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

*Annual Committee Meeting*



*Wednesday, January 16, 2019 10:15 AM – Noon*

Marriott Marquis, Archives Room (M4)

Dr. Dan Smith called meeting to order at approximately 10:15 am. He first reviewed the TRB Discrimination and Harassment Policy, and emergency evacuation procedures. Following that, each meeting attendee introduced themselves and their organization (it was noted that a sign-in sheet was circulating during the meeting, and is attached to these notes).

Highlights of the meeting are provided below.

**TRB Report – Christy Gerencher**

* Christy indicated that she will be going to S Africa on behalf of our committee to attend the African Conference for Linear Infrastructure & Ecology. The workshop is organized by Wendy Collinson, and is the African equivalent of our own ICOET conference. It was noted that a number of committee members are going to the conference.
* Jonathan Rubin was not available to attend the meeting today, but Christy noted a number of members have hit their 3 year term. Committee rotation is required now by TRB, to bring new ideas to the table. She also noted that we must rotate members off who have been on the committee for 9 years, or if they are not active.
* Christy suggested that Committee Chair, Dr. Dan Smith, needs to know today if anyone is interested in being on committee.
* Christy noted that there are benefits to being on TRB committees – i.e., you get a discount on the registration for the annual meeting. It is also good to put on your resume, and you never know what opportunities will come up by being on a committee.
* Committee members who are termed out need to be off the committee for one cycle (3 years) and can be reappointed to the committee afterwards.
* Christy also provided info on the current TRB meeting and upcoming events listed below.
  + They estimate this conference had about 14,000 registrants, but they are not sure of actual attendance. The official number comes later.
  + TRB is gearing up for its centennial celebration – this is our 98th year. There are plans to produce a book, and recognize people as part of the centennial celebration.
  + Christy is the chair of TR News, and is looking to provide info/stories of committee members for upcoming issues, and in particular, what we have gotten out of being a committee member.
  + There is an effort to identify critical issues in transportation, and they need our committee’s help in providing input. She referenced a link at the TRB.org website for further information.
  + February 1st a centennial paper is due. This will be a conversational article, and contributions to the article would be welcome.
  + TRB is anticipating big cuts to its budget going forward. Neil Peterson Executive Director has been told by the Secretary of Transportation that substantial cuts are coming in 2021. Federal grant money to DOTs account for ~ 55% of program, and no one expects states will contribute that much going forward. They are looking for other sources of revenue, but there is a lot of uncertainty. TRB is doing a strategic analysis of its organization and committee structure. They are looking for efficiencies, and places to save money.
  + Christy indicated she will keep everyone informed as things develop and info is released.

**TRB Centennial Paper for ADC 30 (Joe Burns)**

* Joe Burns indicated for the record that he is no longer working for USFS. Centennial Paper is going to showcase accomplishments, challenges, etc. Over next couple of months, he and others assisting him have prepared a draft. Joe anticipates that the draft will be circulated today, and we will have two weeks to review. Joe worked with Tom Linkous, Alex Levy, and it will touch upon past, current, future activities of committee.
* Joe read the initial draft to the group. It was noted that concerns related to climate impacts on species and ecological systems in general, are likely to be a substantial concern going forward. Joe asked that comments be sent to Dan Smith, who will forward them to Tom Linkous, Joe Burns, and Alex Levy.
* Dan Smith suggested adding a subcommittee on this to help complete the paper.

**Inter-committee Liaison Report (Alex Levy)**

* Alex noted that Meg Hedeen could not be in attendance at the meeting, as she is stepping into new role at GDOT and could not participate in TRB this year. Therefore, Alex is providing the update on her behalf.
* Alex requested that others in ADC30 who attend other committee meetings with nexus to our committee share what they hear/learn with us.
* There was a suggestion that a brief announcement or article be included in the next newsletter.
  + Dan Smith sent out form for others to take notes on other committee meetings and share that information with the larger group.

**Communications Coordinator Report (Jeff Simmons, Maggie Ernest Johnson)**

* Jeff noted that there still are about 10 committee members who have not submitted bios. It was requested that bios be submitted as soon as possible. We will update as members term out or leave the committee.
* Meeting notes for January 2018 TRB Annual Meeting have been posted on weebly page. Comments are welcome. Jeff noted that he did not attend the mid-year meeting in Florida, and requested that anyone who has notes provide them to him. Dan Smith indicated he had some and would forward them ASAP.
* We published 2 newsletters since last TRB Annual meeting. Most recent one was right before this annual meeting. Up until a few weeks before production/distribution, we were a bit thin on content, but several people responded with articles last minute. A sincere “thank you” goes out to all who submitted articles.
* It was encouraged that people who are interested in participating in the committee go to MyTRB.org and sign up to become a friend.
* Jeff is checking to see if posters and presentations related to ADC30 at TRB can be posted to the weebly page. It is uncertain what restrictions there are regarding server space. Jeff to inquire with Bridget Donaldson on this.
* Maggie then proceeded to lead a discussion regarding use of social media to communicate with committee members and friends, interested individuals, and the public. Maggie noted that a social media survey had been initiated, with the following results:
  + 38 people responded;
  + Responses indicate that most would use Facebook or LinkedIn, although some would use Twitter (not as much);
  + It was generally agreed that social media is a good way to disseminate information and news, particularly to younger members/friends;
  + We need to attract young people to sustain the organization, so it is important we communicate in a way that reaches them. It was also noted that there was a lot of gray hair in the room, and;
  + 89 percent of responders said they would follow ADC30 on social media.
* It was also noted that an effective social media campaign requires a lot of maintenance - you cannot let things slide or else it becomes useless.
* Platforms change, so we need to keep up with the technology and adjust as necessary.
* We need to make sure we are providing info that is relevant and in a form members will use
* One idea that was floated was to utilize a blog with hyperlinks to other sources of information and other platforms
* It was requested that a presentation be made at next years Annual Meeting on social media, addressing such questions as: What should we do? How? Training for committee members? Goals? How sustain? How do we develop a comfortable learning curve, and how do we increase visibility? How to stay current on content?
* Goal of social media campaign is to pull something together that people will actually use.
* It was recommended by Dan Smith that we have a more detailed discussion at ICOET.
* Other questions or thoughts to consider: developing a webinar platform to allow for more frequent meetings rather than current twice per year to move things forward? Need to understand our target audience.
* We will add this to our agenda at midyear meeting (ICOET).

**Committee Research Coordinator Report (Todd Williams)**

* Todd provided a powerpoint of his activities regarding research and grant funds available in 2018 and program changes looking forward. Todd also offered to set up a webinar if requested. Note that Todd’s presentation is included as an attachment by reference.
* Funding sources – there are multiple possibilities, but everything to date is through NCHRP – which requires working through state DOTs to obtain funding.
* The 25-25 Program – part of overall NCHRP program for environmental programs (CES, state DOTs)
* NCHRP- these have been the source of longer term studies and larger grants.
* Key things to remember about these funds:
  + They are funded by DOTs – the topic has to be something of importance to them
  + Whatever the outcome it can be implemented
  + It can be submitted by FHWA, state DOTs, AASHTO Committees
* Most ADC 30 research comes through the 25-25 program
* Todd provided a list of a number of different research programs, and those will be posted on the committee weebly site
* NCHRP Program Update
  + $54.7 Million
  + 111 problem statements received
  + 95 new projects, 16 continuation studies
  + 9 problem statements for environmental projects in 2019, 4 approved
  + Program 20-44 allows for funding to implement research results
  + Also have slush fund for unforeseen needs
* Looking towards 2020 program
  + Problem statements due 11/1 – worked through AASHTO via TERI database
* Todd sent out email in June for Snap Searches
* Lots of resources listed for research programs and funding
* March or April is when selection of proposals will happen
* Suggested that DOT staff talk with their reps in State to push their projects. That should happen between Feb 1 and March 15
* Things that typically have gone to 25-25 are good candidates for synthesis
* Work with Kris Gade to submit through TERI
* Suggested review NCHRP Annual Report
* Research Working Group?
* Critical Issues in Transportation 2019 Report
* Todd willing to organize a call if desired
* Joe suggested people reach out now to get things rolling
* Todd put in plug for Gary McVoy on EMS system perspectives for state DOTs
* Gary McVoy – EMS – monitoring projects for ecological stewardship – Gary provided a brief presentation. Noted that NCHRP EMS IA provides a systems approach.
* Todd noted he could use help and requested volunteers for research group

**Presentation - Introduction to Green Roads (Jeralee Anderson, PhD)**

* Greenroads is a Rating System that was started at TRB ~ 11 years ago
* Rating system for transportation and sustainability – third party
* It is like LEED, but for transportation projects
* Started as a research project at University of Washington
* Calibrated on 130+ projects worldwide
* Mission of Greenroads is education and certification
* 12 mandatory requirements
  + 5 core credit activities
  + Most relevant to us – environment and water categories
  + This system is above and beyond compliance
  + 1-5 pts based on life cycle
  + 4 extra credit activities for innovative practices
  + Working on version 3 of Greenroads now
  + #1 most used transportation rating system in world
  + Can save substantial money on project costs
* Presentation to be posted on committee weebly page and attached by reference.

**Presentation – Sustainable Transportation (Fraser Shilling, PhD)**

* This is an abbreviated version of Sunday workshop at TRB
* Goal is to understand what is sustainable transportation, and can we do it?
* Fraser reviewed definitions for sustainable and environmentally-sustainable
  + He provided a working definition for sustainability from natural resource perspective
  + One benefit is that this approach allows for triple bottom line return
* A fundamental question is are we looking at enough when considering ecosystems as part of sustainability for transportation projects
* Presentation to be posted on committee weebly page and attached by reference.

**Announcements/Remarks/Questions**

* Dan reminded attendees about TR News, and upcoming conferences/events
  + ICOET, which will also be ADC30 mid-year meeting, to be held in Sacremento CA in September
  + ACLIE – in South Africa, coming up in March
* Kris Gade provided a brief update of monarch butterfly CCAA
  + 15 DOTs helping to develop, and it is anticipated that it should come out in Federal Register spring. It is uncertain if government shutdown will delay this.
  + She is encouraged by positive comments from USFWS personnel involved in discussions
* Ed Frantz noted that NYSDOT is about to release results of a 10 year study of travel corridors in Adirondack Park. He anticipates presenting at ICOET. It will be coming out very soon.
* Nova Simpson (NVDOT) spoke about the critter crossing program developed for kids in NV through NVDOT
  + Program includes a basic draft curriculum – worked with local teachers, FHWA, DOT
  + She has thumb drives, and indicated she would be happy to provide for others to review and comment on

**Attachments:** Sign-in Sheets