

Ecology and Transportation Committee
TRB Committee ADC30 - Business Meeting Minutes
Sunday, June 24, 2012
3:00 PM – 5:30 PM CDT

Introduction of Members and Friends of the Committee: Present were: Lars Carlson, Alex Levy, Bethany Williams, Jimmy Kagan, Bob O'Loughlin, Christie Gerencher, TRB. The following called in : Daniel Smith; Julianne Schwarzer, Marcia Bowen, Deb Nelson, Patty Cramer.

1. Alex said that attendance and the meeting on Sunday created some personal conflicts for some people. Approximately 150 folks are registered.
2. Remarks by Christy Gerencher, Senior Program Officer, TRB.. Unfortunately three committees were meeting at the same time, so Christie did not have much time. She recommended that we initiate quarterly conference calls to conduct our business. She also reminded us that TRB needs to TRB involvement at ICOET before we advertise it as our mid-year meeting. She said we need to submit a short description of what/where/when. Alex is going to invite the Environmental Analysis committee to the meeting.

Kristie said that TRB has approved changing the annual meeting venue in 2015 to the Washington DC convention center. We have outgrown the three hotels. This needs to be approved by the Washington tourism bureau. There is some concern about the sense of community that develops at each hotel but it should enhance cross-modal opportunities. TRB is sensitive to the change in registration cost, and it will increase a little. It is getting harder for federal employees to travel, and travel will likely become non-existent in the future. The bills in congress both say that if one employee from a federal agency attends a meeting then no other employees can attend a meeting with same sponsor. TRB can sponsor webinars and virtual meetings. TRB gets considerable support from federal agencies, specifically FHWA, so this is also a concern.

3. Remarks by Bob O'Loughlin, Environment and Energy Section Chair. FHWA is trying to improve overall transportation planning in WA/OR/AZ., working with Western governors to improve data and opportunities. He said that our section will sponsor a half day workshop at the Annual Meeting on developing research needs statements and getting funded. It will build on the meeting just held. Our research needs coordinator should try to attend.

There will be another TR News Issue on Environment with a focus on "Sustainability in Transportation and Improving the Quality of Life". It would be good if we could do an article or sidebar. The decision is needed in August. The issue will have only 5 articles and there are 8 committees in the Section. He will build in space for work much like what Steve Anderle is doing. The Committee will also be happy to receive pictures.

4. Review/Approval of Minutes of January 23, 2011 Business Meeting; Marcia moved to approve. 2012 business meeting minutes were distributed and can be approved via email.
5. Remarks of the Chair (Alex Levy) Alex thanked Bethany for working with Martin Palmer to organize this meeting. There is a robust agenda and lots of networking opportunities.

Sub-Committee Brief Reports

- a) Communication - Marcia Bowen, Chair & Chris Gesing, Web Site
Alex said that the website needs to be updated with 2011 and 2012 minutes and other materials to keep it current. Members and friends should check regularly. Kristie Gerencher said that TRB has a membership listing on the TRB website and she asked those individuals whose status has changed to forward an email to Kristie with updated information. Marcia said that generally two newsletters are prepared each year; one before the annual meeting and one around the time of the mid-year meeting. Since the mid-year meeting is being held earlier this year, we will get newsletter out after meeting and before end of summer. Julianne has already sent an article on community practices.
- b) Steering – Mary Gray/Deb Nelson: Deb had no updates. The strategic plan is due next year and Alex and Deb asked people to look at the plan and think about what needs updating.
- c) Liaison - Lars Carlson, Chair: Lars did not receive many liaison reports. ADC40 noise and vibration approached us about sponsoring a workshop on environmental effects of noise and vibration. Alex said that there is a June 1 deadline for workshops and sessions, but Kristie said that we could stretch that until August 1. However, we don't necessarily need to sponsor a workshop just because we are asked.
- d) Mid-Year Meeting & Program – Bethany Williams, Chair: Bethany thanked Martin for all that he did, along with Alex. Highlights include presentation by Mitch Wine and Randal Looney USFWS IPaC (Information, Planning, and Conservation System) webtool for consultation.
- f) Research and Discussion of Sunday Research Workshop - Patty Cramer, Chair. Patty took the 10 top research priorities and she and Alex edited them. Chris added them to our website along with a "research" tab. Alex said that the presentation on research needs at the conference may help simplify our statements so that they are clear to who may not be as familiar with the topics

2) Updates

Daniel Smith reported that he has starting a monitoring program on US41, which is panther habitat along with black bear and white tailed deer, to determine effectiveness of system. He has also started a baseline preconstruction project in the Ocala national forest project by collecting data on wildlife movements in advance of constructing wildlife overpasses/crossings. He is trying to get research money for dual use structures-recreation and wildlife to understand how wildlife is using them. There is some perception that human and wildlife use are incompatible. Dan co-sponsoring two workshops in South Africa...one oriented towards academics at International Wildlife Congress, the meeting of the Wildlife Society. They are targeting countries that don't have resources. Speakers are going to talk about their work and then have roundtable discussions. The second workshop is geared towards practitioners, and will be held in Johannesburg. It is timely because of the highly controversial Serengeti Road, a road that would divide the Serengeti in half.

Bridget Donaldson provided an update to Alex on research activities including windrow composting of deer carcasses and studies on cured in place piping.

Lars Carlson reported that photo documentation has demonstrated that critter crossings for MBTA Greenbush line are being used by turtles and other species.

Alex reported that an Indiana bat roosting habitat was discovered in the north Georgia mountains. This may be an opportunity for bats to avoid white nose syndrome. Marcia reported that she has been working on sound effects of pile driving. Alex mentioned Joe

Shalkowski discussed changes in ports with Panama canal opening. He wondered if there is a marine environment committee. There is and Marcia is a member. Marcia also mentioned the high scrutiny projects at whitehouse.gov, including the project she is working on, Whittier Bridge in MA.

Patty reported that she just finished up a project for Best Management Practices for Wildlife Vermont AOT, who wants to integrate this into their every day life. Patty hopes will be publically released. She has been monitoring 16 crossings and 20 structures. She noted that painting white lines so cattle won't go over them does not work but sharing overpasses with wildlife can work. She continues her long term project on I-93 and will include a link to latest report in the newsletter. She is sharing work with WTI.

Julianne Schwarzer provided an update on FHWA. They continue to work on SHRP 2 implementation. They are developing a liaison with transportation communities of practice. They are continuing to support the ESA webtool, which will have a connection with IPaC. They continue advance Eco-Logical to headquarters and CEQ. There was a comment that the sustainability webinar put on by TRB – was excellent. FHWA will be putting it on their website.

- 3) Annual Meeting Program - Alex Levy. Deb said that the SHRP2 projects might be good workshop topics. incorporating sustainability issues in capital programs and funding. Could include topics such as advance mitigation, the work that Steve Andrele and Jimmy Kagan are doing integrating ecological frameworks into programs.
- 4) Wrap-up Discussion –
 - a) Need for follow-up Teleconference Business Meeting? Alex will set up a conference call in the week of July 23rd to make progress on the annual meeting and the TR news issue.
 - b) There may be slots opening for membership Hans Beckker may be dropping off and Keith Knapp would like to step down. Alex asked that folks think about agencies or organizations that would make a good contribution to the Committee.
 - c) Upcoming meetings:

2012 IENE – Potsdam- Berlin, Germany – October 21-24, 2012

2013 TRB 92nd Annual Meeting will be held January 13-17, 2013

2013 TRB Mid-Year Meeting will be held at ICOET June 23-27, 2013

– Westin Kierland, Scottsdale, Arizona -

- Call for Abstracts will be open this fall
- Registration will open by early 2013