Research Summary

Transportation Library Connectivity & Development Pooled Fund Study, TPF-5(237)

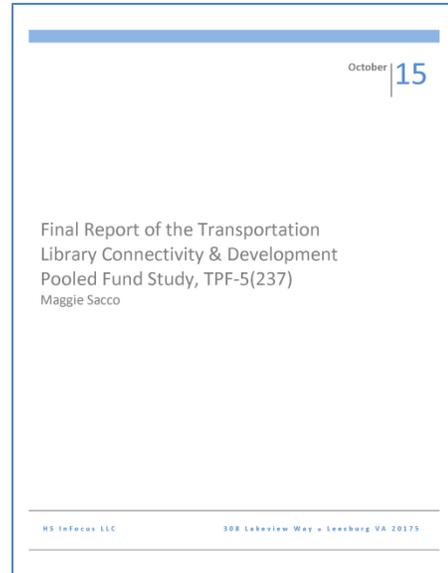

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Final Report of the Transportation Library Connectivity & Development Pooled Fund Study, TPF-5(237)
Maggie Sacco

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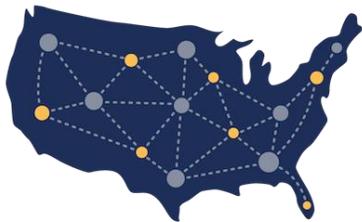
Traditionally, a small group of libraries have been responsible for providing information service within the transportation community to support practitioners and decision-makers. This Transportation Pooled Fund (TPF), with Missouri Department of Transportation as lead state, was developed to support and evaluate collaborative library development.

Supporting the work of the previous study TPF-5(105), the two main goals were 1) to operate a functional library consortium and 2) to enhance existing efforts to develop a national transportation information infrastructure using Transportation Knowledge Networks (TKNs) within the parameters of the pooled fund program.

The study's Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) members created a scope that provided members with the traditional benefits of a typical library consortium including increased access to subscription information resources through group discounts, training and professional development opportunities, increased networking and resource sharing, outreach assistance and technical library services support.

Although library services can be supported locally, collaboration among consortium members allowed for shared problem solving, resource access, as well as time and cost savings through best practices, defrayed costs and collective purchasing power. All of these things are critical in an era of real-time communication.

In addition to consortium benefits, the study provided products and solutions to fill needs within the transportation research and information community

Over the course of the five year project, the number of members remained mostly constant at 22 with representation by 23 states overall. A membership tier structure outlined benefits by investment level.

Major project results include:

- **Provided technical guidance to members**, focusing on smaller libraries with solo

librarians, while emphasizing an increased reliance on self-sustaining networks.

- **Promoted the value of transportation library and information services**. One example of how we promoted our work and the value of libraries was the publication *Proving Your Library's Value: A Toolkit for Transportation Librarians*.
- **Conducted an annual meeting and workshop**, in conjunction with related events, to help members demonstrate the value of library and information services to their customers. One example was holding co-located meetings with regional TKNs whenever possible.
- **Managed the interactive content management system (CMS) website**, including tracking and reporting information. Provided limited access to server space. One example was providing a hosting space for two wikis on digitization and data management.
- **Collaborated with stakeholder groups** such as the National Transportation Library, the AASHTO RAC Transportation Knowledge Network (TKN) Task Force and other groups to enhance communication between transportation librarians, specifically to support their projects as they help grow the TKNs.
- **Paid OCLC and other subscription costs** for eligible Pooled Fund members. Group subscription examples include Library of Congress cataloging tools and LibGuides.
- **Paid for professional meeting attendance** for eligible Pooled Fund members. The most valued meeting attended was the Special Libraries Association annual conference.
- **Implemented focused research and technology projects**, as proposed by members. Highlighted projects include management of multiple cataloging projects, creation of a Transportation Knowledge Management interactive calendar, and

developing guidelines based on the project for Improvement of Research Report Distribution and Access and Promotion of More Effective Use of Technical Report Documentation Page, USDOT Form 1700.7. Overall, these projects have benefitted the transportation community at large.

Project Information

PROJECT NAME: Transportation Library Connectivity & Development Pooled Fund Study, TPF-5(237)

PROJECT START/END DATE: May 2011 through September 2015

PROJECT COST: $1,525,285

LEAD CONTRACTOR: HS InFocus LLC

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