaps this is not going to be a great money saver, but certainly will build on coordinated efforts and programs that the consumer living nearby can benefit from either program, rather than finding it only available on one side of the river.

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits

While each respective Agency has seen the benefits of video conferencing of homebuyer financial education classes, a coordination of efforts between the two agencies should create efficiencies, including, a greater number of classes, thereby serving more locations without an increase in cost and, perhaps, achieving some degree of savings through this coordination.

In addition to the shared technological outreach to consumers, Minnesota has a successful Homeownership Center model providing a strong collaboration and leadership to the state's housing counselors. It is likely that there will be benefit to Wisconsin learning from this Center on: how to create such a resource, what WHEDA's role could be in this, and how this collaboration could be a central resource to Wisconsin counseling agencies and an opportunity for saving money at the same time.

By sharing Workforce Housing outreach both agencies can have some savings on travel and staff time, but the primary benefit would be to the employer and employees.

Possible Barriers to Implementation

The Authority doesn't believe there are any statutory barriers in implementing such an initiative. Logistics would have to be coordinated by the two agencies and the technology provider, UW Extension, will also have to be integrated into these efforts.

Implementation of a Homeownership Center would be a long-term project, but seems as though it would be a great direction to move to for strong collaboration throughout the state.

Implementation of mutual programs for Community Land Trust would not take long to implement, since Minnesota has a long history of CLT involvement already.

Timeframe for Implementation

Implementation could happen relatively quickly. It will require increased communication both from a marketing, as well as a logistical perspective, but a quick concentrated effort should be able to bring the initiative operational.

Implementation of a Homeownership Center would be a long term project, but seems as though it would be a great direction to move to for strong collaboration throughout the state.

Coordinating a Workforce Housing outreach could happen relatively quickly with a coordination meeting of those responsible for this outreach to create the plan for implementation.

Implementation of mutual programs for Community Land Trust would not take long to implement, since Minnesota has a long history of CLT involvement already.

Program Contacts

Wisconsin: Diane Schobert, 608-266-0191, Chris Gunst, 608-261-5930, and John Schultz
414-227-2292

Minnesota: Connie Hoyer 651-296-2172

MULTI-FAMILY UNDERWRITING AND LENDING; LOW-INCOME

HOUSING TAX CREDIT PROGRAM

Both the Authority and the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency are the designated administrators for the federal Low-Income Housing Credit “LIHTC” Program for our respective states. The LIHTC program provides equity to qualified multi-family housing projects, either new construction or rehab, creating affordable housing units as well as economic growth. However, due to the economic conditions of the last year, the LIHTC program has been adversely affected as the value of the credits has declined by approximately 25%. The production of affordable housing units has slowed to a trickle. We believe that a shared effort by the Authority and the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency to market the LIHTC program could attract investment to our respective states and help reignite the affordable housing sector.

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits

Investors in the LIHTC market have traditionally been huge, national businesses. While in times of plenty and prosperity, this fact has not been particularly important as there was so much money available for investment that more rural, Midwestern states received their share. However, with the market contraction, investment has fled the Midwest for the urbanized regions on the two coasts. We believe, however, that an aggressive outreach campaign targeted on investing in Wisconsin and the region can both attract some of these investment dollars as well as develop new investors. Working with Minnesota Housing Finance Agency will allow both entities to target a greater number of potential investors as well as the ability to share cost. The substantial benefit of this initiative would not be so much budgetary savings, as it would be growing the affordable housing market sector and lowering the cost of construction.

Possible Barriers for Implementation

There are no statutory barriers in implementing this initiative and the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency is also very interested in working together. The real barrier is to overcome the difficulties of the LIHTC market. It is quite possible that this effort done effectively and coordinated with Minnesota will still not be able to overcome the lack of capital at the national level as well as the investment bias favoring investments in large, urban based housing projects.

Timeframe for Implementation

The Authority is already in the midst of planning an outreach push to attract LIHTC investors that is expected to culminate in a series of investor meetings in April. We would hope to integrate the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency into these efforts and expand the scope of the outreach in short-order, late spring or early summer.

Program Contacts:

Wisconsin: Rae Ellen Packard 608-266-6622 and Chris Gunst 608-261-5930

Minnesota: Bob Odman 651-296-2172

Additional opportunities for coordination of efforts between the Authority and Minnesota Housing Finance Authority to improve service and capture efficiencies

- Exploring a joint marketing of our single-family housing products. While the actual products are state specific, the two agencies share a common mission of increasing homeowners by providing first-time home buyers an excellent mortgage product. There should be opportunities to combine marketing efforts to highlight the benefits of homeownership as well as strengthening and coordinating homebuyer education efforts mentioned above.
- Sharing experiences and, potentially, technologies of the Agencies' respective lending processes and practices. While funding and servicing loans are fundamentally state-specific activities, efficiencies should be gained by working closely with Minnesota Housing Finance Agency to understand how each Agency operates and develop "best practices".

DEPARTMENT OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

**Department of Workforce Development
Unemployment Insurance**

UI - Debit card/Shared value card services

Wisconsin's UI program would piggyback on Minnesota's contract to provide debit card/shared value card services.

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits

- **Wisconsin:** Reduced procurement costs and timelines for Wisconsin to establish a debit card. It is expected that the Minnesota vendor (US Bank) would provide better service than Wisconsin's current debit card vendor. Estimated cost savings on postage and supplies of \$1.44 million.
- **Minnesota:** Having two states on the contract may improve both state's long term bargaining leverage with the vendor.

Possible Barriers to Implementation

- **Wisconsin:** State procurement laws and rules.
- **Minnesota:** State procurement laws and rules.

Timeline for Implementation

Feasibility to be explored by procurement offices.

Time: One month.

Implementation: Several months; dependent on IT systems resources in Wisconsin.

Program Contacts

- **Wisconsin:**
Hal Bergan, UI Administrator
- **Minnesota:**
Kathy Nelson, UI Director

**Department of Workforce Development
Unemployment Insurance**

UI - Benefits Modernization IT Project

Minnesota will provide specific information on their recently completed benefits modernization IT project. Wisconsin will utilize most powerful elements in their ongoing modernization efforts.

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits

- **Wisconsin:** Wisconsin will be able to take advantage of Minnesota's recently completed system work to provide design ideas for their short term and long term system improvements.
- **Minnesota:** N/A

Possible Barriers to Implementation

- **Wisconsin:** None, though both agencies are very busy with the flood of unemployment claims.
- **Minnesota:** Same

Timeline for Implementation

Within the next six months, possibly much sooner.

Program Contacts

- **Wisconsin:**
Hal Bergan, UI Administrator
- **Minnesota:**
Kathy Nelson, UI Director

**Department of Workforce Development
Unemployment Insurance**

UI - Maximize Federal Reimbursement for Administrative Costs

Wisconsin and Minnesota would compare methodologies on how to maximize federal reimbursement for administrative costs. Wisconsin has been very successful at this and the states may be able to learn from each others practices.

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits

- **Wisconsin:** N/A
- **Minnesota:** Minnesota should be able to improve its federal funding.

Possible Barriers to Implementation

- **Wisconsin:** None
- **Minnesota:** None

Timeline for Implementation

Within six months.

Program Contacts

- **Wisconsin**
Hal Bergan, UI Administrator
- **Minnesota**
Kathy Nelson, UI Director

**Department Of Workforce Development
Division of Vocational Rehabilitation**

Voc Rehab - Coordinate and Collaborate on national employer relationship building and job placement opportunities.

Minnesota and Wisconsin VR leadership will construct an inter-agency Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to share resources and stimulate employer commitments to the hiring of persons with disabilities and job placement outcomes.

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits

- **Wisconsin:** The MOU will increase the specific interagency employer outreach and placement activities and actions, utilizing existing staff and budget resources, with the goal of increased employment outcomes for VR consumers of both agencies
- **Minnesota:** See above

Possible Barriers to Implementation

- **Wisconsin:** None
- **Minnesota:** None

Timeline for Implementation

- Can be implemented within six months

Program Contacts

- **Wisconsin:**
 - Charlene Dwyer, DVR Administrator
 - Manuel Lugo, DVR Deputy Administrator
 - Mike Greco, Consumer Services Bureau Director
 - Jean Rogers, Regional Administrator
- **Minnesota:**
 - Kim Peck, VR Director, General Agency

**Department of Workforce Development
Division of Vocational Rehabilitation**

Voc. Rehab - Business Enterprise Program (BEP) coordination and collaboration

Both Minnesota and Wisconsin VR agencies manage Business Enterprise Programs (BEPs) that promote employment opportunities in vending and cafeteria services for blind and visually impaired individuals.

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits

- **Wisconsin:**

- Eliminate duplication. The Minnesota training program and its management structures will be evaluated for best practices in efficiencies and effectiveness which will be shared via an inter-agency report with the Program Administrators.

In particular, an evaluation of the cost efficiencies and effectiveness of Wisconsin BEP utilizing the Minnesota BEP vendor training resources will be examined and recommendations will be made to the Program Administrators during 2009.

- Wisconsin is also interested in assessing other BEP management efficiencies that could be achieved in a contractual partnership with the Minnesota VR agency for the Blind

- **Minnesota:**

- Minnesota VR agency for the Blind already has a robust and well designed training program. Providing training for Wisconsin DVR consumers will further utilize built in training capacity making the training program more cost effective.

Possible Barriers to Implementation

- **Wisconsin:** Although the Minnesota training program is well designed, there may be concerns by some Wisconsin DVR consumers with going out of state for the program
- **Minnesota:** None

Timeline for Implementation

- The evaluation and memorandum of agreements can be completed in less than six months.
- Wisconsin DVR Consumers could start attending as early as July 2009.

Program Contacts

- **Wisconsin**
Charlene Dwyer, DVR Administrator
- **Minnesota**
Chuck Hamilton, VR Director, Services for the Blind

**Department of Workforce Development
Division of Vocational Rehabilitation**

Voc. Rehab - Improved coordination of qualified sign language interpreter and orientation and mobility instructor resources

Improved coordination of qualified sign language interpreter and orientation and mobility instructor resources which are in short supply in both states.

The service resources available in both states will be identified and a plan for coordinating and improving access to these services will be developed. The use of distance technology will be examined for the delivery of sign language services across state borders.

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits

- **Wisconsin:** Combining the available interpreter resources in both states will increase availability of interpreters to both Minnesota and Wisconsin VR programs. This will reduce the length of time to arrange for appointments. It will increase competition and may also increase the number of interpreters interested in providing services by increasing the available market
- **Minnesota:** Same as above

Possible Barriers to Implementation

- **Wisconsin:** May need to negotiate common fee and travel cost rates
- **Minnesota:** Same as above

Timeline for Implementation

Research resources available and best methods of collaboration can be done in the next six months. Sign language services delivered through a video-conferencing mode may or may not take longer and will rely on broadband infrastructures in both states.

Program Contacts

- **Wisconsin**
Charlene Dwyer, DVR Administrator
- **Minnesota:**
 - Kim Peck, VR Director VR General Agency Services
 - Chuk Hamilton, VR Director Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired

Department of Workforce Development

Voc. Rehab - Work Opportunity Tax Credit (Wotc)

Automated System To Accept And Process Wotc Application On-Line Or In Batch

DET is working to develop an automated system to accept and process WOTC application on-line or in batch. The system will have edit checks to prevent submission of incomplete or inaccurate applications, will cross-check other automated systems for eligibility, and issue automated certifications and denials.

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits

- **Wisconsin:** Estimated development costs are \$462,000. We could share the development costs and investigate operating the system on behalf of Minnesota. Automating the system would allow us to reduce staffing costs and levels from approximately five FTE to two.
- **Minnesota:** Minnesota could share in the development costs and the long-term operating costs by having Wisconsin process claims under the program.

Possible Barriers to Implementation

- **Wisconsin:** We are moving very quickly on development and haven't had time to consult directly on potential technical or policy issues.
- **Minnesota:** Technical and or policy issues may exist.

Timeline for Implementation

The system will be launched in phases beginning in May of 2009 and wrapping up in December of 2009.

Program Contacts

- **Wisconsin:**
Ron Danowski, DET Division Administrator
Tim Hinline, Management Information Chief, IT Coordination Section
- **Minnesota:**
Julie Toske, Director

Department of Workforce Development

JOB CENTER OF WISCONSIN

Labor Exchange Systems

Minnesota has been implementing changes to their labor exchange system in recent months. We have been building the Job Center of Wisconsin. Wisconsin has a centralized approach to job orders or the access to job advisors through Call Center Anywhere (CCA). There may be ways to gain some efficiency and to take advantage of economies of scale through sharing the technology and staff.

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits

- **Wisconsin:** Since moving to the CCA system and approach for taking job orders we have reduced the number of staff taking job orders from 30-35 FTE per week to less than 10. We could investigate operating the system on behalf of Minnesota. We are taking more job orders than before and the quality and consistency of orders has increased.
- **Minnesota:** Minnesota could share in operating costs by having Wisconsin process job orders under the program.

Possible Barriers to Implementation

- **Wisconsin:** Potential technical or policy issues may exist.
- **Minnesota:** Technical and or policy issues may exist.

Timeline for Implementation

The system is already in place in Wisconsin. Given short-term recovery priorities, completing the process in six months may be difficult. If we move quickly, it is possible something could be done by December 31, 2009.

Program Contacts

- **Wisconsin:**
Ron Danowski, DET Division Administrator
Brian Solomon, Director, Job Service Bureau
- **Minnesota:**
Erik Aamo, Director

Department Of Workforce Development Work Keys/Work Readiness Assessment and Certificate System

Minnesota has been participating in two pilot projects on Assessment and Work Readiness Certification. Wisconsin is interested in exploring these two areas also.

By sharing the results of the Minnesota pilot projects and building on their experience, Wisconsin could possibly move faster and less expensively in researching and implementing them.

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits

- **Wisconsin:** Wisconsin could benefit from the experience of Minnesota in piloting the projects. This could free up WIA resources planned to be used to pilot the efforts in Wisconsin to look at other potential approaches or tools. It is possible that the two states could use their combined purchasing strength to obtain the Work Keys or certification at a reduced cost to for both states.
- **Minnesota:** It is possible that the two states could use their combined purchasing strength to obtain the Work Keys or certification at a reduced cost to for both states.

Possible Barriers to Implementation

- **Wisconsin:** Potential technical or policy issues may exist. The affects on the acceptance by the public would be minimal as neither state has these systems widely available to the public at this time.
- **Minnesota:** Technical and or policy issues may exist. The effects on the acceptance by the public would be minimal as neither state has these systems widely available to the public at this time.

Timeline for Implementation

Given the complexity of the projects, completing the process in six months is unlikely.

Program Contacts

- **Wisconsin:**
Ron Danowski, DET Division Administrator
Brian Solomon, Director, Job Service Bureau
- **Minnesota:**
Rick Caligari, Director

Department of Workforce Development

CAREER PATHWAYS

Wisconsin and Minnesota have been participating in the Joyce Foundation “Shifting Gears” project. The project seeks to help low income working adults increase their skills and incomes through adult basic education by identifying career pathways for many occupations. The project would provide an accessible information system that could be used to help students identify and map career pathways through a website both states could use.

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits

- **Wisconsin:** The estimated development cost for the site is approximately \$150,000. Annual operating and upkeep costs are estimated to be approximately \$100,000 per year. The states could share in the development, implementation and operating costs of the site.
- **Minnesota:** See above.

Possible Barriers to Implementation

- **Wisconsin:** The effects on the acceptance by the public would be minimal as neither state has these systems widely available to the public at this time.
- **Minnesota:** The effects on the acceptance by the public would be minimal as neither state has these systems widely available to the public at this time.

Timeline for Implementation

Given the complexity of the projects, completing the process in six months is unlikely.

Program Contacts

- **Wisconsin:**
Ron Danowski, Division Administrator
Linda Preysz, Special Projects Manager, Division of Employment and Training
- **Minnesota:** Mary Schmidt

**Department Of Workforce Development
Equal Rights Division**

Labor Standards And Prevailing Wage Complaint Forms

Minnesota Labor Standards has expressed an interest in obtaining access to Wisconsin's labor standards and prevailing wage complaint forms. Currently, Minnesota does not have complaint forms in these areas that it makes available to the general public. Minnesota is considering adopting forms for this use.

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits

- **Wisconsin:** None.
- **Minnesota:** Currently Minnesota takes 100% of their labor standards and prevailing wage complaints over the telephone. This process involves a lot of staff time in screening and taking complaints. If Minnesota were to make complaint forms available on their website and in paper form it has the potential to free-up some staff time.

Possible Barriers to Implementation

- **Wisconsin:** Wisconsin has made our forms available to Minnesota.
- **Minnesota:** Improved efficiency.

Timeline for Implementation

Minnesota has not announced any timeline for making a decision on whether to begin using complaint forms. However, a decision will likely be made within the next six months and if Minnesota decides to use forms, Minnesota should be able to implement that decision in six months.

Program Contacts

- **Wisconsin:**
Jennifer Ortiz, ER Administrator
- **Minnesota:**
Roslyn Wade

Department Of Workforce Development Workers Compensation

Collaboration For Workers Compensation Voluntary Mediation Sessions

Collaboration for workers compensation voluntary mediation sessions to settle pending claims prior to formal hearings being held.

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits

- **Wisconsin:** In helping Wisconsin injured employees and employers save mileage and other costs, Minnesota will cross train our licensed mediators to offer workers' compensation mediations for Wisconsin workers' compensation cases on a fee-for-service contract basis. This will be available to Wisconsin residents who reside within a sixty mile radius of our shared geographic border.
- **Minnesota:** The Minnesota mediators must be trained by the Wisconsin WCD in the Wisconsin WC law (ch. 102, Wis. Stats., DWD 80 & 81 Wis. Adm. Code), important case law and WCD policy before they are permitted to mediate Wisconsin cases.

Possible Barriers to Implementation

- **Wisconsin:** With compromise agreements in Wisconsin employees can lose their right to make claims for further medical expense resulting from work-related injuries. In Minnesota employees may not lose their right to claim further medical expense following settlements.

Wisconsin and Minnesota have different parties to WC cases. In Wisconsin, the parties are primarily employees, employers, insurance carriers and state funds. In Minnesota health care providers and health insurance carriers and plans are also given the status of parties and have the right to appear as parties in WC cases.

The WCD currently schedules WC cases in three (3) cities that border Minnesota; La Crosse, Hudson and Superior. For most Wisconsin residents, the travel distance to one of these cities will likely be less than travel to the Twin Cities or Duluth where Minnesota has WC offices. Many attorneys representing employers and WC insurance carriers are located in the Milwaukee area and may object to traveling to the Twin Cities for a mediation session that will not result in an enforceable settlement.

- **Minnesota:** Staff would have to be cross-trained on Wisconsin laws and procedures

Timeline for Implementation

A letter will be sent to Governors Doyle and Pawlenty indicating that staff will be further pursuing collaboration and a cost benefit analysis to confirm or reconsider initial assessments.

Program Contacts

- **Wisconsin:**
Frances Huntley Cooper, WC Administrator
- **Minnesota:**
Jayne J. Jones, Senior Executive Director of Outreach, Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry

Department of Workforce Development Workers Compensation

Workers Compensation Injury and Claims Research

Within workers' compensation, the current issues of policy reforms are nationally topical and we believe that our two states could be duplicating policy reform research for legislative recommendations and rulemaking. We will continue sharing work product on policy reforms to eliminate duplication of time and cost. In addition, Minnesota will offer a minimal fee for service contract for any statistical research reports needed by Wisconsin's workers' compensation division.

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits

- **Wisconsin:** Lower costs to program and efficiency. The Wisconsin Worker's Compensation Division has partnered with the Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene, Division of Public Health Informatics and Surveillance, for a robust and viable research program. Reports produced present detailed information on compensable claims by year of injury; indemnity due is summarized and broken out by gender, body part, cause of injury, nature of injury and county where the injury occurred.

The information is also broken out by North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS) codes, which is very useful for epidemiologists and other researchers. Given the nature of this program, consideration should be given to Wisconsin doing statistical research for Minnesota, especially in the area of federally required OSHA and CFI reports.

- **Minnesota:** Lower costs to program by combining

Possible Barriers to Implementation

- **Wisconsin:** None
- **Minnesota:** Will review procurement contracts for total costs from their contractor or their current staff.

Timeline for Implementation

A letter will be sent to Governors Doyle and Pawlenty indicating that staff will be further pursuing collaboration and a cost benefit analysis to confirm or reconsider initial assessments.

Program Contacts

- **Wisconsin:**
Frances Huntley Cooper, WC Administrator
- **Minnesota:**
Jayne J. Jones, Senior Executive Director of Outreach, Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry

Department of Workforce Development Workers Compensation

Uninsured Claims and Bill Review Shared Contract

Currently, both of our states regulate uninsured workers' compensation claims and handle them differently. Minnesota does uninsured claims in-house and Wisconsin handles claims through a third party administrator. We would like to explore a cost-savings study of a shared-service contract for Minnesota to also handle Wisconsin's claims instead of a third party administrator. In addition, we believe by collaborating and negotiating a bill review contract together we will be in a better position to negotiate a contract on better terms and, therefore, lowering cost.

Opportunities for Improved Efficiency and/or Financial Benefits

- **Wisconsin:** Lower costs to program.
- **Minnesota:** Lower costs to program.

Possible Barriers to Implementation

- **Wisconsin:**

The Wisconsin Uninsured Employers Fund (UEF) has a very cost beneficial contract with the ASU Group to provide third party administrator service. The ASU TPA services bid was more than 50% lower than the next lowest bid.

For the 2005 to 2006 contract period the total cost was \$55,215. For the 2006-2007 period, the total cost was \$45,890. For the current year, the un-audited estimate TPA cost is \$76,200.

For the calendar year 2008, the total bill review reductions were \$116,976.42. The total cost for the bill review services was \$18,249.49.

- **Minnesota:** Will review procurement contracts for total costs from their contractor.

Timeline for Implementation

A letter will be sent to Governors Doyle and Pawlenty indicating that staff will be further pursuing collaboration and a cost benefit analysis to confirm or reconsider initial assessments.

Program Contacts

- **Wisconsin:**
Frances Huntley Cooper, WC Administrator
- **Minnesota:**
Jayne J. Jones, Senior Executive Director of Outreach, Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry