

Preface

One thing that is becoming obvious as we organize these conferences is that there is a lot going on around the world to address the issues related to wildlife ecology and transportation. It is also obvious from the literature cited by our authors that there is a wide literature spread through many different journals and the gray literature that has relevance to wildlife ecology and transportation. We continue our efforts to bring much of this information to these conferences so that the major works can be found in one place. From our beginning in dealing mainly with wildlife mortality, we have tried to expand our horizons to include the broader topic of wildlife ecology as relates to transportation and we plan to carry that theme forward in future conferences. We are also trying to expand to an international level in order to share research from around the world. We continued our efforts to try to include at least some papers from each animal group from reptiles/amphibians to grizzly bears. Landscape ecology and landscape linkages have been topics at this conference. This was an effort to get away from strictly project level considerations. Therefore, we are sure that you will find something of interest to your particular area of science in these proceedings.

We would like to thank all of the authors for their excellent papers and presentations for without their hard work, these conferences would not be possible. The fact that the attendees were present for all of the papers is testament to the quality of the presentations. We are sure that this proceedings will be another "best seller".

Thanks to the Federal Highway Administration, Florida Department of Transportation, Forest Service and Defenders of Wildlife for sponsoring the meeting. Special thanks to Paul Schmidt and Post, Buckley, Schuh and Jernigan for once again handling the dinner money and helping with the socials. Additionally, we would like to thank the other cooperators - Reynolds, Smith and Hill; Consulting Engineering and Science, Inc. and Law Engineering and Environmental Services. Thanks to these companies, we had wonderful socials where everyone enjoyed the opportunity to talk with others from around the world.

In the Environmental Management Office of the Florida Department of Transportation, several individuals worked very hard to organize the conference. Mr. David Zeigler helped bring the agenda together, handled registration, worked with attendees and speakers, edited papers, distributed proceedings and other activities to organize the conference including keeping me straight on what was happening. Jon Berry, Elizabeth (Betsy) Howard, and Joan Durden provided support for presentations, logistical matters and publishing this proceedings. As most of you know, Betsy also kept things straight at the conference. Helen Dull provided the wonderful posters which brightened the meeting space and helped us find our way.

Thanks to the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials for conducting a meeting of the Subcommittee on Natural Resources of the Standing Committee on the Environment and cooperating in our conference. Their meeting on the day proceeding the conference enabled both engineers and environmental personnel from many states transportation agencies to attend the conference. We especially appreciated the participation of Charles Thompson, Secretary of Wisconsin Department of Transportation from the Standing Committee on the Environment.

We appreciate the efforts of the US Forest Service and Defenders of Wildlife in holding a wrap-up meeting the day after the conference to help address highways through public lands. The discussions were enlightening and covered the diversity of issues related to public lands and transportation facilities. The conclusions arrived at during this meeting are included in these proceedings.

Some individuals who continue to influence our progress deserve special thanks. Thanks to Frank Carlile, Assistant Secretary for Transportation Policy for his support and welcome speech. C. Leroy Irwin, Manager of the Environmental Management Office

continues to lead the Florida Department of Transportation to higher levels of environmental awareness. Paul Garrett of the Federal Highway Administration and Bill Ruediger of the US Forest Service continue to be my partners in this endeavor to better understand the relationships of transportation to wildlife ecology. Dr. Chris Servheen was gracious in sharing his landscape linkage concepts and presenting a wonderful dinner speech on grizzly bear biology. Thanks to all these folks, the conference was a great success.

The evaluations of the conference indicated that the conference was educational and worth attending. Most felt that Florida was a good location for the conference with a few people wishing that we had a conference someplace out west. Some felt that there were too many speakers each day and felt some speakers could have used more time. Last minute changes to the agenda bothered some attendees who could only make part of the meeting. I don't know how you anticipate or rectify absent speakers so there was not much we could have done about it. Attendees liked the informal atmosphere, diversity of topics and speakers and the opportunity to interact with those who had similar interests. The few things that the attendees liked least were the acoustics in the conference room, absence of a field trip, travel difficulties and the repetitive nature of some of the papers. Suggestions for the future included attracting a more diverse audience and shorter talks with more time for questions. We invited a very diverse audience. However, because of difficulties with travel many could not attend. There was a great deal of interest in receiving proceedings from those who could not attend so the audience is much larger than the people who could physically attend the conference - the advantage of having a proceedings. From the comments which I received from attendees, the vast majority of those attending felt like the conference was great and well worth attending.

As we move into the future, our plan is to continue the conferences on a two year cycle so that there is time for new things to happen so that we are not just saying the same things over and over. I will try to capture more international papers and attendees. I will continue to look for real data as relates directly to the issues. An attempt will be made to stay away from theoretical works and have more research that deals with real world situations. We will address everything from landscape ecology and landscape linkages to the micro-environments of individual species that are being impacted by transportation projects. We will attempt to capture more papers on process to help all understand that the best place to address these issues is back at the transportation planning stage where we have the maximum options. Other features to reduce wildlife mortality such as deer whistles, land management, etc. will be investigated at future meetings.

If you did not make this one, I would encourage you to make the effort to attend the next one as they get better each time and by the next one, we should have peaked. Good luck to all who work daily at addressing wildlife and transportation issues.

*Gary L. Evink
Conference Chairman*