EMPOWERING I-80 COMMUNITIES TODAY AND TOMORROW
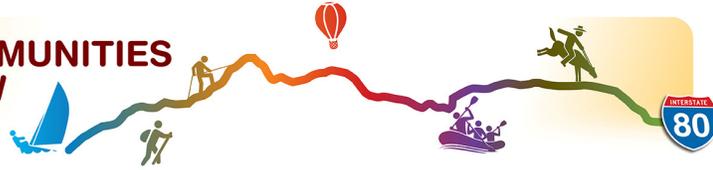
Group:	I80 CSMP Wildlife Crossing Working Group
Subject:	Kick-off Meeting

Date and time:	April 30, 2013 10:00 A.M. PCST	**Meeting no:**	1
Meeting place:	Teleconference	**Minutes by:**	Emily

Attendees:	*Steve Merrill (NDOT)*	*Emily Kubovchik (Atkins)*
	Suzy Melim (Caltrans D3)	*Perry Gross (Atkins)*
	Nova Simpson (NDOT)	*Coy Peacock (NDOT)*
	John Bradshaw (NDOT)	
	Chris Young (NDOT)	
	Kari Huebner (NDOW)	

Agenda/*Minutes*

ITEM	DESCRIPTION
1	**Welcome!** *Roll call for RSVP and other attendees. Teleconference etiquette and meeting logistics. Brief introduction to the website.*
2	**I-80 CSMP Overview** *Perry Gross provided a project overview, indicating the importance of specific, topical discussions by several working groups to help inform the project task forces as well as to inform the overall project concepts.*
3	**Project Website** *Emily asked that all participants review the website and familiarize themselves with its many functions and all of the different types of information. The WLC WG has its own page with meeting dates and times and agendas and meeting notes. The WLC WG page also has a list of contacts/members with a hyperlink to the names for easy e-mailing. An RSS feed has is also available so that participants know when the pages of interest have been updated.*

4   Recruitment

Some great suggestions were made with regards to recruitment to include Mining, politicians at local levels, BLM, Department of Interior, Forest Service Districts, Fish and Wildlife, local FHWA, Members of Western Government Association, UNR, California Deer Association, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, and other Conservation/preservation Groups, District level agency staff. Emily would like to solicit contacts if possible, but will forge ahead on finding appropriate representation within these agencies.

5   Next Steps

Emily noted for everyone to please review the draft goals/purpose on the website and we will discuss/finalize at the next meeting. Also, if there are any resources (like the DOI habitat initiative -- thanks Chris) please let me know and I will either post the resource or look into it further.

*The next meeting is scheduled for **May 14, 2013 at 10:00 am***

Group:	I80 CSMP Wildlife Crossing Working Group		
Subject:	Organizing the Group		
Date and time:	May 14, 2013 10:00 A.M. PCST	**Meeting no:**	2
Meeting place:	Teleconference	**Minutes by:**	Emily
Attendees:	*Steve Merrill (NDOT)*	*Rick Clark (USFS)*	
	John Bradshaw (NDOT)	*Coy Peacock (NDOT)*	
	Chris Young (NDOT)	*Amy Duffy (Western Regional Partnership)*	
	Kari Huebner (NDOW)		
	Sandra Jacobson (USFS)	*Greg Novak (FHWA)*	
	Will Pratt (Snyderville Basin Recreation District	*Michael Murphy (NDOT)*	
		Lisa Yoder (Summit County)	
	Jin Zhen (FHWA)	*Emily Kubovchik (Atkins)*	
	Mike Cox (NDOW)	*Kris Absher (Atkins)*	

Agenda/*Minutes*

ITEM	DESCRIPTION
1	Welcome!
	Roll call for RSVP and other attendees. Brief introduction of participants and roles within their respective agencies.
2	Review Purpose of Working Group
	Emily provided a brief overview of the I-80 Corridor System Master Plan, and the purpose of the working group. Generally, the conversations within the working group will be documented and provided to the broader project stakeholders. These discussions intend to inform future strategies, projects, and programs from a corridor-wide (California,
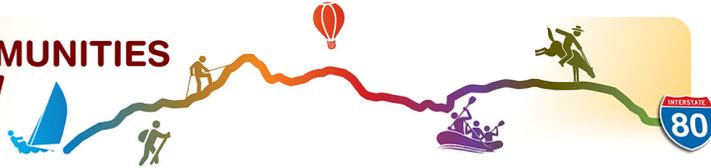
Nevada, Utah, Wyoming) perspective. By collaborating among the many varied interests along the corridor, the goal is to provide a framework in which funding may be more easily achieved.

3   Identify an Initial List of Subtopics for Working Group Exploration

The following is a grouped list of initial topics that the group brainstormed. These topics were grouped (by the facilitator) to help facilitate future conversations. These topics will be further reviewed for both priority and feasibility of further action.

A clarification was made with regard to the width of the corridor. Emily clarified that there was no defined width and for the purpose of our working group we should consider what area is influenced by I-80 or has an influence on I-80.

DATA

1. *Focus on data mining to identify crossing areas.*
2. *Look at corridor topography to see where structures make sense. Which type of remedy is appropriate by area; overcrossing vs. undercrossing? What would migration look like if I-80 didn't exist?*
3. *Need movement map by species.*
4. *Gather information from statewide habitat connectivity plans.*
5. *Contact Western Regional Partnership for information.*
6. *Contact Western Governors Association (Wildlife Movement group) for potential GIS information*
7. *Assess gaps- this will occur after data has been collected and reviewed*

BEST PRACTICES

1. *Best practices – likely to be discussed during more in-depth conversations on specific topics*

EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

1. *Research indicates that crossing structures are effective*
2. *Is the railroad considering similar strategies within rail corridors (adjacent to I-80)?*

RIGHT-OF-WAY

1. *Outside DOT right-of-way coordination issues are difficult when it comes to fencing, public vs. private land*
2. *Identify land owners along the corridor (data)*
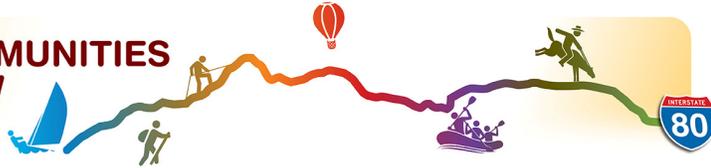
FUNDING

1. *Funding is difficult to get for wildlife crossings. Explore combining wildlife crossing needs with safety needs, and accident prevention for more access to funding.*
2. *Safety aspect becomes harder to justify as accidents decrease because structures are working*
3. *Project Ranking – Is there a benefit to identifying the most important need?*

AGENCY GOALS

1. *Ecology and transportation – goals of different agencies differ; restoration vs mitigation*
2. *Review habitat plans (this also has a data component) and identify common goals between agencies*
3. *USFS encourages a broader view that includes ecological issues and their importance*

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4   Goals and Objectives for Working Group: Review Statement on Website

Emily asked that the members review the information on the website and provide feedback on the group's purpose.

USFS would like consideration of bigger ecological issues and the potential for restoring migrations to how it was before I-80 became a barrier. To identify not only species causing safety issues, but the movement of all species.

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5   Next Steps

As always if there are additional resources please let me know and I will either post the resource or look into it further.

*The next meeting is scheduled for **May 28, 2013 at 10:00 am Pacific***

Group:	I80 CSMP Wildlife Crossing Working Group		
Subject:	Organizing the Group		
Date and time:	May 28, 2013 10:00 A.M. PCST	**Meeting no:**	3
Meeting place:	Teleconference	**Minutes by:**	Emily
Attendees:	*Steve Merrill (NDOT)*	*Coy Peacock (NDOT)*	
	John Bradshaw (NDOT)	*Michael Murphy (NDOT)*	
	Chris Young (NDOT)	*Paul West (UDOT)*	
	Will Pratt (Snyderville Basin Recreation District)	*Emily Kubovchik (Atkins)*	
	Rick Clark (USFS)	*Kris Absher (Atkins)*	
	Nova Simpson (NDOT)	*Carmen Bailey (Utah DWR)*	
	Suzy Melim (Caltrans D3)		

Agenda/*Minutes*

ITEM	DESCRIPTION
1	Roll Call/Introductions
	Roll call for RSVP and other attendees. Brief introduction of participants and roles within their respective agencies.
2	Review mission statement from Website
	Emily Kubovchik reviewed the changes she made to the mission statement to simplify it. Co-chair Nova Simpson added an important interface with safety. Carmen Bailey commented on the functional linkage between wildlife and transportation. The group agreed to adding language to show the interface between wildlife crossings and safety for traveling public and wildlife. **Action***: Emily will finalize the mission statement and put on the website.*
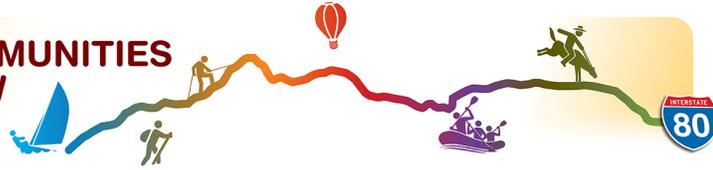
3   Review and prioritize list of topics (from Meeting 2) for further exploration

Emily listed the 18 topics generated by the group during the last two meetings. She reviewed them by the following groupings:

- *Data*
- *Best practices*
- *Education and outreach*
- *Right-of-way*
- *Funding*
- *Agency Goals*

***Data**:*

- *Carmen introduced the Utah Wildlife-Vehicle Collision Reporter known as "Road kill tool". This is an online tool for agencies to keep track of wildlife-related collisions. It is an iPhone app and is not for public use. However, this data can be made available to the working group members. **Action**: Emily will work with Carmen to set up a WebEx to demonstrate the Utah Wildlife-Vehicle Collision Reporter. **Action**: Emily will send Carmen the working group names for access to the app.*

- *Carmen also informed the group about the Western Governors' Association wildlife coordination group who collected the following data in the Critical Habitat Assessment Tool (CHAT): The working group may be able to get access to their data for the GIS tool.*
    - *Sensitive species*
    - *Riparian areas*
    - *Game areas*
    - *Un-fragmented habitat*

- *Nova indicated the iPhone app data may be more valuable to this working group that the CHAT. The group agreed that DOTs and DOWs need to coordinate better.*

- *Rick told the group about the California Road kill Observation System (CROS) which relies on observations from the public. Wyoming collects data too – but not on an app. The University of Wyoming has GIS format from the Natural Diversity program.*
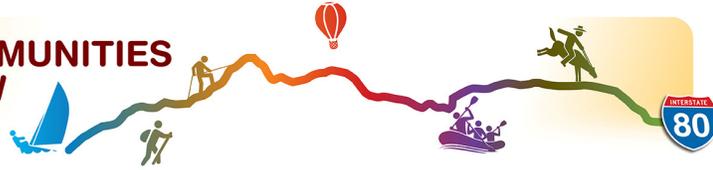
- *Other data resource agencies include: California Fish and Wildlife, BLM, Nevada Natural Heritage*

 Action: *Emily will follow-up with agencies to compile resource information and available data*

Action: *Emily will add identification of mitigation activities by location to the Data topics.*

Best practices:

- *Emily will keep an ongoing list of best practices for stakeholders to use as a resource when identified during specific discussions.*

Education and outreach:

- *Nova indicated it is a priority to reach upper management at the agencies with the need for wildlife crossings.*

- *Carmen added they have worked hard to develop relationships with UDOT and that UDOT takes the lead on outreach. Carmen will invite folks from UDOT to join the working group.*

  Action: *Emily will add the Citizen Science Program concept to the Education and Outreach topics.*

Right-of-way:

- *Identify programs or mechanisms to encourage private engagement and possibly provide incentives that may make private landowners more willing to cooperate.*
- *Urban sprawl, ranches and fencing are all part of the bigger ecological picture.*
- *Land Acquisitions to promote habitat connectivity and concerns outside the right-of-way.*

Funding:

- *Crossings pay for themselves over time because collisions are reduced.*
- *Provide justification for crossings by showing the #s using the crossings.*
- *Group doesn't see much of an advantage to ranking project priorities.*

Agency goals:

- *Main DOT goal is to provide safe and efficient transportation system.*
- *Second tier goal is to provide ecological restoration.*
- *The group should look for common interests and goals. This collaboration not only decreases fragmentation but increases opportunities to share funding resources*

4   Next Steps

Action: Emily will send out an on-line survey to help streamline future discussions.

*The next meeting is scheduled for **June 18, 2013 at 10:00 am Pacific***

Group:	I80 CSMP Wildlife Crossing Working Group		
Subject:	Data		
Date and time:	June 18, 2013 10:00 A.M. PCST	**Meeting no:**	4
Meeting place:	Teleconference	**Minutes by:**	Emily
Attendees:	*Will Pratt (Snyderville Basin Recreation District)*	*Coy Peacock (NDOT)*	
	Nova Simpson (NDOT)	*Michael Murphy (NDOT)*	
	Hannah Main (Caltrans D3)	*Emily Kubovchik (Atkins)*	
	Kari Huebner (NDOW)	*Carmen Bailey (Utah DWR)*	
	Shawn Frye (HDR-GI)	*Jessen Mortensen (NDOT)*	
		Amy Duffy (WRP)	
	Sandra Jacobson (USFS)		

Agenda/*Minutes*

ITEM	DESCRIPTION
1	**Roll Call/Introductions**
	Roll call for RSVP and other attendees.
2	**Review new! mission statement from Website**
	Emily Kubovchik reviewed the changes she made to the mission statement. Sandra Jacobson had several questions, and recommended that the mission statement be further clarified so as to capture whether the group was geared more toward mitigation or research and monitoring. The mission statement will be reviewed and modified accordingly.
	Nova is working with NDOT's Safety Department to purchase wildlife cameras and continue to work with UNR in order to monitor various wildlife crossings. Further monitoring efforts should provide additional information about the structures and their effectiveness for target species.

3 **GIS**

- **Data sharing**

Emily Kubovchik indicated that the study team wanted to provide GIS data publically, with the understanding that there are some layers that may be locked down because of their sensitivity. Kari Huebner indicated that this seemed like a reasonable approach moving forward. Shawn Frye indicated that specific GIS layers could be locked down and password protected if needed to better secure sensitive information. Emily also asked if anyone had a "go-by" or some sort of MOU for sharing data with other agencies. It appears that the data is either made available or can be requested from agency to agency fairly easily.

NDOW data can be requested by through the Reno NDOW office. Kari will help facilitate that data coordination.

- **How do we want to use this info?**

Emily asked the group how we wanted to use GIS and the information we collect. Sandra wanted clarification on what species the group was targeting. Nova Simpson indicated that since larger species have a bigger effect on safety, these would be our focus. Sandra cautioned the use of carcass data as the sole data source for determining crossing locations. This was acknowledged.

Sandra also mentioned that while the designs typically accommodate the large species, information on smaller species is also helpful in allowing for connectivity of smaller species and additional design elements such as "cover" can be included in these designs. Sandra suggested that this group help develop best management practices for mitigating multiple sizes of species. For example, cross culverts included in roadway projects primarily for conveying water may also accommodate smaller animal species.

It was also mentioned that unique habitats such as wetlands may help inform crossing locations and may be included in GIS

Carmen noted that Utah doesn't currently have very robust corridor data. Kari mentioned that collaring various species has really helped increase Nevada's corridor data, but noted that it was labor intensive and took several years to collect and organize the data to its current state.

- **Update on GIS info received**

Shawn Frye has compiled several data sources in GIS and has documented where the data came from, what the data entails, and contact information for the specific data. This may

more easily track the information for updates when additional information is collected or modified by the initial owner of the data.

Sandra indicated that the National Forest Service have data on winter and summer ranges

Kari wanted to know how far from the I-80 corridor do we want to collect information? Species may be required to move at a landscape level and that several locations may need to be addressed when targeting specific populations. Additionally, other environmental factors may be limiting the species and crossings may not be the only aspect that needs to be addressed away from intersections with I-80.

4   Research on Wildlife Crossing Topics

Emily asked what kind of research are Universities around the country doing and would it be beneficial to start compiling a list of research topics for reference. Emily will work with Nova to start compiling a list.

Carmen indicated that Utah State (Pat Cramer) is finishing up a 6 year research project and would be willing to present this information to the group

Carmen also indicated that she would like to present the Road kill app to the group. Emily will investigate the use of Webex to facilitate the meeting.
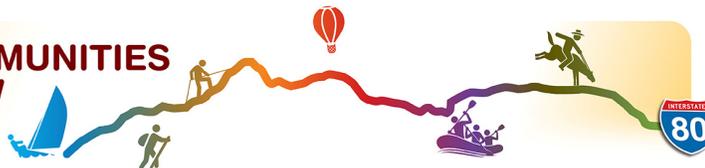
5   Explanation of Survey

- **Organize and combine topic categories**
- **Prioritize topics/Categories**

Emily indicated that she would be sending surveys out to the group to help focus discussions and prioritize topics to maximize actionable items

6   Next Steps

Next meeting is scheduled for July 9th with a full agenda. Carmen Bailey has volunteered to present the Wildlife-Vehicle Collision Reporter application. Additionally, working group participants attending the International Conference on Ecology and Transportation will provide some highlights of the conference. Emily Kubovchik will also send out a survey for working group members to complete to help the group focus/prioritize topics of interest. These survey results will be discussed at future meetings.

Group:	I80 CSMP Wildlife Crossing Working Group		
Subject:	Data		
Date and time:	July 9, 2013 10:00 A.M. PCST	**Meeting no:**	5
Meeting place:	Teleconference	**Minutes by:**	Emily
Attendees:	*Will Pratt (Snyderville Basin Recreation District)*	*Coy Peacock (NDOT)*	
	Nova Simpson (NDOT)	*Michael Murphy (NDOT)*	
	Hannah Main (Caltrans D3)	*Emily Kubovchik (Atkins)*	
	Kari Huebner (NDOW)	*Carmen Bailey (Utah DWR)*	
	Shawn Frye (HDR-GI)	*Jessen Mortensen (NDOT)*	
	Sandra Jacobson (USFS)	*Amy Duffy (WRP)*	
		Lucy Joyce (NDOT)	
	Chris Young (NDOT)	*Steve Merrill (NDOT)*	
	Patty Cramer (USU)	*Dan Olsen (USU)*	
	Kevin Lee (NDOT)		

Agenda/*Minutes*

ITEM	DESCRIPTION
1	**Roll Call/Introductions**
	Roll call for RSVP and other attendees.
2	**Wildlife-Vehicle Collision Reporter App presentation**
	Carmen Bailey gave a WebEx presentation on the application currently used in Utah to track animal hits on Utah roads. Currently since access to the application is limited and by invitation only, a hit is only recorded when the carcass is removed so as to limit double counting. Utah has not solicited public reporting. Source code is available and has currently been obtained by several agencies. The information database is currently being used to determine areas of concern, but with time it will hopefully be utilized to investigate

larger questions including habitat dynamics and road avoidance.

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3   ICOET Highlights

Sandra Jacobsen gave an brief overview of the International Conference on Ecology and Transportation held June 23-27 in Scottsdale, Arizona. Sandra indicated that the take home message was that transportation and ecology is being recognized as a real science, and that the advocates are making incremental progress in the industry. The United States, the west in particular, has been recognized internationally for their progress on the subject

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4   Explanation of Survey

- **Organize and combine topic categories**
- **Prioritize topics/Categories**

Emily indicated that she would be sending surveys out to the group to help focus discussions and prioritize topics to maximize actionable items

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5   Review new! mission statement from Website

Emily Kubovchik indicated that there are still being changes made to the mission statement and will report on statement at the next meeting

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6   Next Steps

Next meeting is scheduled for July 30th. We will be discussing the result of the survey to be sent out in addition to a discussion on funding. Also, Coy briefed the group on funds received from the MCOM grant. Nova will give a more detailed explanation of this at the following meeting.