

Memorandum

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Subject: **INFORMATION:** Designation of FHWA
Exemplary Human Environment Initiatives
and Exemplary Ecosystem Initiatives for 2009

Date: July 31, 2009

From: (Original signed by)
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and Human Environment

Reply to
Attn of: HEPN-1
HEPE-1

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Project Development and
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To: Division Administrators
Federal Lands Highway Division Engineers
Directors of Field Services
Resource Center Managers

The purpose of this memorandum is to announce the recipients of both the 2009 Exemplary Human Environment Initiatives (EHEI) and the Exemplary Ecosystem Initiatives (EEI). The EHEIs recognize outstanding examples of transportation projects that either create or improve conditions for human activities while protecting the natural environment. The EEIs identify exemplary ecosystem and habitat projects that are unique or highly unusual in their (a) geographic scope; (b) use of cutting edge science or technology; (c) high level of environmental standards; (d) high quality of results achieved; and/or (e) recognition by environmental interests as being particularly valuable or noteworthy.

This is the second year where we acknowledged that environmental achievements do not have to be divided between natural and human initiatives, and offered the opportunity for the same initiative to receive recognition in both EHEI and EEI status. We are pleased to announce the following six initiatives that have achieved both EEI and EHEI status. In total sixteen projects received EHEI recognition and another six received EEI recognition.

Projects Selected for Joint EHEI/EEI Recognition:

- California: *Development of the Caltrans Re-Vegetation Program in Northern California*. For developing an innovative and cost effective approach to re-vegetation.
- Delaware: *Glenville Wetlands Mitigation Bank Project and Fox Point State Park*. For using a collaborative approach to manage flooding problems while improving the environment.



- Idaho: *Idaho Transportation/Wildlife Database*. For developing an innovative tool that identifies the proximity of wildlife safety hazards.
- Minnesota: *Vegetation Management Memorandum of Understanding--Fond du Lac*. For developing a process to manage vegetation without reliance on herbicides.
- Oregon: *Culturally-Sensitive Dogbane Transplanting and Inter- and Multi-Agency Collaboration*. For developing an approach to preserve a culturally significant natural resource.
- Texas: *Seymour Park Mitigation Site*. For reestablishing the link between a divided ecosystem while improving opportunities for outdoor activities.

Here are the other 2009 EHEIs by category:

Education and Training Programs

- Michigan: *Guidelines for Stakeholder Engagement*. For developing a useful resource to educate people about Context Sensitive Solutions.
- Nevada: *Historic Stewart Indian Cemetery Outreach and Education Partnership*. For engaging the community to clean up and document an important historic site.
- Tennessee: *StopLitter™ – Tennessee’s Had Enough*. For developing an innovative, multi-faceted campaign to reduce roadside litter.

Enhancing the Environment for Human Activities

- Arkansas: *Tanner Street Bridge Replacement*. For employing a collaborative, context sensitive approach to replace a historic bridge.
- Louisiana: *Front Street in Natchitoches*. For a collaborative approach to improve transportation facilities while maintaining the historic character of downtown.
- Texas: *The Roma Visitors Center and Plaza Project*. For using a collaborative approach to rehabilitate a historic town center and improve facilities for pedestrians of all abilities.

Encouraging Nonmotorized Transportation

- Minnesota: *Stillwater Lift Bridge Management Plan and Repair Project Stakeholder Involvement Process*. For employing an innovative approach that emphasized Universal Design to foster access for pedestrians of all ability levels.
- New Jersey: *Route 71 Pedestrian Tunnel*. For using a Context Sensitive Solutions approach to improve facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Oregon: *“Walk There! 50 treks in and around Portland and Vancouver” Guidebook Project*. For developing a unique collaboration between transportation and health organizations to promote walking.

Process Improvements

- Utah: *Mountain View Corridor Environmental Impact Statement “Growth Choices” Process*. For using a process that helped citizens and elected officials understand how sustainable, context sensitive approaches can be used to plan for future growth.

The additional 2009 EEIs are:

- California: *Elkhorn Slough Early Mitigation Partnership*. For development of a collaborative process to develop mitigation sites for sensitive resources and funding

strategies that provide for advanced, regional-scale mitigation for multiple transportation projects in the watershed.

- Maryland: *US 310 Waldorf Area Transportation Improvements Project*. For implementing an environmental stewardship approach to the planning and development of the U.S. 301 Waldorf Area Transportation Improvements Project which seeks to maximize the enhancement, protection, and improvement of natural, community and cultural resources.
- Maryland: *Asquith Creek Reef Project*. For a unique partnership for sustainable transportation and environmental protection through the creation of the Asquith Creek Oyster Reef. The project brought together concrete from infrastructure preservation and three-million juvenile oysters in a Chesapeake Bay tributary.
- Missouri: *Low-Water Crossing Modification as Stream Mitigation Technique*. For development of an innovative stream mitigation bank which underscores the importance and environmental benefits of using a watershed approach when selecting compensatory mitigation sites.
- Oregon: *Oregon Wildlife Movement Strategy*. For a broad-scale, statewide effort which identifies priorities for animal movement and provide tools and partners, to provide for animals' movement needs through a variety of voluntary approaches (e.g., transportation project scoping; project implementation; conservation; or restoration).
- Oklahoma: *American Burying Beetle Conservation and Transportation Improvement Initiative*. For collaborative development of a programmatic agreement to evaluate the Oklahoma Department of Transportation's (ODOT) activities which are likely to affect the endangered American burying beetle (ABB) over a 5-year period, and to develop a landscape conservation approach to avoid, minimize and offset those impacts.

Congratulations to all of the State DOTs and division offices whose efforts are represented in this year's EHEI and EEI selections, and thank you to all who submitted projects for this year. We will be soliciting nominations for our next round of EHEIs and EEIs in April 2010. If you have further questions regarding the EHEI program, please contact Mr. Gabe Rousseau at (202) 366-8044 or gabe.rousseau@dot.gov. For questions about the EEIs please contact Ms. Carol Adkins at (202) 366-2054 or carol.adkins@dot.gov.