***TRB COMMITTEE ON ECOLOGY AND TRANSPORTATION (ADC30)***

*Annual Committee Meeting*



*Monday, January 8, 2018 10:15 AM – Noon*

Marriott Marquis, Independence E (M4)

*AGENDA*

*10:15 – 10:25 Welcome and Introductions*

Meeting started at 10:25 am with introductions for all in attendance on site and on the phone (see attached sign in sheet for those in attendance at the conference site).

Phone attendees who identified themselves – Ed Sammans (Louis Berger), Will McGoldrick (SCDOT), Ed Frantz (NYSDOT), Eliza Barrett, Wendy Collinson (Transport Programme Manager, Endangered Wildlife Trust), Julie Kintch (Eco resolutions)

*10:25 – 10:35 Review of Committee Activities since January 2017* —Dan Smith, UCF

Dan presented a slide with a complete statement of the new TRB Harrassment Free Environment policy. Christine Gerencher also noted that the policy is on mobile app. Dan also reviewed the Committee Mission Statement, and noted that it is on the Committee weebly page.

*10:35 – 10:40 Highlights of 2018 Program* — Kris Gade, AzDOT & Dan Smith, UCF

Jeff Gagnon – There were many submittals for the meeting, covering a diversity of subjects. One was on bat selection of bridges in Iowa. Other sessions of note: 514 Poster session tomorrow at 8 am, where there will be 16 posters on current issues in ecology and transportation; Session 598 on technology advances in road ecology science, including on lidar, big data, roadside detection technology. We are co-sponsor for session with ADC10 tomorrow - 843 Communicating Environmental Commitments during construction. Kris Gade noted covers haz mat to species protection, and how commitments get developed during design and then implemented in construction. That session is Wednesday, from 2:30-4 pm.

Other co-sponsored sessions include Session 535 on LIDAR on Tuesday at 10:15; one on Pollinators run by Kris Gade and Fraser Shilling - USFWS to provide an update on status of pollinators, and TXDOT will talk about their programs.

*10:40 – 10:50 TRB Report*—Christine Gerencher, TRB/Jonathan Rubin, Section Chair

Eugene Murray – Summer meeting – there were 26 attendees, held at ICOET ADC30/10 midyear meeting in Salt Lake City. The ICOET conference was hosted by UDOT, Idaho DOT, and included 33 podium sessions, 130 lecturn sessions, 58 posters. seven sessions on partnership, seven on crossings/connectivity, new directions, terrestrial species, aquatic, sustainability, stormwater. The conference also included lightening sessions – 12 different talks in same session on variety of topics. More than 40 attendees

*10:50 – 10:55 Liaison* — Meghan Hedeen, GDOT & Alex Levy, VHB

(Sharing/Partnering related interests with other committees)

Alex Levy presented as a proxy for Meg Hedeen. No report right now, but Alex requested people reach out after meeting to tell him what other committees are working on. Alex noted Patty provided list of research needs for ADA40 to Todd.

*10:55 – 11:00 Committee Communications Coordinator –* Jeff Simmons, Stantec

Jeff Simmons provided a summary of communication efforts in 2017 and looking forward.

* The second newsletter since last year’s TRB Annual Meeting was recently completed, and all newsletters have been uploaded to the Committee weebly page. Jeff thanked all who submitted, as it is recognized we are all busy and it does take time.
* Meeting minutes from last TRB (2017) and May 2017 meeting at ICOET are on the weebly site. Please let Jeff know if there are comments.
* Bios received for committee members are uploaded on the weebly site.
* If you want to be a “friend” of the committee, go to MyTRB.org and register. Also it was requested that everyone make sure their info is up to date.
* For all future newsletter article submittals, we need documentation of permission to print graphics/photos. We may request this as part of the email blast requesting content.
* It was noted that in 2018 we anticipate trying to develop more of a social media program/approach. The plan is to developing a plan, and a request was made that anyone interested in helping, please contact Jeff.
* Some discussion regarding revising the committee poster.

*11:00 – 11:10 Committee Research Coordinator*—Todd Williams, Michael Baker International

* Calls-for-Problem Statements (NCHRP/TERI/TRIS-TRIS & PRP)
* Brief Summary of Research Funding Mechanisms through TRB/AASHTO

Todd Williams- Research provided deadlines for a number of research proposals/grant opportunities. All should be considered approximate.

* NCHRP – mid feb – looking for synthesis research statements
* NCHRP – IDEA proposals
* TERI database – AASHTO collects info – can input year- round, but early May develops 25-25 program and NCHRP statements
* AASHTO may look at eliminating 25-25 program
* 3 programs - planning, environment, and one other program – may replace with one program, slightly reduced in $. Environmental
* Environmental in past - ~$600K, but could get more funding. Maybe decision end of this month?
* AASHTO SCOE (now CES) adding sustainability – not sure how this will translate to opportunities
* SCO Research – now called special committee on research and innovation –
* Funding Program Resources – there is a research funding document – on TRB, but right now dated. New version completed, but has not been posted yet.
* Programs – traditionally have focused on NCHRP, 25-25; only state DOTs, FHWA, AASHTO can submit NCHRP statements - $40 million per year -95-120 submittals typically, and usually fund 45-50 submittals. Todd going to work with Bridget to get info out on how to make winning submittals.
* We have used TERI database to document our efforts
* 3 NCHRP topics (longer term) in 2019, but none made the cut; 3 topics advanced for voting – one looks like it will get approved - Artificial bat habitats, repository for small animal crossing designs
* Todd provided flow chart of research process – would like to show on website.
* Todd said we should prioritizing research topics
* Dan suggested collaboration is important for funding – example – could work with ICOET in developing research topics and funding
* CEE – weekly newsletters – good content on there – resiliency/climate change is big issue – Todd suggested one could link climate change to ecology.

Kris Gade discussed NCHRP study – monarch use by roadsides (study lead is Univ of Minnesota) and came out of AASHTO CES. Kris noted that AASHTO Standing Committee on the Environment (SCOE) is now Committee on Environment and Sustainability (CES). CES is looking at legislative reform, in particular Endangered Species Act, and how changes in Administration may change laws. They will also make suggestions on legislation, rather than eliminating laws. Alex Levy inquired if the Migratory Bird Treaty Act had come up in discussions. Kris Gade indicated that it had been looked at, but given differences in enforcement from state to state, nothing really moved forward.

*11:10 – 11:20 Integrating Conservation and Transportation Planning in the SE US*

* Maggie Ernest, The Wildlands Network DC Office
* Bridget Donaldson, Virginia Roads Working Group

Slide presentations were provided.

Maggie Ernest presented on the Wildland Network-- EO Wilson half earth principal – looked at roads and how to provide habitat/connectivity.

Bridget Donaldson presented on Virginia working group on landscape level conservation.

*11:20 – 11:30 Identifying American Black Bear (Ursus americanus) Highway Crossing Locations in Central Georgia, USA*

* David Jared, GDOT

Presentation at last ICOET meeting.

*11:30 – 11:50 Member and Agency Program and Research Updates*

Dan Buford – liaisons funded through research funds. New level of review – everything goes through secretary’s office – new and slowing down

Environmental Streamlining still priority- particularly for Essential Fish Habitat (EFH), and Endangered Species Act (ESA)

Marlys Osterhues – indicated she would like to look at how we can get rail/FRA more engaged in these type of issues ADC 30 is working on. She suggested an interest in greater collaboration. Dan noted that he would be interested in mortality/crossings for turtles. Working on integration of FHWA principals into FRA projects, and using results of research into projects. Looking to work with State DOTs on rail projects.

Alex asked if there is clearing house for research on freight rail. Marlys indicated there isn’t, and her group is under staffed, with more than 30 EISs ongoing. Joe Burns indicated he has been working with office of sustainability and climate for few months. Catherine Liller - USFWS reopened comment period on service-wide mitigation policy and ESA Comp Mitigation.

Kris Gade – ROW as habitat working group (led by Univ of Chicago) is working on candidate conserve agreement for ROWs for transportation, rail, oil pipelines, transmission lines. Kris will mention this at her talk tomorrow. Wildlife Corridors Conservation Act – likely to be reintroduced in a few months. Create national wildlife corridor system – big component is transportation – corridor crossings. Maggie said she can provide more info.

*11:50 – 11:55 Mid-year Meeting Update –* FAEP, Sept 2018 in Orlando, FL

Dan mentioned the midyear ADC30 meeting; we do not have a firm date yet, and they are still working out agreement with hotel. Dan will send out a message once things are firmed up. Dan anticipates a lot of good field trips, lots done since last ICOET meeting in FL. This includes a visit to a 4000 ft long bridge for wildlife.

Dan recognized a number of committee members and friends for their support over the last year. This includes the individuals below.

Jeff Gagnon – for review of papers/abstracts for the meeting.

Jeff Simmons – for efforts in production of newsletters and other communication materials.

Alex Levy – as outgoing chair, provided guidance and support when needed during transition.

Bridget Donaldson – for her efforts to maintain the committee weebly page/website

Kris Gade – for her efforts in program development.

Todd Williams – for his contributions in tracking research programs and grant opportunities.

*11:55 – 12:00 Closing Remarks*

***Reminder****:* Joint Subcommittee on Animal Vehicle Conflicts ANB20(20)/ADC30(1)

meets Tuesday, Jan 9th, 6:00 - 7:30 PM in Marriott Marquis, Salon 14 (M2)

*12:00 Noon Adjourn*