



Workshop Invitation

Linking Conservation and Transportation Planning

May 31-June 1, 2006
Arkansas Transit Authority
(620 West Broadway Street)
North Little Rock, Arkansas

Summary: The FHWA Project Development and Environmental Review Office, NatureServe and Defenders of Wildlife are hosting a workshop to improve linkages between conservation and transportation planning.

This workshop will emphasize the use of information, tools and methods that can be shared between the transportation community, and the resource and regulatory agencies at the local, State, regional, and national levels. In particular this project will focus on using tools and information developed by NatureServe and its State Natural Heritage Program members, as well as linking transportation planning to other conservation approaches including State Wildlife Action Plans.

Audience: This workshop is geared towards transportation planners (both MPO and DOT) as well as others involved in transportation planning.

Maximum workshop size: 40 'active' participants with an additional 10 'observers'.

Workshop Content (see attached agenda for details):

The workshop will include an overview of:

- transportation efforts currently underway
- major conservation approaches in use (including natural heritage methods and State Wildlife Action Plans)
- software tools being utilized for conservation planning (including NatureServe Vista, Community Viz, Quantm, etc.)

The workshop will be structured to allow discussion and the formation of a modified process for transportation planning that includes an infusion of various data, methods and tools presented during the workshop.

Workshop participants will be expected to represent their agency regarding its responsibilities for subject matter and jurisdiction, and to facilitate moving forward the goals of this initiative. Workshop participants will also be expected to work toward

future efforts in developing products and results, and demonstrating their use. Possible approaches can include considerations of cooperative funding and partnerships that will facilitate demonstration, delivery, and use into the future. As one example, workshop participants could assist in demonstrating and delivering products and results by giving presentations at professional conferences relevant to their agency and their subject matter.

Products from the Workshop will include the following:

1. Workshop materials
2. A compilation of materials on a variety of conservation decision support tools and methods
3. Predictive modeling documentation
4. VISTA case study presentation (with example analyses and output results)
5. Summary of concepts on information sharing and coordination across agencies (data management, programmatic approaches)
6. Workshop summaries with cumulative lessons learned
7. Presentation for discussion forums and conferences
8. Summary of future efforts/phases

Goals for the Future:

The Workshops will seek to set the stage for use of consistent scientific methods, data collection and compilation techniques, analyses, and products - useful for coordination/consultation between resource and regulatory agencies towards linking conservation and transportation planning. Future efforts will continue to pursue this goal.

Questions for participants to consider prior to workshop:

OVERARCHING QUESTION:

What information, tools or partnerships are needed for transportation, resource and regulatory agencies to be effective participants in merging transportation and conservation plans and support transportation program cycles?

DETAILED QUESTIONS TO SUPPORT THE OVERARCHING QUESTION ABOVE:

1. Are you aware of current conservation planning needs in your agency and technologies/tools (e.g. data management systems, scenario building tools, GIS tools, predictive planning systems)?
2. What are the transportation issues you are trying to address within the context of conservation planning? Have you had any successes?
3. Are you aware of how conservation planning fits into the NEPA process?
4. Are you aware of how conservation planning fits into a local plan?
5. What other organizations could contribute to successfully linking conservation and transportation planning? Are there impediments to working collaboratively with these organizations?
6. What types of technologies/data/information would be helpful in linking conservation and transportation planning that are not currently accessible or do

not exist? What are the impediments to obtaining or advancing this technology/data/information?

Registration:

Fill out the attached registration form, due April 26, 2006 and send it to Rebecca Price at NatureServe, Rebecca_price@natureserve.org. Logistics and other Planning information will be sent to you once we receive your registration form.