



MSU's Western Transportation Institute releases mobile version of its popular real-time traffic tool

December 12, 2016 -- Denise Hoepfner, MSU News Service

BOZEMAN -- Just in time for wintry holiday road trips over the river and through the woods, the Western Transportation Institute at Montana State University has released a mobile version of its award-winning One-Stop-Shop online traffic tool for travelers looking for up-to-the-minute information on weather and road conditions.

Like the desktop version, the OSS mobile version provides road conditions and weather information for 11 Western states, including Montana, and includes enhanced features while putting the information right at the motorists' fingertips, said Doug Galarus, senior research scientist and manager of WTI's Systems Engineering, Development and Integration Program.

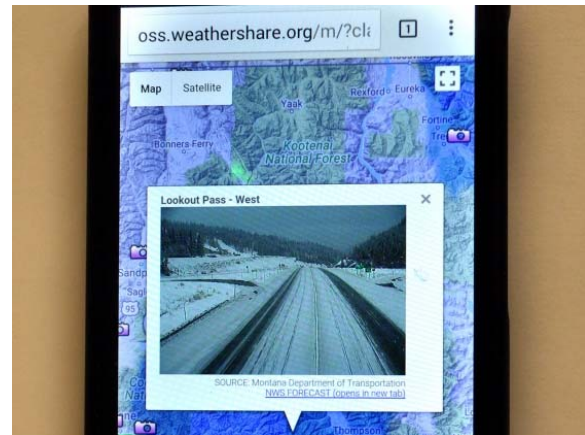
"The mobile version provides closed-circuit television camera images, electronic sign messages, road incidents, chain restrictions, weather conditions and Google traffic information," Galarus said.

Galarus said a big advantage of the user-friendly mobile version is that drivers can find this information in one place, which is especially important with the increased number of motorists and quickly changing road conditions that can occur during the winter holidays.

The systems group at WTI created the mobile version to reach a wider audience, realizing that the traveling public turns to smartphones and tablets for their information. However, Galarus cautions that drivers should not use the OSS while driving.

"Drivers should use it for trip planning or when safely stopped at rest areas and the like," Galarus said. "Or, if there is a passenger in the car, the passenger can help to 'co-pilot,' using the One-Stop-Shop for real-time information."

Last December, the desktop version of the One-Stop-Shop had more than 63,000 user sessions, with 6,190 of those user sessions on Christmas Eve, Galarus said.



MSU's Western Transportation Institute has released an online version of its One-Stop-Shop real-time traffic information tool. Shown is a photo of the OSS mobile version. Photo courtesy WTI.

“We served up more than 3 million camera images in December 2015, with more than 325,000 images served up on Dec. 24,” he said. “With the release of the mobile version, we expect even more visits to the site and hope to help travelers reach their destinations safely.”

The One-Stop-Shop for traveler information was developed in 2014 at WTI and funded by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) and the Western States Rural Transportation Consortium. That same year, the project won an international award from the Intelligent Transportation Society of America.

Unlike websites for state transportation departments, the site’s road information doesn’t stop at jurisdictional boundaries. Combined with real-time weather information, the OSS provides motorists with a seamless decision-making tool for traveler safety.

The National Weather Service, trucking and recreational vehicle groups, broadcast meteorologists, chambers of commerce and numerous local, state and federal government agencies have linked to the OSS website.

“We are excited to release the mobile version of the One-Stop-Shop in time for Christmas travel,” Galarus said. “Hopefully, it will help folks to be aware of conditions they may confront on the roadway, and to make smart, safe decisions accordingly.”

WTI is a collaborative research partnership involving MSU’s College of Engineering, the Montana Department of Transportation and Caltrans. It was established to provide innovative solutions to transportation problems at all levels, from local to international.

To access the mobile OSS, go to <http://oss.weathershare.org/m/>.

To access the desktop OSS, go to: <http://oss.weathershare.org/>.

For more information about WTI, go to www.westerntransportationinstitute.org.

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