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COMPREHENSIVE STUDY TO UNDERSTAND LONGITUDINAL ERW SEAM FAILURES

Submitted by, Battelle in collaboration with
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The objective of the proposed project is to assist the PHMSA in favorably closing NTSB Recommendation P-09-1 arising from the Carmichael MS pipeline rupture involving an ERW seam, which directed that the PHMSA conduct a comprehensive study of ERW pipe properties and the means to assure that they do not fail in service. The work is anticipated to validate that periodic use of the current ERW seam integrity assessment methods (hydrostatic testing and in-line inspection using a crack-detection tool) are the best means to prevent ERW seam ruptures. The work will address the characteristics of ERW seams that make them susceptible to failure, and it will identify the factors the pipeline operators must consider in order to assure that their ERW pipelines are safe. .

In this quarter, data on Pipeline operator's experience with early generation ERW pipelines, focusing on the effectiveness of in-line inspection and hydrotesting as they apply to verifying the integrity of early generation ERW pipelines has been collected. It is expected that more data will be acquired, but the timing depends on the cooperation of pipeline operators. Delays have been experienced because some operators have requested confidentiality agreements. As new data are acquired they will be added to the current databases. On a programmatic note, the project was restructured from a cofunded project with funding from PRCI with substantial in-kind cofunding to full funding from DOT PHMSA. The change has caused some delays; the challenge is acquire pipe samples and get the program back on schedule.