**Special Facilitated Session**

**THE LANGUAGE OF SUSTAINABILITY: WHAT YOU SAID AND WHAT OTHERS HEARD**

**Larry Ehl** (206-910-4142, Larry@transportationissuesdaily.com), Publisher, Transportation Issues Daily (e-newsletter/blog), 8011 180th Place SW, Edmonds, WA 98026, USA (Session Organizer, Moderator and Presenter)

**Lloyd Brown** (202-624-5802, lbrown@aashto.org), Communications Director, American Association of State Highway & Transportation Officials, 444 N. Capitol Street NW, Suite 249, Washington, DC 20001, USA (Session Co-Organizer and Presenter)

**Mike Rosen** (206-462-6362, mrosen@prrbiz.com), Managing Principal, PRR, 1109 First Avenue, Suite 300, Seattle, WA 98101, USA (Presenter)

**Patricia White** (202-772-0236, twHITE@defenders.org), Director, Habitat and Highways Program, Defenders of Wildlife, 1130 17th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036, USA (Presenter)

**ABSTRACT**

Have you ever tried to convince someone about a sustainability initiative only to meet the ‘Berlin Wall’ of resistance? Or tried to get support for doing something differently on a transportation project so that transportation-related pollution is reduced, only to meet Mt. Everest-sized opposition?

The presenters in this facilitated session – four experts in transportation-related communications and public relations – all had challenging experiences such as these and then learned valuable skills to improve the connection with their audiences and increase the odds for a positive outcome. The presenters shared these skills during a moderated panel discussion with ICOET participants.

Moderator Larry Ehl provided introductions and began discussion by looking at internal and external audiences. Understanding one’s audience can enable transportation practitioners to use words, phrases, and arguments that can freeze beliefs and biases, connect with the audience, and result in a more productive conversation about possibilities and outcomes. An analysis of the characteristics of several audiences was presented and suggestions offered on how to talk about sustainability with each audience.

Lloyd Brown presented on context. The sustainability conversation occurs unavoidably within the larger context of conversations about global warming, government efficiencies and priorities, and funding challenges. Having a basic understanding about that context is important to connecting with one’s audience and communicating effectively. The presentation summarized the public attitudes about such global issues, discussed how they may impact the sustainability conversation, and provided suggestions on how to navigate those attitudes to one’s advantage.

Mike Rosen addressed the changing paths communication (for example, Twitter) and how these paths are changing the distribution of information. While transportation practitioners may not be permitted to use social media tools such as Twitter in their work, information presented by these same practitioners at public meetings will often be repeated on Twitter and blogs. Rosen and other panelists provided an overview of these new communication paths, discussed how they can positively or negatively impact key messages, and suggested some tools to use to advance one’s work.

Patricia White presented two case studies and analyzed what did and did not work in each – what were the keys to success, and where could communications have been improved. The session concluded with a discussion of tools and strategies that practitioners can use to positively influence conversations about sustainability.

**BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES**

**Larry Ehl** publishes a nationally-recognized blog on federal transportation issues. He has over 20 years of experience working with government and public engagement as a Senate Chief of Staff, Director of Government Relations in the public and private sectors, elected School Board member, and volunteer Board Member of the Cascade Land Conservancy. Larry has a passion for demystifying the federal government for stakeholders who don’t have the...
expertise, time or resources to do so themselves. He has led or assisted with the creation and execution of numerous strategic communications and advocacy plans. Larry’s transportation policy experience includes nearly eight years in government relations with the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT). He provided counsel on policy and funding issues to the WSDOT executive team, the Governor’s staff, and Congressional Members and staff. He also staffed WSDOT Secretary Paula Hammond’s involvement with the national Association of State Highway & Transportation Officials and in her role as Chair of the States for Passenger Rail Coalition. In 2009 he served as Secretary for the 18-member Western Association of State Transportation Departments. Larry’s private sector experience includes six years with Fisher Companies, Inc. as Director of Corporate and Government Relations. Ehl led the corporation’s involvement in federal, state and local legislative and regulatory issues in the company’s divisions of broadcast media, commercial real estate, and flour milling/food products distribution. He also spent six years in corporate advertising and finance with a major Los Angeles-based retail company.

**Lloyd Brown** is the director of communications for the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials. Since joining AASHTO in August 2010, Lloyd has successfully transitioned the focus of the organization’s communication program to emphasize public “engagement” through strategically leveraging social media tools alongside more established tactics such as media relations and special events. Lloyd was named the PR Person of the Year by the National Transportation Public Affairs Workshop in 2009. Most recently, Lloyd was featured in the June 30, 2011 issue of PR Week as the DC Influencer of the month. Lloyd served as the Washington State Department of Transportation communication director until July 2010, overseeing all facets of agency communications – public information and involvement activities, strategic messaging, crisis communication, agency branding and web site and social media administration. Under Lloyd’s leadership, WSDOT was recognized as a national leader in the development and implementation of social media tools, redefining the agency’s relationship with the public. Prior to joining WSDOT in 2002, Brown worked as a public relations account manager working on and leading award-winning public relations and public affairs campaigns for a range of private and public sector clients throughout the West, including the California bottle and can recycling program, and Arizona’s ground-breaking anti-tobacco program. Brown began his communications career as a radio disc jockey at KZFN in Moscow, Idaho. He soon left radio to follow his passion for writing, becoming a newspaper reporter and editor in Washington and later Arizona. He earned a BA in Communications from Washington State University and is currently pursuing a Master’s Degree from Gonzaga University.

**Mike Rosen** serves as Managing Principal for PRR, a Seattle-based company recognized nationally for its award-winning work across the country in communications, social marketing, public involvement, and community building. Mike is nationally recognized as a visionary communications innovator and strategist, he is a leader in creating communication solutions driven by business acumen. With 40 years in the industry, Mr. Rosen has helped clients create and execute scores of national, regional and local initiatives across communication disciplines and sectors. He pioneered many of the approaches currently used in market transformation, social marketing and behavior modification programs that have helped change the way we view and interact with our world. Mr. Rosen has helped to initiate many innovative public-private partnerships. His portfolio includes work for clients such as Nike, Starbuck, Philips Sonicare, Coinstar, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. His body of work has helped advance transportation initiatives including helping clients introduce CVISN, ramp meters, high-speed rail, HOV lanes, re-refined motor oil and new mass transit services. He has helped residents in Washington State understand the benefits of animal bridges, inspired fortune 500 companies to provide transportation options to their employees and helped EPA design the new fuel economy label so buyers can more easily identify a vehicle’s environmental impact. As an accomplished television producer, Mr. Rosen has been recognized with some of the industry’s most prestigious national and international awards, including the Peabody, New York International Film Festival, Chicago International Film Festival, Emmy and IRIS awards.

**Patricia White** is Director of the Habitat & Highways Campaign for Defenders of Wildlife, a national, nonprofit membership organization dedicated to the protection of all native animals and plants in their natural communities. Defenders is one of the country’s leaders in science-based, results-oriented wildlife conservation. Patricia’s areas of expertise are state and national surface transportation policy and practice, wildlife-vehicle collisions and prevention, integrating conservation and transportation planning. Trisha began Defenders’ Habitat & Highways Campaign in 2000 which seeks to reduce the impact of roads and highways on wildlife and encourage state and local authorities to incorporate wildlife conservation into transportation and community planning. She represents Defenders as a sponsor and steering committee member on the International Conference for Ecology and Transportation and is currently working to launch the TransWild Alliance. In addition, she is also a founding member of TRB Committee on Ecology and Transportation, and a board member of Southern Rockies Ecosystem Project. Prior to Defenders, Trisha spent three years with World Resources Institute's Biological Resources program, and one year as an environment policy consultant to USAID’s Global Environment Center. She received her Bachelor’s degree from Central Michigan University and a Master’s degree in Environment & Resource Policy from the George Washington University. In 2004 Trisha authored the report “Second Nature: Improving Transportation Without Putting Nature Second.”
ABSTRACT

Infra Eco Network Europe (IENE) is a pan-European network of experts dealing with transport infrastructure, landscape ecology and wildlife mitigation. IENE intends to arrange biannual international conferences alternating and communicating with ICOET to encourage the exchange of knowledge and stimulate a faster development of practical solutions.

The 2010 IENE conference in Hungary, entitled "Improving connections in a changing environment", was attended by about 200 participants from 32 countries worldwide. It emphasised the increasing role of the transport sector for biodiversity, which can be seen both as a threat and as an opportunity: A chance, because investments in transport infrastructure can entail increased understanding, improved planning processes and effective counteractions. A threat, because existing legal frameworks still focus on the protection of designated sites and threatened species and do not suffice to safeguard fundamental biodiversity values such as landscape connectivity.

At the conference, six key tasks have been identified to improve and ensure ecological connectivity in our changing environment:

1. Develop the concept of ecological networks and employ it as a framework in nature protection, landscape management and as a tool in spatial planning. Several European countries have already started this development.
2. Integrate landscape ecological thinking and ecological network approaches both in strategic and design-level planning of infrastructure. This may require a broadening of the corridor concept from the original coherent habitat network towards a strategic designation of functional linkages across complex landscapes.
3. Optimise rather than minimise the ecological impact. Investments in transport infrastructure can be used to introduce new or re-establish missing ecological qualities in the landscape. Transport corridors may offer refuges for rare species and create connectivity between otherwise isolated habitats. These must be balanced against the risk for creating ecological traps and spreading invasive species.
4. Adapt and improve mitigation measures that help to restore landscape permeability. Install de-fragmentation programs with a systematic focus on strategic ecological corridors. Further technical improvements could lead to more cost-efficient and ready to use mitigation options.
5. Collaborate! In order to match the speed of infrastructure development, and contribute pro-actively rather than repairing the damage afterwards, international collaboration is needed. Joint research programs, development projects and information activities appear as highly cost-efficient means to speed up the progress in knowledge and experience.
6. Involve the public in planning and decision-making processes, inform and educate about problems and solutions. Public participation may be essential to safeguard future concern about connectivity measures at local level.

BACKGROUND

The Infra Eco Network Europe (IENE) has been established in 1995 thanks to the initiative of the Road and Hydraulic Engineering Division of the Dutch Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water Management. It was based on the
conclusions of the International Symposium on Habitat Fragmentation and Infrastructure in 1995, Maastricht, NL, at which the participants from over 25 countries proposed the formation of an international network in order to jointly address fragmentation issues caused by transport infrastructure, share knowledge and resources, and find practical but scientifically sound solutions to the common problems.

IENE, being initially a network of selected national representatives, is now based on the individual membership of experts dealing with landscape, infrastructure, wildlife and traffic. At present, the network consists of 164 registered members from 42 countries representing 142 organizations, including private companies, universities, agencies and governmental bodies. IENE bridges between the sectors of transport and environment, as well as between science and practice, and provides a forum for the international and interdisciplinary dialogue on matters concerning landscape and infrastructure. Despite being a mere network, IENE initiated the COST-action 341, a European joint venture on habitat fragmentation due to transport infrastructure, that produced the European handbook on Wildlife and Traffic (Iuell 2003), the European Review (Trocmé et al. 2003) and a number of national State of the Art Reports on the topic (see www.iene.info/cost-341). IENE arranges annual meetings, scientific workshops, and international conferences, at which decision makers, planners, practitioners, and researchers can interact and learn from each other. The next international conference is currently prepared for October 22-24, 2012, and will be held near Berlin, Germany.

Most of the early input to IENE derived from national agencies/authorities with specific needs for practical guidelines and technical advice. The focus was hence very much on design and efficacy of fauna provisions such as ecoducts and fauna passages. Over time, however, it became obvious that defragmentation must be considered much earlier in the planning process. Strategic planning is essential to achieve effective mitigation, but it requires expert knowledge on whether, where and how connectivity should be maintained or restored for the species in question.

Given the rapid development of road infrastructure, especially in eastern European countries, the envisioned upgrading of the European Network of transport corridors (TEN), and the overarching threat of a changing climate and unbroken loss of biodiversity, there is urge to integrate ecological concern at all levels of infrastructure planning. For this, we need a legal framework that provides incentives to improve connections in our changing environment and new approaches to include connectivity concepts in spatial planning. Successful defragmentation is a goal that cannot be accomplished by the transport sector alone: it requires a concerted effort of all involved stakeholders as well as the public. These are the questions that were targeted by the IENE 2010 international conference and that will also be of guidance for IENE activities in the following years.

THE CONFERENCE

The IENE 2010 international conference, entitled "Improving connections in a changing environment", was held in Velence, Hungary, during Sept. 27 - Oct. 01, 2010. It was attended by about 200 participants from 32 countries worldwide and featured 5 plenary and 69 short presentations, 53 posters and 5 workshops among which was a meeting of the CEDR task group on Wildlife and Traffic and a special discussion of the impacts of railways and rail traffic. It also included an educational campaign that preceded the conference with a children’s competition for the best illustration of the topic “On dangerous roads” and by that created a public recognition of the issue in Hungary. The conference was followed-up in 2011 through a national meeting in Hungary with 101 participants and 23 presentations. The conference documentation (abstracts, pictures, presentations, audio and video recordings) can be accessed at www.iene.info.

Overall, the conference covered a variety of topics ranging from environmental policy, infrastructure planning, and impact assessment, over road mortality, barrier and disturbance effects, mitigation measures and monitoring experiences, railway and road comparisons, to ecological networks, defragmentation approaches, and the potential of infrastructure corridors as resources for biodiversity.

The conference was opened by István Láng, the honorary chair of the Hungarian national Council for Environmental Protection and by Benedek Jávor, Chair of the Sustainable Development Committee of the Hungarian Parliament.

Plenary talks were held by invited speakers from Japan (Fumihiro Hara, Hokkaido Development Engineering Center), Germany (Michael Below, Deutsche Bahn AG), Sweden (Lars Nilsson, National Transport Administration), USA (Paul Wagner, ICOET), and Canada (Lenore Fahrig, Carleton University, Ottawa). These experts raised important strategic questions concerning ecological research on impacts, differences between rail and road infrastructures, and important similarities and dissimilarities between the US, Japan and Europe, with respect to habitat fragmentation, transport planning and mitigation. From an ecological and technical point of view, it is out of question that the mutual exchange of experience must be global, even if differences in the juridical and political background may require adapted solutions.
MAIN CONCLUSIONS

The IENE 2010 conference led to several conclusions that have implications in research, planning and practice. These conclusions can be summarized by six major tasks that will help to improve and ensure ecological connectivity in our changing environment:

1. Develop the concept of green infrastructure or ecological networks and employ it as a framework in nature protection and landscape management and a reference in both strategic and project-level planning of infrastructure.

At European level as well as in several countries, comprehensive work has been launched during the past years to develop networks of habitats or movement corridors that shall support the exchange of both small and large species among distant populations. These efforts can be seen as an extension of the Natura 2000 network (within EU) and the Emerald Network (other European countries) of protected high biodiversity sites, as they often address non-threatened and unprotected species or sites or even entire landscapes. Above all, however, the approaches focus on the functional connectivity within a network and not between areas in a patchwork.

The European Commission defines Green Infrastructure (http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/ecosystems/green_infrastructure.htm) as “a concept addressing the connectivity of ecosystems, their protection and the provision of ecosystem services, while also addressing mitigation and adaptation to climate change. [...] Green Infrastructure helps ensure the sustainable provision of ecosystem goods and services while increasing the resilience of ecosystems. The concept is central to the overall objective of ecosystem restoration, which is now part of the 2020 biodiversity target. [...] Its ultimate aim is contributing to the development of a greener and more sustainable economy by investing in ecosystem-based approaches delivering multiple benefits in addition to technical solutions, and mitigating adverse effects of transport and energy infrastructure.”

The essential contribution of green infrastructure and other ecological networks to the environmental adaptation of the transport sector is that they may be used as a reference in the spatial planning of infrastructure and help to prioritize sites where special concern on connectivity (or infrastructure permeability) must be given, and improvements in the existing transport system are necessary. Obviously, it is neither the entire landscape nor the entire length of a new infrastructure barrier that can be mitigated. Fauna provisions should hence be located where their effect is maximized and their long-term functioning ensured. The risk, however, is that all mitigation efforts might be concentrated on intersections with designated ecological corridors, while other opportunities to enhance the permeability of infrastructure barriers are missed.

2. Enhance the understanding of fragmentation and the scientific knowledge on barrier, mortality and disturbance effects and make it operational in planning contexts.

Much research has been done so far on how traffic and infrastructure affect wildlife. The evidence for adverse impacts is overwhelming: thousands of individual animals are killed in traffic, disturbed in mating and reproduction or repelled by busy highways and high-speed railways. Most studies, however, have been of descriptive rather than of exploratory nature, with a focus on individuals and local phenomena instead of on populations at regional scales. Few studies allow for drawing general conclusions on dose-response relationships or critical thresholds. This applies especially to monitoring studies commissioned for new infrastructure investments. It is no longer a secret that animals use fauna passages, but there is still uncertainty about which factors are essential for a successful passage and whether the documented use is sufficient at population level to prevent local extinctions (van der Ree et al. 2010). There is further uncertainty about the kind of impact that is most relevant to a given species under certain circumstances. For many if not most species, mortality may be the most significant threat to mitigate, let alone traffic safety aspects, whereas for others, barrier and isolation effects may be a greater issue (Fahrig 2010).

Knowledge about the relative significance of impacts (also in comparison to other land use forms) is essential to decide about whether mitigation should be prioritized and how it can be achieved in a cost-efficient way. Obviously, not all species can be considered, but some may be used as umbrella or focal species in mitigation planning as measures designed for them may also be of benefit to other species. Other species may serve well as indicators of a certain impact (mortality, noise). To rely solely on red listed species, for which there is the only juridical incentive for mitigation, may however not suffice. Infrastructure planners ask for guidance to select the most appropriate species for impact evaluation and monitoring studies. Simpler and clearer recipes on such investigations may further help integrate ecological concern in the planning process (Nilsson 2010). This applies especially to questions on landscape fragmentation at strategic levels and regional scales. Fragmentation of habitat and entire landscapes is a well-established concept by now, and quantitative measures such as the effective mesh size (Jaeger 2010) have proven to
be suitable in providing planners with tools to distinguish areas that are especially sensitive to further fragmentation - from ecological as well as social perspective (Pernkopf & Lang 2010).

3. **Optimize the ecological impact and take advantage of potentially positive effects that can complement missing ecological qualities in the landscape.**

Traffic and infrastructure have undoubtedly a variety of adverse effects on the adjacent landscape and its wildlife. Yet, through the creation of new, albeit disturbed habitats in transportation corridors, verges, cuts and quarries, infrastructure offers an often unexploited opportunity to enrich landscapes, provide valuable biotopes or compensate for the loss of habitat or reduced accessibility of spatial resources.

With careful design and management, roadsides and railway corridors can offer a refuge to plants (Lennartsson et al. 2010), invertebrates (Kiss et al. 2010) or small mammals (Marques & Mira 2010) that otherwise may not find a suitable habitat in the cultivated landscape. If these habitats are integrated in the “green infrastructure” of the surrounding landscape, and linked through ecoducts to similar habitats across the road, human transport corridors may eventually contribute significantly to the preservation of these species.

However, these benefits must be balanced against the risk of creating ecological traps that mask the dangerous traffic with attractive food and cover resources but cause increased mortality (Dinetti 2010). Also, the downside of connectivity is that it fosters desired as well as undesired species and helps spreading invasive species that require expensive control management (e.g., Thompson et al. 2010). An integrated land use and mitigation plan may help to maximize the potential benefits while minimizing inherent risks and dangers. Again, good knowledge on how individual species respond on traffic, infrastructure and mitigation measures is essential.

4. **Develop monitoring strategies to validate the efficacy of mitigation measures and create common guidelines for evaluation studies.**

Across Europe, millions of Euros are invested each year on technical measures and innovations to counteract habitat fragmentation and reduce mortality in wildlife without any knowledge about the efficacy and reliability of these investments. It is rather the exception than the rule that mitigation efforts are followed-up and evaluated. Learning by doing should be a standard, but unless monitoring studies are already integrated in the initial exploitation plan or required for other reasons, they are often very difficult to finance.

Monitoring or follow-up studies are important in different ways, they help to gain knowledge about the role of individual components that distinguish effective from non-effective mitigation solutions, and they reduce the risks of over- and underspending in relation to the targeted result, and they are the only way to validate the effect of mitigation efforts. The lessons learned from mistakes made by others or during previous attempts can save lives as well as money. Yet, to allow for this, studies should meet certain scientific and qualitative demands (van der Ree at al. 2010), which often implies higher costs and longer time schedules than what transport authorities may be willing to pay for. International guidelines, such as in the European handbook on Wildlife and Traffic (Iuell et al. 2003), may be a helpful tool to define standards for monitoring studies that both agencies as well as ecologists could refer to. An update of the 2003 handbook has been proposed at the conference and is also recommended by the CEDR Task Group on Wildlife and Traffic (Ujvári, Nilsson, & Rösten, in press).

Other essential questions are how efficacy should be defined and thus measured. How much mitigation is necessary to obtain the desired results and what are appropriate performance targets in a given situation. When should monitoring be mandatory and when is it acceptable to refrain from expensive programs and rely on simpler follow-up studies or even trust in existing practical experience from elsewhere? Here, ecologists are asked to develop schemes and guidelines that help planners in cost-benefit analyses of infrastructure investments and produce realistic requirements on mitigation.

If provisions for wildlife can be argued for and designed with a solid foundation in scientific knowledge and practical experience, we have taken a big step forward to improve connectivity in our environment.

5. **Collaborate across borders in joint research projects, defragmentation programs and information activities to contribute proactively to future infrastructure development.**

Across Europe, and worldwide, a growing concern for biodiversity and habitat connectivity in response to the steadily expanding road and rail infrastructure has produced numerous actions at national as well as international level. Examples of international endeavors for restoring habitat connectivity are e.g., the ECONAT forum for the exchange of
best practice concerning Natura 2000 sites in the EU (Bekker & Baader 2010); the ECONNECT project or the Ecological Continuum initiative for the Alps (Kohler 2010), the Trans European Wildlife Network, with a special focus on restoring connectivity for wide ranging species in Eastern Europe (Huber & Spangenberg 2010). National examples are e.g., the Dutch Defragmentation program MJPO (Bekker 2010), the German BUND Habitat network for wildcat (Hoerstermann, Mölich & Vogel 2010); the Czech Territorial System of Ecological Stability (TSES; Hlavác et al. 2010), or the Swiss Defragmentation program (Trocmé 2010).

Other important international collaborations that also address infrastructure and biodiversity are e.g., the Conference of European Directors of Roads (www.CEDR.fr) with the task group 7 on Wildlife and Traffic (Bekker & Henriksen 2010); the World Road Association (www.PIARC.org) technical committee A1; and very recently the International Union of Railways (www.UIC.org) decided to set up a new network “Sustainable land use”, partly in response to the Rail workshop held at the IENE 2010 conference.

Questions concerning landscape connectivity, defragmentation, and mitigation measures rise in very different contexts, many of which are linked to IENE through the involved experts. Nevertheless, there is risk for misunderstanding and confusion simply because of the variety of languages and concepts employed in Europe. IENE proposed therefore to develop a common terminology, based on the glossary of the COST-action 341 and the input of network members. Another risk is that certain questions are studied over and over again whereas others remain unanswered. To counteract this, IENE proposed to establish a scientific advisory group on infrastructure and ecology that identifies important unresolved research questions. Such a list of priority areas could then provide guidance to universities, research councils, transport agencies and other organizations that fund relevant research projects.

Finally, while it is relatively simple to gather scientists at international conferences, practitioners, transport planners, road engineers and environmental consultants are often more bound to their national settings and find fewer opportunities to exchange experiences and questions. New arenas should be established to make scientific knowledge more operative in practice and identify which applied questions that still need continued research.

**6. Involve the public in planning and decision-making processes, inform and educate about impacts and solutions.**

One of the key factors for a successful life-long functioning of defragmentation measures is the involvement of the general public. Without public acceptance of and concern for technical provisions such as ecoducts or fauna tunnels, there is risk for misuse, disturbance or demolition, as well as for a consequent change in land use triggered by these measures. Ecoducts may be used as conventional road bridges or for recreational purposes, underpasses may be used for storage and shelter, smaller passages may be fenced off by local farmers; examples of such failures are many across Europe. Also, complaints may arise as to why transport authorities favor deer and other wildlife instead of improving crossing facilities for humans. The greatest danger, however, may be that adjacent natural areas that connect fauna passages with the ecological habitat network in the wider landscape, are sooner or later exploited for industrial or urban development. It is easy to forget that not only road or rail infrastructure, but also green bridges, ecoducts and other built provisions, will be in place for many decades to come. Changes in land use, climate and human population that accumulate over time must hence be considered already from the beginning. Without maintained habitat connectivity, even the most expensive ecoducts will lose their significance for wildlife and the initial investments may be rendered valueless.

On the other hand, public awareness about the impact of traffic on wildlife is an often underestimated factor that may help implementing mitigation and compensatory measures where the legal framework is insufficient. Traffic killed animals and highway barriers are well recognized phenomena, even among school children, and can easily create a public opinion that may justify planners to invest in fauna provisions for ethical reasons, despite a lack of ecological necessity. Yet, the public opinion can be tricky, as it may not be the most affected and threatened species that arise the people’s interest, but rather the common and cute one. It will hence require a well-planned public information to translate the ecological problem into a communicable tale with well-known images and recognizable icons. Some of the projects on ecological networks mentioned above have been successful in promoting a focal or “umbrella” species that helps in establishing mitigation measures from which many other species benefit as well. Public participation in spatial planning is a powerful tool that ecologists should well learn to take advantage of if they seek to improve connections in our changing environment and accomplish a more permeable and environmentally sustainable transport infrastructure. After all, concern for biodiversity is not merely a task for experts alone, but a challenge to everyone.
CLOSING REMARKS - SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER ACTIONS

Improving ecological connections in a changing environment is clearly not a simple task that the transport sector can take responsibility for or even accomplish alone! It requires strategic and long term spatial planning as well as better knowledge about mitigation needs and possibilities. It will require collaboration between ecologists, engineers, planners, stakeholders, and the general public; but last not least a well-founded argumentation to convince decision makers when and where action is to prioritize.

At the conference, a number of specific tasks have been identified that could be addressed by IENE members and in collaboration with ICOET. The following examples are not an exclusive list. We could/should:

- set up an open glossary on matters relating to fragmentation, mitigation and infrastructure that can help to establish a common conceptual basis and a harmonized terminology,
- establish a scientific advisory group that can highlight important gaps in knowledge with respect to e.g., impact assessment, mitigation, and monitoring,
- create a work group that focuses on ecological impacts and mitigation options related to railways and high-speed trains with the aim to increase knowledge and support new research,
- update the European Handbook on Wildlife and Traffic with respect to new empirical data, revised technical guidelines and new environmental policy,
- develop general guidelines and criteria for when and where what kind of mitigation should be required,
- develop guidelines for follow-up studies and monitoring programs and establish long-term funding opportunities,
- develop attractive and appropriate information material and create education opportunities for the general public as well as for policy makers.

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES

Dr. Andreas Seiler has his PhD in wildlife biology from the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences in 2003 and has since 1994 worked on animal-vehicle collisions, barrier effects of roads and traffic on wildlife, traffic noise disturbance in birds, monitoring of mitigation measures along new infrastructure, and landscape fragmentation issues. He has a close collaboration with the Swedish Transport Administration, and is a member of the IENE Steering committee and the IENE Secretariat.

Dr. Lars E. Nilsson, Environmental director of the Swedish Transport Administration. Previously environmental director of the Swedish Road Administration, political advisor to the transport minister and a scientist from the universities of Stockholm, Leiden and Uppsala. Lars has been working on the subject of transport and environment for more than 15 years at a policy level. He has been active in many research programs including being chairman of the Swedish emission research program EMFO and Transport-Mistra program.

Dr. Miklós Puky is a senior research fellow at the Hungarian Danube Research Institute of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and the Chair of the IUCN SSC Declining Amphibian Populations Task Force Hungary. Most of his work is dedicated to different conservation and environmental education programs and he also teaches conservation ecology at the University Eötvös, Budapest. Miklós started amphibian road kill research and conservation in 1986, which was a first attempt in the Central-European region. For organizing and leading international programmes he was presented several conservation and education prizes such as Pro Natura, For the Environment, Géza Entz and the Henry Ford European Conservation Award and he was also a winner of the Ten Outstanding Young People competition.

Anders Sjölund has an MSc in ecology from Uppsala University and studied biology and geology at Stockholm University and forestry at the Swedish University of agricultural in Umeå. Anders started his working life, as engineer at the Ericsson Ltd, developing phone applications in telephone exchanges. After studies in biology he was employed at
environmental departments in municipalities, County Administrative Boards, the Road Administration and at the Swedish Transport Administration. Anders is chairman of the Natural and Cultural Heritage Group in the Nordic Road Association, and of the Technical Committee 555 Standardized nature inventory at the Swedish Standards Institute. Anders also chairs the Steering committee of the Infra Eco Network Europe (IENE).

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Facilitated Session

**Eco-Logical in Action**

Mary Gray (360-753-9487, Mary.Gray@dot.gov), Environmental Program Specialist, Federal Highway Administration, 711 South Capitol Way, Suite 501, Olympia, WA 98501, USA (Session Organizer, Moderator and Presenter)

Julianne Schwarzer (617-494-3259, Julianne.Schwarzer@dot.gov), Community Planner, USDOT Volpe Center, 55 Broadway – RVT-22, Cambridge, MA 02142, USA (Session Co-Organizer and Presenter)

Gabe Epperson (801-303-1459, gabe@envisionutah.org), Planning Director, Envision Utah, 254 South 600 East, Suite 201, Salt Lake City, UT 84102, USA (Presenter)

David Leopold (312-742-4772, david.leopold@cityofchicago.org), Project Manager, Streetscape and Sustainable Design Program, Chicago Department of Transportation, 30 N LaSalle Street, Suite 500, Chicago IL, 60614, USA (Presenter)

Deb Wambach (406-444-0461, dwambach@mt.gov), District Biologist, Montana Department of Transportation, 2701 Prospect Avenue, PO Box 201001, Helena, MT 59620-1001, USA (Presenter, unable to attend)

**ABSTRACT**

In 2006, after several years of collaboration, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and eight other Federal agencies signed and published Eco-Logical: An Ecosystem Approach to Developing Infrastructure Projects (Eco-Logical), which endorsed an “Eco-Logical approach.” The approach offered an alternative to the conventional practice of mitigating project impacts by replacing similar resources close to the impact site. The Eco-Logical signatory agencies asserted that conventional on-site, project-by-project mitigation satisfied regulatory requirements but may not have led to the best environmental outcomes for the ecosystem. Instead, Eco-Logical contended that sustaining or restoring ecological systems at the ecosystem scale was possible when developing infrastructure projects if Federal, State, Tribal, and local partners used flexibility in regulatory processes.

In 2007, FHWA created the Eco-Logical grant program to pilot this new, ecosystem-sensitive approach to infrastructure development. Since that time, FHWA expanded its Eco-Logical program to include research on the origins and functionality of the Eco-Logical approach, a webinar series, publication of outreach materials, and reengagement of the original Eco-Logical signatory agencies. Through these activities, FHWA hopes to better understand how an organization can be successful in implementing the Eco-Logical approach and begin to leverage national implementation. In particular, the reengagement of the signatory agencies demonstrates a desire to work collaboratively to shift the transportation landscape to one in which infrastructure development and ecosystem conservation can be integrated to harmonize economic, environmental, and social needs and objectives.

This facilitated session focused on recent implementations of the Eco-Logical approach and lessons learned through the FHWA program. Presenters identified program elements and activities that have led to the successful implementation of Eco-Logical and discussed challenges they encountered while implementing Eco-Logical, including how they overcame those challenges. The presenters first discussed Eco-Logical broadly and then focused on three implementations: a multimodal program, an urban program, and the longest running implementation of Eco-Logical. The presentations demonstrated the breadth of situations in which Eco-Logical can be applied and the commonalities between different implementations.

The session began with an overview of the recent activities of the FHWA Eco-Logical program, including the reengagement of the Eco-Logical signatory agencies presented by USDOT Volpe Center. Following the overview, the work of three groups of Eco-Logical grant recipients currently implementing the Eco-Logical approach was presented and discussed. Envision Utah presented on their testing of a multi-modal application of the Eco-Logical approach through a public visioning and multi-agency implementation process. The Chicago Department of Transportation highlighted their implementation of an urban application of Eco-Logical through a “green streetscape” program that led to the construction of urban ecosystem improvements. The ITEEM program of the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT), the first known implementation of Eco-Logical was discussed including lessons learned over the course of ITEEM implementation.
Through the session, conference attendees learned how to successfully implement the Eco-Logical approach in a variety of settings, using lessons derived from the FHWA Eco-Logical grant program and related research. Most importantly, the session stressed the value of considering the larger ecosystem in infrastructure planning and highlighted how this type of planning can and should be used in a variety of applications.

BIографICAL SKETCHES

Mary Gray has been with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) for 20 years. Her educational background is balanced with B.A.(s) in Environmental Studies and Geography (UCSB) along with a M.S. in Civil Engineering (Stanford University). She has been engaged in the transportation process from Planning through Monitoring at the completion of projects. Her diverse experience is a result of variety of positions she has held while working both in the field and for headquarters. Mary’s current focus areas are Eco-Logical, Endangered Species Act, habitat connectivity, wildlife connectivity, Planning and Environmental Linkages, Wildlife Vehicle Collisions, and SHRP2 C06 A&B.

Julianne Schwarzer is a Community Planner for the United States Department of Transportation Volpe National Transportation Systems Center (Volpe Center) who specializes in environmental and ecosystem planning, policy, outreach and communications. Since beginning with the Volpe Center in 2007, her work has focused on ecosystem- and watershed-scale infrastructure planning, facilitation, programmatic outreach and technical assistance. Julianne has worked with agencies including Federal Aviation Administration, Federal Highway Administration, National Park Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and U.S. Coast Guard. She has co-authored the paper Eco-Logical: An Ecosystem Approach to Developing Transportation Infrastructure Projects in a Changing Climate for the FHWA, which she presented at the International Conference on Ecology and the Environment in 2009. She holds a B.F.A. in Film, Television and Radio from New York University's Tisch School of the Arts, and an M.C.P. in City Planning, with a certificate in Environmental Planning and Policy, from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Julianne graduate work focused on conflict surrounding urban wildlife management.

Gabe Epperson is the Planning Director for Envision Utah and has been the Project Manager for three major regional planning efforts, including two along the Wasatch Front: Blueprint Jordan River, and Wasatch Canyons Tomorrow, as well as a two-county visioning effort in southeast Wyoming: the High Plains Initiative. Mr. Epperson began working for Envision Utah in 2003 as an Assistant Planner working on efforts in Salt Lake County (Sandy City 9400 South TRAX Site Plan). In 2004, he began the development of the Local Government Economic Development Toolbox, which was completed in 2005. The Economic Development Toolbox is a 150+ page document with straightforward guidelines for local governments to prepare for economic growth, attracting higher-paying businesses and high-skilled workers. Beginning in 2005, Mr. Epperson, began serving as the Project Lead for the Wasatch Choices 2040 project: a 4-County land use and transportation visioning process that was used by two MPOs (WFRC and MAG) as the official land use scenario for their Long Range Transportation Plans.

David Leopold is an urban planner and program manager for the Chicago Department of Transportation Streetscape and Sustainable Design Program. Charged with creating accessible and dynamic urban spaces, he has completed over 25 infrastructure projects ranging from pocket parks and public markets to streetscapes and master plans. Mr. Leopold oversaw the development of CDOT’s Street and Site Plan Design Guidelines and served on the CDOT Development Roundtable to coordinate private construction of the standards. He has a Masters in Urban and Regional Planning from the University of Michigan, and is incorporating progressive environmental design into traditional infrastructure through Chicago’s Sustainable Streets Program and award-winning Green Alley Program.

Deb Wambach graduated from the University of Wisconsin Madison in 1997 with a B.A. in Conservation Biology and a B.S in Wildlife Management and Ecology. She has been employed as a District Biologist with the Montana Department of Transportation for the past 14 years. Working primarily in southwest Montana, Deb is responsible for identifying, analyzing, and mitigating the impacts of highway projects on biological resources including wetlands, rivers and streams, fisheries, threatened and endangered species, wildlife habitat, and wildlife connectivity. Deb served as the ITEEM Highway 83 Pilot Study Project Manager from 2008 through the completion of the process application in 2010. Outside of work, Deb enjoys the outdoor recreational opportunities abound in Montana, including camping, road trips, river floating, and fishing. She likes to garden and to cook – and loves the company of her two dogs, Piper and Ursa, and of her significant-other, Paul.