Rural Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) Program

Photo Source: USDOT

As new ITS technologies evolve toward products ready for the marketplace, the ITS Joint Program Office (JPO) focuses on transitioning federally funded innovations into adoption and widespread use in the rural environment. Recognizing that ITS in a rural context is a multifaceted endeavor, the ITS JPO's Rural ITS Program seeks to help rural, regional, and multistate stakeholders from a cross section of backgrounds to affirmatively affect transportation in rural areas. This includes representatives who are community members; elected officials; emergency responders; communication and information technology professionals; land use planners; economic development managers; and infrastructure, electrical, transportation, and safety engineers.

The goals of the Rural ITS Program are to identify and select ITS initiatives based on the unique transportation needs and deployment challenges in rural areas; share noteworthy practices from successful implementation in rural, regional, and multistate environments; and express the value to rural communities of these ITS technology solutions. The program includes five elements:

- National Rural ITS (NRITS) Conference
- Case Studies and Noteworthy Practices
- Outreach and Advocacy
- ITS Professional Capacity Building (PCB)
- Technical Assistance.

These program elements provide communication and educational support to facilitate awareness, understanding, acceptance, adoption, and deployment of ITS technologies. Together, these elements advance ITS technologies to wider-scale deployment in rural settings in coordination with other stakeholders at the federal, state, regional, and local levels.

NRITS Conference

The annual NRITS Conference provides participants with an opportunity to network and share experiences within and across a wide variety of ITS disciplines while hearing new and thoughtful perspectives on various ITS topics. The event brings together both traditional and non-traditional ITS users to address issues such as safety, mobility, multi-agency coordination, and workforce development, as well as emergency responder, freight and logistics, and transit issues in a rural context. The ITS JPO has supported the NRITS Conference for more than 25 years to promote the use of ITS to address the challenges that rural, small, and underserved communities face.

Case Studies and Noteworthy Practices

Case studies provide easy access to exciting, innovative rural ITS technologies that agencies have implemented. They model efforts that can inspire an organization into action and to take on their own challenge. Noteworthy rural ITS practices are exemplary approaches that have the capacity to reduce staff time, save money and resources, and meet community goals and objectives.

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Outreach and Advocacy

Outreach and advocacy accelerate deployment through targeted market opportunities and tailored ITS products for rural, small, and underserved communities. A key factor in establishing partnerships that result in knowledge sharing and transfer of next-generation rural ITS is hearing from individuals who have done the work themselves. This educates the public and provides stakeholders with the tools they need to promote deployment of rural ITS.

ITS PCB

The ITS JPO's PCB Program developed the *ITS ePrimer Module 10: Rural and Regional ITS Applications* as a resource for rural communities. The module considers varying contexts, from rural applications to large, multistate, multimodal programs.

- ***ITS ePrimer:*** https://www.pcb.its.dot.gov/eprimer/module10.aspx
- ***Webinar:*** https://www.pcb.its.dot.gov/eprimer/module10p.aspx

Technical Assistance

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has made efforts to support deployment of ITS technology in statewide and rural areas in the United States. In an ongoing effort to continue the support for ITS solutions for rural applications, FHWA provides current information regarding ITS deployment for rural transportation needs as well as links to other organizations that are addressing rural transportation-related issues.

- ***Mobility on Demand:*** https://www.transit.dot.gov/research-innovation/mobilitydemand-mod-sandbox-program.html
- ***Road Weather Research:*** https://www.its.dot.gov/factsheets/roadweather_management.htm
- ***Mobility Services for All Americans:*** https://www.its.dot.gov/research_archives/msaa/index.htm
- ***Accessible Transportation Technologies Research Initiative:*** https://www.its.dot.gov/research_areas/attri/index.htm
- ***Connected Vehicle Pilot Deployment Program:*** https://www.its.dot.gov/pilots/index.htm
  - Curve Speed Warning
  - Work Zone Warnings
  - Stop Sign Gap Assistance
  - Do Not Pass Warning
  - Response, Emergency Staging and Communications, Uniform Management, and Evacuation

How to Get Involved

National Rural ITS Conference

Learn more about the annual conference
www.nrits.org

ITS PCB

Take advantage of training, education, and resources
https://www.pcb.its.dot.gov/

ITS Knowledge Resources

Download summaries on the benefits, costs, deployment levels, and lessons learned for ITS deployment and operations
www.itsknowledgeresources.its.dot.gov/its/itsbcllwebpage.nsf/KRHomePage

ITS Research Programs

Read more detailed descriptions of the ITS JPO's research programs
https://www.its.dot.gov/research_current.htm

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