

PHMSA CATS Western Region

Tom Finch

720-963-3175

thomas.finch@dot.gov



Western Region Focus Areas

- Public Complaints/Whistleblowers
- Technical Support Re: Pipeline Safety Regulations
- Emergency Response – Information dissemination including incident causes and PHMSA safety actions
- Permits – Liaison between federal/state/local agencies and pipeline operators
- Pipeline Safety Education - public and gov't officials
- Operators' Public Awareness Program Effectiveness Evaluations (PAPEE)



Integrity Management (IM)

- IM Program Working:
 - ILI tools advancement in technology (MFL, geometry, crack, seam, stress/strain) continue to identify integrity threats before they can fail
 - Systems being reassessed and compared to previous ILI results thereby finding changes in pipe condition [NOT GOOD]
 - Fewer incidents caused by:
 - Corrosion
 - Outside Force Damage (dents/gouges)

Western Region (WR) CATS Example 1

- Chevron – Willard Bay, UT (March 2013)
 - Low frequency seam failure
 - Focus on communication (federal, state, local public officials) to cause and mandated remedial actions
 - Ongoing communication through startup and ongoing repairs and tests.



WR CATS Example 2

- Phillips 66 – Lodge Grass, MT (July 2013)
 - Failure due to land movement
 - Facilitated Interaction between Crow Nation leaders and pipeline operator due to cause and follow PHMSA actions
 - Communication with public officials due to remoteness



WR CATS Example 3

- ExxonMobil – Laurel, MT (July 2011)
 - Yellowstone River flooding event
 - Provided information to Unified Command, State and local officials
 - Governors Task Force member aimed at ensuring safety of all water crossings
 - Engaged with Stakeholders during CAO implementation to brief them on progress of safety mandates





WR Safety Challenges

- Low stress and rural gathering lines applicability – Finding those operators who do not think they are regulated by PHMSA
- AC Interference/Lightning
- Landslide Areas
- Seasonal flash flooding events
- Encroachment of urban areas and parallel utility/pipeline construction



Western Region CATS Contact Information

- **Tom Finch:**
- thomas.finch@dot.gov
- Phone: (720) 963-3175

- **Dave Mulligan:**
- david.mulligan@dot.gov
- Phone: (720) 963-3193