



The Environmental Quarterly

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June 2005

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Environmental Colleague,

Just a quick note to say "Thank you" for your calls and emails following our first edition. Your feedback and requests to be added to our mailing list have been encouraging to say the least. We are pleased you found the newsletter to be of value and that you look forward to reading more.

Sincerely, **Don Cote**
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INDIRECT AND CUMULATIVE EFFECTS WORKSHOPS -- NOW AVAILABLE!

by MaryAnn Rondinella, Environmental Specialist, FHWA Resource Center

The FHWA Headquarters and FHWA Resource Center Environment Technical Service Team (TST) have recently developed an **Indirect and Cumulative Effects Workshop**, designed to highlight the analysis of these impacts in transportation project planning, and it appears to be a big hit already! Staff from the two offices have conducted five workshops on indirect and cumulative effects analysis from November 2004 to May 2005. Mr. Lamar Smith, Team Leader of the FHWA Headquarters Office of Project Development and Environmental Review, conducted workshops in Louisiana, New Hampshire, New York, and Colorado. Mr. Brian Smith, FHWA Resource Center Biology/Water Quality Specialist, conducted the workshop in New Jersey.

The two-day workshop (1- and 1½-day versions are also available) reviews the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements to analyze indirect and cumulative effects. It covers the basic definitions and principles of analysis. One key point that has often confused analysts is that indirect effects (also called secondary effects) are different from cumulative effects.

The workshop defines the different types of effects and the component activities that give rise to them. Also discussed are key Federal court rulings on the elements of indirect and cumulative effects analysis.

In Colorado, the workshop included five presentations on approaches for analysis of cumulative effects. The presentations included the Colorado Springs regional cumulative effects analysis, which will be the basis for analysis of major highway projects in that area. Information about the regional analysis can be found at the website, <http://i25environment.com/append/app9rcea.htm>. The other projects discussed were the U.S. 36 Boulder Turnpike Project, the I-70 Mountain Corridor Programmatic EIS, the C-470 East/I-70 Interchange Projects, and the State Highway 9 Widening Project.

The workshop is offered to Divisions and their transportation and resource agency partners. *This training is free of charge.* For more information, please contact Lamar Smith, (202) 366-8994 or any of the following TST team members: David Grachen, (404) 562-3668; Brian Smith, (708) 283-3553; Mary Ann Rondinella, (720) 963-3207.



Federal Highway Administration Announces 11 Awards for Environmental Excellence



A project to improve water quality in Colorado and a course for school children on scenic byways in North Carolina are among the 11 initiatives recognized today by the Federal Highway Administration today for excellence in environmental preservation and protection.

The FHWA's Environmental Excellence Awards highlight federally funded transportation projects, programs and processes that surpass environmental compliance guidelines to achieve noteworthy natural resource preservation goals. Winners of the 2005 awards, presented during an Earth Day ceremony, were selected from among 238 nominations from 38 States and the District of Columbia.

"These winners serve as models of environmental stewardship," said Federal Highway Administrator Mary E. Peters. "They carry forward the Bush Administration's commitment to a high quality transportation system and a healthy environment." "The award winners have provided fresh and innovative ideas that can lead to greater environmental excellence in the future," said Deputy Federal Highway Administrator J. Richard Capka, who presented the awards.

Following are the award recipients:

- **The Oregon Bridge Replacement Environmental Stewardship Program:** The Oregon Department of Transportation's project to repair or replace approximately 350 bridges used environmental streamlining to shave more than a year off construction time, saving taxpayers approximately \$55 million.
- **North Carolina's Scenic Byways Program:** More than 1,500 elementary school teachers use materials developed by the North Carolina Department of Transportation to teach students about scenic byways.
- **SouthWest Station, Minnesota:** The SouthWest Metro Transit Commission attracted more passengers by locating a new transit station near major roadways and a bus terminal that serves Minneapolis and Eden Prairie, located southwest of the City. As a result, vehicle trips have decreased by 1,630 per day, reducing carbon monoxide emissions and improving air quality.

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Letter from Federal Highway Administrator

I'm pleased to introduce you here to the winners of the 2005 Environmental Excellence Awards. Their notable accomplishments clearly demonstrate a strong commitment to safeguarding the environment while at the same time meeting growing transportation demand and increasing safety concerns. They got the job done through environmental streamlining and environmental stewardship--common goals of both the Federal Highway Administration and the U.S. Department of Transportation.

In the following pages you'll read about award-winning accomplishments ranging from new ways of removing winter road sand to an environmental streamlining approach to bridge replacement to the reuniting of big-city neighborhoods severed by highways. The winners were chosen from among 238 entries and represent these States: California, Colorado, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Montana, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, and Oregon. Awards were presented in the following categories: Air Quality Improvement; Cultural and Historical Resources; Ecosystems, Habitat and Wildlife; Environmental Leadership; Environmental Research; Environmental Streamlining; Livable Communities; Nonmotorized Transportation; Roadside Resource Management and Maintenance; Scenic Byways; Wetlands, Watersheds and Water Quality.

The projects, processes, individuals, and groups you'll read about have exceeded expectation. They've gone beyond mere "compliance" to achieve "environmental excellence." They've involved numerous public and private partners and used forward-thinking approaches to solve environmental problems faced by transportation decisionmakers. They've been careful and creative stewards of the Earth.

Congratulations to these winners!

Mary E. Peters

Federal Highway Administrator



GET ON A TRAIL! WHAT'S THE IMPACT?

by Christopher Douwes, Trails and Enhancements Program Manager, FHWA HQ

You've heard phrases like "Take a Hike" and "Take only pictures, leave only footprints" and advice such as "You should get more exercise." Where should you go?

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) is the single largest funding source for trails in the United States through the Federal-aid and Federal Lands programs. Most trail funding comes from Transportation Enhancement Activities (especially for transportation trails) and the Recreational Trails Program. But, transportation trails are eligible under every major Federal-aid highway category: NHS, CMAQ, Bridge, even (under specific circumstances) Interstate Maintenance.



What's so great about trails?

Trails are good for your health. The U.S. Department of Transportation signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) among various Federal departments to promote Public Health and Recreation. See www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/rectrails/mou_pubhealth.htm.

Among the items in the MOU is "working with the U.S. Department of Transportation to encourage using its funding programs to support projects which promote walking, bicycling, recreational trails". The theme for National Trails Day 2005 (the first

Saturday of June every year) is *Take the Path to a Healthier You*. See www.americanhiking.org/events/ntd/. Trails help your community. Many studies show the real estate benefits of close-to-home recreation and the economic benefits of trails to communities (especially for rural tourism). See www.americantrails.org/resources/benefits/index.html and www.trailsandgreenways.org/resources/benefits/resonbenefits.asp.

Trail Impacts

Do trails have environmental impacts? Yes. But well built trails may reduce negative impacts of poorly designed trails. How can you build a better trail?

FHWA's Recreational Trails Program partners with the US Forest Service to provide trail information to the public. The Forest Service produced a CD with 28 trail publications. Many are available at www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/rectrails/publications.htm#USFS.

We have partnered with many organizations to develop trail design, construction, and maintenance guidelines and safety information:

- National Off Highway Vehicle Conservation Council to develop *Park Guidelines for OHVs* (see www.nohvcc.org for more information).
- International Mountain Bicycling Association to develop *Trail Solutions: IMBA's Guide to Building Sweet Singletrack*. See www.imba.com/resources/trail_building/trail_solutions.html.



- Federal Railroad Administration, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, and Federal Transit Administration for *Rails-with-Trails: Lessons Learned*. See www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/rectrails/memo_rwt.htm.



- U.S. Forest Service on accessibility guidelines (under development, first draft nearly complete).
- US Forest Service on an equestrian guide for built areas and campgrounds (nearing final completion).
- American Horse Council on an equestrian guide for backcountry areas (under development).
- International Association of Snowmobile Administrators and the American Council of Snowmobile Associations to develop several snowmobile safety publications. See www.snowmobilers.org.



FHWA also partners with Tread Lightly! Inc (www.treadlightly.org) to promote its Master Tread Trainers program. More trail ethics information is available through Leave No Trace (www.lnt.org).

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- **New Jersey Route 29 Tunnel/South Riverwalk Project:**

The New Jersey Department of Transportation constructed a tunnel between a historic Trenton community and the Delaware River. By moving traffic underground, the tunnel allows pedestrians to walk to the Delaware River from surrounding neighborhoods and a newly constructed park that commemorates Delaware Valley history.

- **Fisheries Protection Program for the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge:** The California Department of Transportation tested and used an innovative acoustics system to protect fish during construction of the bridge's east span.

- **North Carolina's Environmental Research Program:** Extensive collaboration with regulatory agencies by the North Carolina Department of Transportation's environmental research program leads to better environmental decision making.

- **Central Artery/Tunnel Project, Massachusetts:** Community meetings and other public outreach conducted by the Massachusetts Turnpike Authority resulted in a project design that enhanced Boston neighborhoods and displaced no residents.

- **Reconstruction of Route 25 in Greenport, NY:** The New York Department of Transportation is improving water quality and controlling highway water runoff into the Greenport Harbor by using an improved water drainage system.

- **Reedy Creek Greenway System, North Carolina:** The North Carolina Department of Transportation and the City of Raleigh built bike and walking paths to popular educational, cultural and recreational sites.

- **Berthoud Pass Mountain Access Project, Colorado:** The Colorado Department of Transportation improved water quality and created a more attractive roadside environment by building a sophisticated system to transport sand, snowmelt, and runoff into strategically placed sedimentation basins.

- **Mr. William Ruediger, Montana:** Bill Ruediger, who recently retired from the U.S. Forest Service, won the environmental leadership award for his service as the agency's first wildlife ecology leader for highways.

For additional information, please visit <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/eea.htm>.



SPOTLIGHT ON A WINNING PROJECT:

The Oregon Bridge Replacement Environmental Stewardship Program

Oregon had hundreds of existing bridges on State highways that are also key freight routes in need of replacement or repair. The Oregon DOT brought together its environmental regulatory and resource agency partners to develop a nationally innovative environmental streamlining approach to meet the goals of shortening and reducing administrative processes and procedures while achieving excellent environmental performance and community enhancement. Some of the innovations include preparation of an Environmental Baseline Report for every bridge to inform design teams of all opportunities to avoid or minimize impacts.

Environmental Performance Standards also serve as a single, common set of terms, conditions and design targets that apply to all bridge projects and form the basis of programmatic or batched permits from multiple agencies, and the Comprehensive Mitigation and Conservation Strategy (CMCS) that integrates wetlands mitigation with habitat conservation. The CMCS allows impacts to be evaluated at the ecosystem level and uses a single accounting system for assigning mitigation credit and debit across all agencies. It establishes a program-level mitigation and conservation approach along with the establishment of specific conservation and mitigation banks that serve regional ecological priorities.

The Oregon Bridge Replacement Stewardship program is an outstanding example of interagency coordination and collaboration that provides significant benefits to transportation and the environment by fundamentally changing how a major construction program and numerous State and Federal environmental laws are administered and implemented within existing legal frameworks.

Project Contributors:

- **Bureau of Land Management, Oregon State Office**
Jerry Magee
- **Federal Highway Administration, Oregon Division Office**
Elton Chan | Michelle Eraut
- **Federal Highway Administration Resource Center**
Brian Yanchik

Counsel in place in Baltimore



Ms. Sharon Vaughn-Fair has recently joined the Federal Highway Administration as the

new Assistant Chief Counsel for Eastern Legal Services, located in Baltimore, MD. Sharon comes to FHWA from the Consumer Products Safety Commission, where she served as the Assistant General Counsel for General Law. Prior to working for the Commission, Sharon devoted 13 years of her career to work she completed with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) as an attorney.

While Sharon was with the Consumer Product Safety Commission, an independent, non-regulatory agency, her legal work

focused on consumer safety, hazardous substance packaging (of such diverse products as pharmaceuticals, and fireworks), and shipping issues as they relate to Interstate commerce. While with NHTSA, her primary focus was on legal matters pertaining to Safety, Ethics, and Contracting issues.

She is a graduate of the Howard University School of Law, where she was the Business Manager of the Howard Law Journal.

SPOLIGHT ON A WINNING PROJECT: The Oregon Bridge Replacement Environmental Stewardship Program

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- **Mason, Bruce & Girard**
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- **NOAA Fisheries**
Marc Liverman
- **Oregon Department of Environmental Quality**
Tom Melville | Mark Charles | Ann Levine
- **Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife**
Randy Reeve | Patty Snow
- **Oregon Department of State Lands**
Eric Metz | John Lilly
- **Oregon Department of Transportation**
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Joseph Burns
- **US Forest Service, Pacific Northwest Region**
Richard Sowa

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Where Do You Go For Training

FHWA, Federal land management agencies, and major trail advocacy organizations cooperate on the National Trails Training Partnership (www.NTTP.net). The NTTP website is the first place to look for trail related training for trail planning, design, construction, maintenance, operations, and management. There are conferences, events, courses, and links to many trail resources. FHWA has a cooperative agreement with American Trails to support this work.

Get On a Trail!

There are all kinds of trails. There are Congressionally designated National Scenic and National Historic Trails (see www.nps.gov/hfc/carto/nps-trails.htm for a map, or info below for a printed map/guide). There are designated National Recreation Trails (see www.nps.gov/nts/nrt.html and www.americantrails.org/nationalrecreationtrails/default.htm). But there are also many local trails, and there may be a trail near you.

For more trail information, contact Christopher Douwes, Trails and Enhancements Program Manager, at christopher.douwes@fhwa.dot.gov, (202) 366-5013. FHWA's primary trail funding program websites are:

- Recreational Trails Program:
www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/rec-trails
- Transportation Enhancements:
www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/te

Green Highway Initiative

Promoting Sustainable Development, Environmental Stewardship & Streamlining in Transportation

The purpose of the Mid-Atlantic Green Highway Initiative is to foster & nurture the environmental ethic that has evolved within transportation organizations by identifying and rewarding exemplary actions. Sponsors include: the American Coal Ash Association (ACAA), the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) Center for Environmental Excellence, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Under this initiative we will develop a self-sustaining award and voluntary certification program to formally recognize activities under a variety of "Green Highway" categories such as, integrated planning, design, construction, and maintenance. The ultimate goal is to develop a certification program, which facilitates streamlining regulatory requirements and results in both time and cost saving while protecting and enhancing the environment.

Anticipated Outcomes:

- Refined definition of Green Highways based on input from a wide spectrum of transportation & environmental professionals engaged in all aspects of transportation decisionmaking
- Foundation for a Green Highways Award Program
- Building blocks for developing the self sustaining Green Highway Voluntary Certification Program.

Early Registration - Prior to August 1, 2005

- Early Federal & State Government Registration – \$350
- Early Non-Government Registration - \$450
- Late Federal & State Government Registration - \$450
- Late Non-Government Registration - \$550

On-line registration is now available! To register online, go to:

<http://www.thereillygroup.net/GreenHighways/greenhighwaysregistration.htm>.

The Mid-Atlantic Green Highways Initiative will showcase highly successful approaches to integrated planning, streamlining, stewardship, construction, environmental management



www.wetlandsworkgroup.org/GreenHighways/Green%20Highways.htm

systems, and watershed protection and benchmark the critical components of their success. The lessons learned from both the President's Task Force on Stewardship & Streamlining, and AASHTO's Compendium of Environmental Stewardship Practices, Procedures, and Policies for Highway Construction will be used to inform the effort.

Green Highways Forum

*Planned as a large interactive meeting (500+) with a diverse audience of transportation, environmental, and planning professionals involved in the planning, development & design, construction, maintenance, and regulation of transportation projects. To be held **September 26-29, 2005** in College Park, Maryland.*

Purpose of Forum:

- To assist in formulating the Green Highway Voluntary Certification Program
- To showcase prime examples of stewardship and sustainability in transportation planning, design, construction and maintenance, and to benchmark the keys to their success.
- To explore the opportunities that a successful Green Highways Voluntary Certification Program can have for streamlining regulatory requirements.



Investing in Streamlining

by Vance Hobbs, Environmental Specialist, FHWA Resource Center

The Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT), the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) signed a cooperative agreement on May 16th establishing goals that would allow timely permit decisions for transportation projects in Ohio. Prior to implementation of this agreement, four Corps Districts, including Buffalo, Huntington, Louisville, and Pittsburgh, regulated transportation projects in Ohio.

This new agreement consolidates the transportation program under Huntington District and allows the ODOT to fund a transportation program, which includes the establishment of a Corps field office in Columbus and dedicated Corps regulatory field employees, who will work on program initiatives, as well as, permitting issues for transportation projects in the State of Ohio.

The agreement builds on other successful initiatives and cooperative models (including similar approaches taken in Arkansas and between the FHWA and the Corps' Headquarter offices). The cooperative agreement preserves the



MOU signers (l to r) Dennis Decker, Division Administrator FHWA; General Bruce Berwick U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Division Commander; Gordon Proctor, ODOT Director.

authorities and responsibilities of each agency, while encouraging early and close interagency coordination, enhanced regulatory consistency, and an efficient regulatory process.



The new Corps field office will be staffed with a program manager who will concentrate on programmatic initiatives to improve efficiencies between the Corps and ODOT. These initiatives could include the development of transportation general permits, mitigation banking agreements, and other ecosystem initiatives that will enhance both the Corps and transportation programs.

For more information about the Ohio Cooperative Agreement contact Vance Hobbs, Environmental Program Specialist, FHWA Resource Center, at (410) 962-0634, or Vance.Hobbs@fhwa.dot.gov

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Regulatory Liaison Established

Federal Highway Administration and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Headquarters implemented a cooperative agreement in September of 2004 to put in place a regulatory liaison that will work transportation issues across the nation. Jennifer Moyer was chosen to fill the position in March of 2005, and brings a wealth of experience in the application of the National Environmental Policy Act and Clean Water Act permitting to transportation projects. Prior to taking on the liaison position Jennifer worked at Corps Headquarters in as a Regulatory Program Manager, handling national level regulatory issues arising in the South Pacific and Southwestern Divisions of the Corps. She also has vast project experience from her days in the Baltimore District where she worked on transportation projects including the Woodrow Wilson Bridge. For more information, or if you feel you could use Jennifer's assistance, please contact Vance Hobbs, Environmental Program Specialist, FHWA RC at Vance.Hobbs@fhwa.dot.gov or at (410) 962-0634.

What's Going On?

Here are a few of the upcoming events of interest to the environmental community:

June 15-16, 2005
Western Environmental Network Meeting
Contact: Rod Vaughn, FHWA,
(307) 772-2004x148

June 19 - 22, 2005
10th Long Distance Trails Conference
Las Vegas, NV
Organized by the Partnership for the National Trails System with financial support from FHWA's Recreational Trails Program.
Contact Gary Werner at natrails@aol.com

July 10-12, 2005
Stormwater Management for Highways Symposium
Bonita Springs, Florida
HYATT REGENCY COCONUT POINT RESORT & SPA
Transportation Research Board (TRB) Committee AFB60 on Hydrology, Hydraulics and Water Quality
www.waterlearning.org/TRB/TRB.htm

July 14 - 16, 2005
Southeastern Equestrian Trails Conference
High Point, NC
Hosted by North Carolina Horse Council and FHWA's Recreational Trails Program.
Contact: Cindy Wadford at (919) 854-1990

July 26 - 27, 2005
Transportation Enhancement Managers Meeting
Minneapolis/St. Paul, MN
Hosted by FHWA and the National Transportation Enhancements Clearinghouse
<http://wwwwcf.fhwa.dot.gov/exit.cfm?link=http://www.enhancements.org>

July 27 - 30, 2005
State Trail Administrators Meeting and State and Federal TE Managers Meeting
Minneapolis, MN

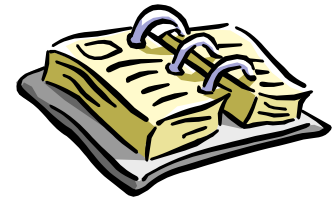
July 27 - 30, 2005
TrailLink 2005, International Trails and Greenways Conference
Minneapolis/St. Paul, MN - Univ. of MN
Hosted by the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy and FHWA's Recreational Trails Program
<http://wwwwcf.fhwa.dot.gov/exit.cfm?link=http://www.railtrails.org>

July 27, 2005
Mid America Trails and Greenways Conference
Minneapolis/St. Paul, MN - University of Minnesota
Organized by the Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program
For additional information, go to: Cheri Espersen at 202-354-6920

August 29-September 2, 2005
International Conference on Ecology and Transportation (ICOET)
San Diego, CA
www.icoet.net/ICOET2005.html

September 11-14, 2005
Joint TRB/SRI Foundation Conference "Environmental Stewardship and Streamlining: Fact or Fiction"
Santa Fe, NM
Contact: Terry Klein at (505) 892-5587

September 26 - 29, 2005
Green Highway Forum: Integrating Stewardship, Safety, & Sustainability
College Park, Maryland
For technical presentations, questions regarding abstract submissions and program development contact:
Denise Rigney, Phone: (215) 814-2726
Fax: (215)-814-2301,
E-mail: rigney.denise@epa.gov
<http://www.wetlandsworkgroup.org/GreenHighways/Green%20Highways.htm>



September 26-29, 2005
Green Highways FORUM
See Page 6 Article for more info

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Due to Quarterly publication schedule, all article submissions for future issues are due to the Editor-In-Chief by the 15th of February, May, August, and/or November

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