

NHDOT SPR2 PROGRAM

RESEARCH PROGRESS REPORT

Project # SPR 42372F		Report Period Year 2022 <input type="checkbox"/> Q1 (Jan-Mar) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Q2 (Apr-Jun) <input type="checkbox"/> Q3 (Jul-Sep) <input type="checkbox"/> Q4 (Oct-Dec)	
Project Title: Use of Drilling Parameters for Enhancing Geotechnical Site Investigations			
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Project Start Date: May 05, 2021	Project End Date: August 31, 2023	Project schedule status: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On schedule <input type="checkbox"/> Ahead of schedule <input type="checkbox"/> Behind schedule	

Brief Project Description:

The standard penetration test (SPT) is a proven tool widely used in providing disturbed soil samples to aid in geotechnical site characterization and estimating soil properties for the design of DOT projects. Testing and sampling are typically done at 5 to 10 feet intervals, and thus between these samples, the use of engineering judgment identifies changes in stratigraphy and the soil's respective properties. The results from these tests are used to develop recommendations and aid in designing the NHDOT Department projects. Continuously performing the SPT is time-consuming, labor-intensive, and not well-suited for many of the soils encountered in New Hampshire and cannot be used to characterize rock. Soils containing large particles such as gravel lead to poor sampling recovery and unreliable results. A technique known as Monitoring-While-Drilling (MWD) makes use of the mechanical response of the drill rig and cutting tools while advancing a borehole. MWD can be used to explore the subsurface in any geological conditions. With such data combined with SPT testing, a continuous quantitative drilling record is produced, and the correlated parameters can be applied more reliably to the design process. Additionally, data to objectively assess site variability is obtained. The drilling parameters collected can provide quality assurance for the soil classifications provided by incomplete testing and sampling exclusively performed by the SPT.

The objectives of this research are as follows:

1. Provide MWD as a tool for geotechnical site characterization to result in a more thorough and accurate representation of subsurface conditions leading to safer and more economical designs. The MWD is an underutilized tool in the process of site characterization for infrastructure projects and is recognized by the Federal Highway Administration EDC-5: Advanced Geotechnical Methods in Exploration (A-GaME) initiative:
https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/innovation/everydaycounts/edc_5/geotech_methods.cfm
2. Support more efficient use of design and construction resources and reduce the chance of delays due to unexpected subsurface conditions. This effort will contribute to the overall goal of improving the efficiency of the NHDOT by increasing the delivery time of subsurface conditions and decreasing the time it takes to complete.
3. Provide data to other efforts: a) depth of bedrock which is of interest to other parties for mapping efforts and water quality studies, b) rock properties and joint orientations to support rock slope stability efforts with the Smart Rock technology and, c) estimates of relative permeabilities to support efforts with the Permeafor.

Scope of Work:

The proposed research will assess the use of MWD to be used on roadway and bridge foundation projects for the NHDOT. The scope of work includes the following tasks:

Task 1- UNH MWD update:

Update the existing UNH MWD system with the latest generation Lutz equipment. This will require the purchase of a new control and recording unit, junction box, and associated software.

Task 2 – MWD installation:

Install MWD system on one of the NHDOT drill rigs and perform an initial evaluation on a site with both soil and rock.

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Task 3 – Torque sensor design:

Design or purchase a torque sensor to be fitted to the mechanically driven drill rig operated by the NHDOT. This design will collaborate with the Montana DOT, the University of Florida, and the Jean Lutz company.

Task 4 – MWD testing:

Using project sites determined with a NHDOT technical advisory group, drilling parameters recorded will be compared to measurements traditionally collected by SPT and the associated soil samples, along with rock cores for deep foundations. The following parameters will be collected: thrust on drilling tool, rotation rate, drilling fluid rate, advance rate, torque, fluid injection pressure, and drilling fluid return rate. In addition, other non-controlled parameters will be documented to include tool wear and changes in drilling fluid composition.

Task 5 – MWD data evaluation:

MWD data obtained in conjunction with key NHDOT projects identified as high-risk projects will be evaluated to determine direct methods to correlate values to specific design parameters and be documented for use on future NHDOT projects.

Task 6 – Collaboration with other users:

Collaborate with other DOT MWD users to develop a database of information for best practices for drilling under various soil and rock conditions.

Task 7- Final report:

Provide a final report summarizing the research and recommendations for implementing the MWD in the everyday site and soil exploration. The information will be summarized to be included in the DOT Geotechnical Manual.

Progress this Quarter (include meetings, installations, equipment purchases, significant progress, etc.):

An initial Technical Advisory Group (TAG) meeting was held over Zoom on June 16, 2021, at 10:30 am. The following items were discussed: 1) Review of the research program and implementation strategy; 2) Review of research needs; 3) Review of project.

This Quarter, we had an amendment to our CPA approved to obtain a newly developed torque sensor (TICOR) by Jean Lutz, capable of measuring torque directly at the top of the drill string. The TICOR sensor will also measure down pressure directly as well as rotation rate, all done wirelessly. This will facilitate the use of the MWD system in the field and provide more accurate measurements without the need for calibrating each drill rig. More importantly, the torque data is essential to the MWD measurements to calculate compound parameters for subsurface characterization in situ.

Once the TICOR is ordered and installed, we will start with comparisons between drilling data and the Standard Penetration Test results.

A portable hand drill has also been purchased in order to perform laboratory and field MWD measurements at shallow depths. This system will be used this coming fall and the results will be compared to the conventional MWD system installed on the NHDOT drill rig. We have successfully tested this system in France on June 17, 2022, with the assistance of Dr. Philippe Reiffsteck (Université Gustave Eiffel).

In parallel, we have also been working and led the MWD Users Group in collaboration with FHWA and the Deep Foundations Institute. Meetings have been held on the third Wednesdays of each month which has provided an excellent opportunity to exchange experiences, analysis approaches and testing equipment, innovations and standards with other users across the United States and worldwide, with more than 80-90 participants at every meeting. The newly acquired TICOR sensor has been widely discussed this Quarter, with presentations from the perspectives of both manufacturer (Jean Lutz) and users in France.

Items needed from NHDOT (i.e., Concurrence, Sub-contract, Assignments, Samples, Testing, etc...):

Once the newly developed TICOR torque sensor is installed on the NHDOT drill rig we will need to collect MWD data from daily drilling activities in the field, as well as any relevant additional testing results (SPT, grain size distribution, RQD, strength, etc.). The drill rig that the NHDOT is currently planning to purchase will also be equipped with the TICOR wireless torque sensor.

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Anticipated research next three (3) months:

Anticipated work for the next Quarter includes additional MWD measurements during drilling activities to be performed by the NHDOT this Summer. Potential site locations will be defined by the NHDOT, according to their demand and availability. We will also continue to perform data analysis and evaluation. Our collaboration with other users will also continue through the MWD Users Group.

Circumstances affecting project: None.

Tasks (from Work Plan)	Planned % Complete	Actual % Complete
<i>Task 1- UNH MWD update:</i>	100	100
<i>Task 2 – MWD installation:</i>	100	80
<i>Task 3 – Torque sensor design:</i>	20	20
<i>Task 4 – MWD testing:</i>	20	5
<i>Task 5 – MWD data evaluation:</i>	15	15
<i>Task 6 – Collaboration with other users:</i>	40	40
<i>Task 7- Final report:</i>	0	0

Barriers or constraints to implementing research results None.