

MINUTES

TRANSPORTATION RESEARCH BOARD

Business Meeting – ADC30

Committee on Ecology and Transportation (ADC30)

Business Meeting

January 14, 2014, 1:30 PM – 3:15 PM

Washington Hilton Hotel, Columbia Hall 1

Minutes

Prepared and Submitted by:

**Marcia Bowen
Secretary ADC30**



**Marcia Bowen, Vice President
Normandeau Associates**

January 2014

Welcome and Introductions: The meeting was called to order at 1:30. Introductions were made. Ray Schweinsberg, Supervisor of the Contracts Division for Arizona Game and Fish Department was in attendance, participating in his agency's first TRB as our committee's invited "non-traditional stakeholder."

Review of Committee Activities since January 2013: Alex Levy, Senior Ecologist with ARCADIS and Chair of the Ecology and Transportation Committee led the discussion.

Overview of 2014 Program—Julianne Schwarzer, Environmental Protection Specialist, USDOT Volpe Center. Julianne said we had great sessions and great sharing with other committees. The annual meeting sessions included [Emerging Topics in Ecology and Transportation](#), [Innovative Practices in Wildlife Crossings](#), a poster session, and an upcoming session at 3:45-5:30 on [Programmatic Approaches to Environmental and Historic Preservation Review](#), sponsored by four different subcommittees; tomorrow the Animal Vehicle Collision joint subcommittee Safety Data, Analysis and Evaluation (ANB20-2) will have a joint meeting with (10:15-12:00 at the Marriott, co-chairs: Keith Knapp, Director, [Iowa Local Technical Assistance Program](#), Iowa State University and Fraser Schilling, Co-Director, Road Ecology Center, [University of California, Davis](#)).

TRB Report— TRB Senior Program Officer, Christine Gerencher, thanked Bethany, Bridget and Julianne, all who have contributed to the paper review and annual meeting sessions. Next year's meeting will be at the Convention Center, with the Marriott Marquis as the primary hotel. Additional hotels will be available within walking distance or on the metro. Hilton will not be part of the affiliated hotels, although Shoreham and Marriott will be. Reservations at the Marquis will open in August and rooms will go quickly. TRB will ensure all spaces will have Wi-Fi access for all attendees. There will not be conference calling capabilities, as the technology has not advanced to be useful for our meetings. The registration fee will be approximately the same. Every hotel room for the next five years will be at the federal per diem rate. Bob O'Loughlin, Air Quality Technical Service Team Leader, FHWA, Chair of Environment and Energy Section said that this was a record year of attendance, 12,000 including 2,000 international attendees; there was a record number of papers, 5,200 submitted compared to 4,800 last year. There was a record number of workshops (135), 195 posters, and 35 sessions on the theme "Celebrating our legacy anticipating our future". In March, the TRB website will have papers from last 4 meetings plus presentations. TRB sponsored 40 nontraditional stakeholders this year by waiving registration fees. TRB is now allowing two additional members from State DOTs with a possible funding source so they can get to the annual meeting. The 2015 Annual Meeting theme will be *Corridors to the future: Transportation and Technology*, Jan 11-15. Bob noted that the TR News had an environmental theme issue, made possible by lots of help from committee members. This is great exposure for the work that the Committee does. A PDF version is now available on the TRB website at no cost. Bob made note of TR news, which celebrates research in 750-1000 word articles about "research pays off". This is an opportunity for members and friends to highlight their current work.

Alex presented certificates to folks who have contributed to make the annual meeting a success: Daniel Smith, PhD, Research Associate/Adjunct Graduate Faculty, University of Central Florida (UCF) for creating and updating our ADC30 poster; it will be at IENE in Sweden in September. Julianne Schwartz for her work in this annual meeting for presentations and partnering with other committees. Bridget Donaldson, Senior Research Scientist Virginia Center for Transportation Innovation and Research (VCTIR), and Bethany Bacher-Gresock, Major Projects Environmental Lead, Federal Highway Administration, Wisconsin Division coordinated paper reviews and helped determine which become papers or lectern sessions. Marcia Bowen received a certificate for her work on communications and the newsletter.

Liaison Reports—Lars Carlson, PhD, Jacobs requested that anyone who attended another committee meeting send a report to him for inclusion in newsletter. Alex said he had attended the (ADA40) Transportation Needs of National Parks and Public Lands Committee meeting and not a lot was said about ecology. Amanda Hardy, PhD, Assistant Director, North America Program, Wildlife Conservation Society, went to their research subcommittee meeting and they are interested in partnering. Fraser Shilling attended the Sustainable Indicators Subcommittee, which is part of (ADD40) Transportation and Sustainability Committee. Marcia went to the (AW030) Marine Environment Committee. Joe went to the (ADC50) Historic and Archeological Preservation in Transportation Committee, which is of interest because historic often gets combined with endangered species evaluations.

Agency Reports— Recap of 2013 and Plans for 2014

FHWA: Marlys Osterhues, Project Mitigation Team Leader, FHWA Headquarters Office of Project Development & Environmental Review discussed progress on MAP 21 sections related to ecology. Section 1311 on programmatic mitigation: will likely be included in larger planning rulemaking which is not yet out for public comment but should be out later this year.

Section 1305 on programmatic approaches: this section requires public/agency outreach before a rulemaking to encourage programmatic agreements is initiated. FHWA is conducting outreach via “a virtual town hall” and additional listening sessions for state DOTs/agencies/MPOs. Check FHWA’s MAP21 website for additional details. There was a question about availability of federal funds for advance mitigation. Marlys indicated that funding eligibility will not be part of Section 1311. FHWA still plans on developing Q and A’s on section 1106(g). Caltrans is actively working on the issue of advanced mitigation and Marlys recommended tracking the progress of their effort. In addition to the range-wide Indiana Bat effort, FHWA is working with NMFS on a programmatic agreement for sturgeon on the East Coast. Marlys noted that through the EDC2 initiative, State DOTs have identified approximately 50-70 new, updated or expanded programmatic agreements that are potentially being looked at. Jimmy Kagan, Director, Institute for Natural Resources – Portland, Oregon State University asked about sage grouse agreements. There are no current plans for FHWA to initiate a separate sage grouse agreement.

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Catherine Liller, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Transportation Liaison reported on USFWS activities. A range-wide Indiana bat programmatic agreement is being instituted with FHWA and USFWS that covers 22 states. Draft documents are expected in late summer it may be a combination of conservation strategy and an informal programmatic agreement. State DOTs may also be able to have formal programmatic agreements. The northern long eared bat is poised to be listed; Region 3 has draft guidance documents. There is a definite need for further research. FHWA and the Service have developed programmatic consultation guidance for transportation projects that will be available later this year. USFWS working on national bat survey/ monitoring guidance. Joe indicated that cost sharing is needed to conduct large-area surveys that are needed to support programmatic agreements. Other programmatic agreements in the pipeline include Maine DOT programmatic agreement for Atlantic salmon; and NJ DOT for bog turtles.

Kate Kurgan, Environment Program Manager, American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), reported on the Center for Environmental Excellence. They will be updating their programmatic agreement library plus case law database. Practitioners' handbooks are being developed for improving environmental documents plus maintenance facilities.

Joe Burns, National Endangered Species Program Leader, U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Service, reported that the Forest Service published a final rule entitled National Forest System Land Management Planning at 36 CFR 219. These rules guide the development of Forest Plans. Forest Plans may inform regional transportation plans on potential transportation needs in and around National Forests.

The Forest Service is now in the process of reviewing and revising their internal agency guidance within the Forest Service manual (FSM) to implement these new forest planning rules. Some of the FSM revisions may include directives to enhance conservation and recovery efforts under section 7 of the ESA. Such revisions may be proposed this year.

WTI: Pat McGowan, Research Engineer at the Western Transportation Institute at Montana State University, was not in attendance but sent the following updates to Alex.

1. For NCHRP, they are collecting, reviewing, and compiling wildlife fencing guidelines. In addition to summarizing the state of the practice they are collecting standard drawings, and specifications. Todd Williams is working with them. If anyone has any design drawings and/or specifications from previous fencing projects, please send them to Marcel Huijser or Pat McGowan.
2. Tony Clevenger is starting a Wolverine study in southern Alberta that should provide knowledge and value to interests across the border in the U.S.
3. They hopefully will be on a team that will provides some further foundation for a programmatic approach to mitigating wildlife impacts of transportation infrastructure in Mongolia (particularly the Gobi Desert). They will hear soon.

AASHTO/SCOE: Todd Williams, Director Office of Environmental Services, Arizona Department of Transportation and Chair of the AASHTO Standing Committee on the Environment's Natural Resources Subcommittee, reported that they are looking for research ideas. He asked about sustainability initiatives and wondered what committee this falls into. TRB has a Committee on Sustainable Transportation.

AASHTO SCOE is looking at their mission statement. It needs to cover a broad part of the US. Scott Marler, Environmental Resources Manager, Iowa Department of Transportation reported that they are struggling with GIS/Geospatial tools that they use. Most do not talk nicely with Microstation/Engineering software.

Wildlife Conservation Society: Amanda reported on several initiatives:

1. They are working on the high divide region (between the Greater Yellowstone/Northern Continental Divide/Salmon-Selway Ecosystems) with regionally isolated grizzly bear population and how roads affect habitat connectivity. WCS now has a strategy and priorities for conservation in the region that addresses road issues. [WCS and multiple state/fed agencies, conservation NGOs and land trusts are collaborating to implement an array of on-the-ground efforts to facilitate natural movements of grizzly bears and wolverines on their own between the isolated GYE and the other ecosystems]
2. WCS is conducting a pilot citizen science project in the Adirondacks to report road kills and wildlife crossings. They are also studying roadway widening to White Mt. in the Adirondacks and how it might affect Bicknell's thrush.
3. In the Arctic beringia, they are looking at walrus haul outs and whales to make recommendations on how shipping lanes should be placed. Aggregations like haul outs

create high risk to the species in case of oil spills. WCS is training First Nations in oil spill response.

4. WCS is regranteeing climate change funding from the Doris Duke Foundation to increase resiliency in natural systems.

Bridget Donaldson reported on Virginia DOT/ Virginia Center for Transportation Innovation's work on developing recommendations for mitigating collisions between vehicles and deer and black bear along a 15-mile segment of I-64 in Virginia including adding fencing to existing large underpasses and the use of animal detection driver warning systems. The ADC30 newsletter has additional information.

Patricia Cramer, PhD, Research Assistant Professor, Utah State University, reported on the Utah State transportation work. She is studying white tailed deer and road crossings. She is also finishing up a five-state study on identifying and prioritizing wildlife mitigation, which will include a planning tool with GIS. She has been using electricity in cattle guards to prevent wildlife crossings in UT and AZ, an interstate collaboration. She is also working with AZ on white tailed deer crossings and fencing.

Lars Carlson of Jacobs is working on a spotted turtle crossing report.

Jimmy Kagan is working on expanding environmental performance metrics as well as stormwater mitigation.

Fraser Shilling, reported on two state-wide road kill data collections being done by UC Davis biologists/volunteers. They are determining if hotspot analysis can be done in combination with carcass data. There are other European road kill data collection efforts that are being conducted with multiple agencies using volunteers. These programs contain good information on standardized collection methods. FHWA has funded a project for wildlife camera data collection, focusing on how to organize pictures into useable observations and automate data collection. He mentioned website Wildlifeobserver.net that has data on road kills and from wildlife cameras. He also mentioned they had conducted the first CA highway adaptation for sea level rise in context of Eco-Logical.

Dan Smith is working on wildlife crossing design on Florida State Road 40 to improve permeability for multiple species. They are collecting two years of preconstruction monitoring data. The road is a major hurricane evacuation route and bisect habitat for endangered/endemic species. He is also working in Interstate 4, which has had a high number of bear kills, building crossing structures and smaller species crossings. The Florida panther population has been growing, but so have human communities/sprawl so road kills have increased. Males are moving into central part of the state and western Georgia, beyond their normal range. He has been inventorying roads to the north that might have hot spots. He expects to have two publications practitioner's guides/handbooks completed by the end of the year, one on small fauna and the second, an international book that he is editing that discusses efforts in other countries. The books are designed to help planners/engineers understand what is/can be done.

The working title of the international book is *Paving the way- better roads for wildlife and people*. He also has an idea of a national system of priority corridors. How could this be done and who is interested?

Lauren Diaz, National Transportation Liaison, and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers: The Corps is cooperating with EPA for definition of waters of US. They are working with FHWA on developing new and improving existing programmatic agreements. They are working with the US Coast Guard on better coordination of permits.

Research Subcommittee Report —Patricia Cramer gave a presentation on how to prepare research statements and get them funded. She is asking for help on defining our research priorities. She would like to establish four groups with representatives from each. Patty will email our strategic plan and will send out a survey, then hold workshops as we did in 2010. Todd will be key to this process because of his connection to AASHTO. AASHTO is also reviewing their strategic plan for research and we can provide input to that. The goal is to submit 1-3 research needs statements each year. She will set up a conference call that divides into four groups, discusses the needs, and then reconvenes and finalizes the Research Needs Statements by October or November. We need state DOTs and AASHTO to support these ideas as being important to them. This should happen at the annual meeting and we need time set aside (and space) for this discussion. It will be important to have a transparent process that is open to all. Funding is limited for the “soft side” of transportation. We reviewed priorities at ICOET last year, and Paul Wagner has that information. We also need to make time at next Annual Meeting and ICOET 2015 to break out and finalize committee’s priorities. ICOET will be held in Raleigh in 2015.

Mid-year Meeting – The mid-year meeting will be held at NETWC (Northeast Transportation and Wildlife Conference), September 21-24, 2014 in Burlington, Vermont. The call for papers just went out. Committee member, Ed Frantz, Adirondack Park and Forest Preserve Manager, [New York State Department of Transportation](#), is our liaison on the conference Steering Committee.

Guest Speaker(s): Steve Anderle, Deputy Director, SHRP 2 gave an overview and update on the Second Strategic Highway Research Program. He acknowledged the assistance the committee has given to him. \$8 million of research has been done that directly interfaces with the Committee. The responsibility will be shifting to Todd Williams. The research has included the C06 project Ecological Approach to Highway Planning; Eco-Logical framework. Four pilot tests were done by Jimmy and Fraser. Reports and summaries are available on the website. TCAPP has been renamed PlanWorks on the FHWA web portal. GIS workshops will be held-check with Julianne or Shannon Cox, or [Planning Communities](#). The goal is to integrate all national data and provide the platform to upload your environmental data. Planning and environment linkages were completed in March. These were written for transportation planners and not environmental specialists. They funded three proof-of-concept projects. Founding Member and current committee friend, Mary Gray, Parsons, is doing one on a bottoms-up

approach; and James Garland, FHWA Office of Planning and Environment and Realty, is doing one on SHRPII capacity. Projects C06 and C19 are in round 2 implementation; Round 3 for the freight data and monitoring project will be available this Friday. They have identified participants for the analytics tools bundle (travel forecasting/modeling). The economics tools bundle has a website that looks at case studies on economics. There will be a workshop in March on this. The process bundle is developing performance measures, TVIS projects, community visioning, and a freight planning guide. An Implementation Planning workshop will be held in August and document guidance will be available in January.

David Williams, Environmental and Right-of-Way Program Manager, FHWA Michigan Division: FHWA is in the implementation phase for Eco-Logical. They are targeting leadership around the country to inform them and create an incentive program. The goal is to get 14 projects to use it around the county. They are also providing technical assistance, including information sources, executive training and feedback. FHWA needs champions for Eco-Logical. They are working with TRB and AASHTO to set up workshops on implementation.

Upcoming meetings:

- ★ Australasian Network for Ecology and Transportation (ANET),
July 20-23, 2014 Coffs Harbor, New South Wales, Australia,
- ★ Infra Eco Network of Europe September 16-19, 2014, Malmö, Sweden
- ★ Summer workshop NY City Waste Minimization Conference. ADC60

Appendix A. Attendance List

Meeting: TRB ANC 30

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