



SUMMIT OUTCOMES

Key Themes, Goals and Suggested Actions

WILDLIFE & TRANSPORTATION

SUMMIT

Creating Safe Passage for People and Wildlife

June 20 | June 21, 2017

This document summarizes and captures the key themes, goals, suggested actions and next steps put forth by attendees during Day 1 and Day 2 of the [Wildlife and Transportation Summit](#) held in Silverthorne, CO on June 20 and June 21.

The purpose of the Summit was to establish partnerships and share ideas and expertise around improving highway safety, and protecting wildlife populations and movement corridors. The Summit focused on informing and engaging agency staff, decision-makers, and public and private stakeholders on current issues around:

- wildlife concerns;
- highway safety;
- partnership opportunities and case studies related to wildlife populations;
- highway crossings/mitigation features; and
- animal-vehicle collisions.

The information presented in this document is a summation of thoughts and comments heard at the Summit and not an articulated plan. The Steering Committee will review all input and

information received at the Summit and incorporate it to the maximum extent practical to Wildlife and Transportation activities moving forward.

This document has been broken down into:

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I. DAY ONE OUTCOMES

THEME 1: Develop a Wildlife and Transportation Steering Committee, Technical Working Group and/or Convene an Annual Workshop

Goal: Provide a forum to advance wildlife and transportation goals. Organize and mobilize stakeholder groups to prioritize wildlife and transportation strategies, funding, and programmatic implementation around the State. Develop a *Wildlife and Transportation Action Plan*.

Suggested Actions:

1. Committee Formation and Process:

- Form a Steering Committee/Task Force to identify a funding and implementation strategy and priority areas of focus.
- Develop a mission and vision statement along with a *Wildlife and Transportation Action Plan* that outlines roles and responsibilities to implement wildlife strategies. This task is a priority for the Steering Committee.
- CDOT/CPW/USFWS will lead the Steering Committee with membership and active participation from government and non-government agencies, e.g. USFS.
- Establish a dispute resolution process that is clearly defined, path toward decision making as issues are elevated.
- Ensure that Steering Committee/Task Force members can attend meetings consistently and provide agency direction and resources to implement agreed upon strategies.
- Hold an annual workshop to evaluate the progress of implementation of the Wildlife Plan, problem-solve on ways to overcome barriers and establish priorities for the following year.

- Track progress using an annual “score card technique” (look to USFS for guidance on score card method). The goal is to track progress toward achieving goals.
- Establish common mission and staff assignments in CDOT/CPW to allow for close collaboration and work to share information and make incremental progress in communication.
- Include technical working groups (both geographically and by subject matter expertise) in addition to a Steering Committee/Task Force to ensure on-the-ground efforts.
- Ensure private interest groups and individuals are involved at the Steering Committee level.
- Coordinate with USFS to ensure that they are engaged and don’t duplicate work.
- Work with TERC
 - Present Summit *Wildlife and Transportation Action Plan* summary. Work with TERC as a potential Champion to identify opportunities and funding.
 - Work with TERC as an information sharing body.
 - Improve communication and remove impediments.

2. Committee/Task Force Duties

- Revise previous MOU or create a new MOU to set expectations and hold Committee members accountable to action items and agreements.
 - Update existing MOU. Outline the relationship between CPW/CDOT.
 - Ensure that agency managers/supervisors understand the MOU elements and agreements.
- Initially focus on Colorado West Slope wildlife issues while acknowledging the need for statewide and regional broader discussions.
 - The reasoning behind the West Slope as a starting point is because the West Slope Prioritization Study is underway. The suggestion is to start with this Study and then broaden it.
- Work with CPW staff that have relevant data to consider wildlife movement and where roads/wildlife movement intersect. Consider wildlife, landscape and traffic standpoints in this analysis.
- Develop norms where every bridge and culvert replacement we plan, look at opportunities for wildlife crossing; example open bottom structures; become part of the normal scoping process/checklist (wider/taller etc.).
 - Use CDOT Form 463 consideration of wildlife
- Use SB40 as an example – conservation for riparian/wetlands as a model for wildlife (part of the NEPA package).

- Develop similar arrangement for wildlife/permeability – approved and outlined by CPW.
- Be careful about adding more regulatory/restrictions on unfunded mandates. Balance.
- Create better awareness with CDOT Engineers.
 - Communicate why wildlife and transportation is important and establish a baseline understanding.
 - Steering Committee could develop training help explain the ‘why’ behind wildlife is important.
- Need to communicate Bridge Enterprise, not an “extra” but part of the project.
- Consider and incorporate EcoLogical 8-step into the process (now 9-step)
- Ensure that education is both external and internal to the organizations.
- Consider a holistic look at the problem. Look outside of Colorado and toward national organizations.

Next Steps: Convene forum, develop Operating Protocols, and outline a mission, vision and *Wildlife and Transportation Action Plan* with roles, responsibilities for the TERC meeting in October. The *Wildlife and Transportation Action Plan* is a priority task for the Steering Committee.

THEME 2: Establish Partnerships and Develop Outreach Strategy

Goal: Promote and implement ‘shared stewardship’ of landscape level issues, wildlife and human health and safety between agencies and public-private entities. Establish Champions and ensure public buy-in. Develop mechanism to communicate and share updates and information between partners.

Suggested Actions:

1. Shared Stewardship

- Develop an agreement with key agencies that outlines responsibilities and accountability mechanisms. (Refer to MOU and possibly update MOU)
- Establish a broad coalition of partners and identify ways to engage stakeholders who actively participate in the *Wildlife and Transportation Action Plan* (short, medium and long-term).

2. Establish Champions for Wildlife and Transportation Issues

- Cultivate upper-level champions and establish a point person for each agency to carry priorities to broader public.
- Work with volunteer and “friends of wildlife” groups
- Citizen scientists

3. Improve Communication

- Communicate hotspots with USFS and CDOT/CPW.
- Understanding of “what is happening beyond the boundaries of the forest.”

4. Getting to the Table

- Identify who is missing from the discussion including:
 - Local governments; Energy industry (oil, gas, coal, wind, solar, biomass, hydro and utilities); Corporate sponsorships and sponsors of wildlife structures; Private ranches and philanthropic members of the public; Insurance companies; Landowners; Nonprofit and sportsmen advocacy groups (e.g. Mule Deer Foundation; Mule Deer Fanatics; Alive and “Wildlife on the Move;”) Denver Zoo; Western Land Group; Hunting TV shows; Ski industry; Tourism groups; Land trusts and GOCO (indirect recreation); BIA and Indian tribes; outreach to local agencies through the TPRs; Department of Corrections; State patrol; State Land Board; Railroads; Wildlife Rehabilitation Centers

5. Non-profit support

- Consider the development or support of a non-profit organization to advance wildlife and transportation discussions.
 - CO Migration Initiative – non-profit, flexibility on how information could be disseminated.

Next Steps: Develop communication and outreach mechanism to ensure partnership are supported and informed. Establish needs, roles and responsibilities of partners and champions. Solicit and document partner input.

THEME 3: Data and Technology

Goal: Consolidate and integrate existing data and use most updated technology, ensure data-driven decision making.

Suggested Actions:

1. Data Goals

- Ensure that technology adds value to public AND animals to avoid losing connectivity
- Ensure the permeability of the roadway
 - Bring all available data to bear to optimize and increase permeability across the landscape including “non-fuzzy shootables,” e.g. box turtles on the plains as an example
- Conservation planning
 - Use a “landscape lens” to ensure corridors for Wildlife movement
 - Work with land trusts and mitigation options
 - EcoLogical Framework
- Proactive planning and data collection
 - Think ahead for pre-project data collection.
- Identify the magnitude of cost needed to address wildlife issues in Colorado (prioritization study)
- Ensure Best Practices – I-70 EcoLogical projects, West Slope Prioritization
 - statewide design and construction examples and collaboration practices – species, landscapes; education with engineers including at the local level

2. Information Sharing

- Share information across agencies; e.g. CPW data layered on top of other non-CPW wildlife datasets. Standardize and make accessible existing information, avoid duplication of efforts.
- Develop and use an App to track animal carcasses in the field

3. Data Needs and Gaps

- Monitoring data is essential to show what is working and what is not working. If tax dollars are used, how do we show that the money is worthwhile?
- Generate more information regarding small species and smaller distance migratory paths
- Examine opportunities for improving safety using technology
- Infra-red cameras in cars
- Strike data is important but roads are so big that Wildlife are not able to cross; animals choose not to cross
- Perform gap analysis and determine what is missing.

Next Steps: Begin to compile/understand different data sources and understand the best way to centralize, open source and share data among stakeholders. Begin to assess the cost of the problem. Determine gaps in data and data still needed prior to programmatic implementation.

THEME 4: Determine Consistent Funding and Increase Staffing

Goal: Develop a list of funding opportunities and priorities (federal, state, local), establish criteria and a strategy for a dedicated/consistent source of funding.

Suggested Actions:

1. Funding

- Pursue impact fees and look to those who have an interest and impact on the roads including, but not limited to, oil and gas and gaming
- Explore entrance fees for outdoor recreation groups and hunting licenses
- Consider impact fee on recreation and off highway vehicles
- SB 267 – 25% of funds go to rural CO – could go to animal-vehicle collisions. SB 267 – split funding between rural and urban
- Pursue unique funding sources – federal, state, local, grants and foundations – where is the money? Determine different buckets of money to piece together
- Champion legislation to dedicate money for wildlife crossings
- Consider in-lieu fees and mitigation banks
 - This could be used for industry and energy – mitigation bank for crossings.
 - Ensure monitoring to provide data to show results and establish buy-in for USFWS or agency that oversees the impacts.
 - CalTrans model
 - Pool funds for Wildlife from developers.
 - Present local governments with a model to create a pool from developers in lieu of on-site mitigation on a case-by-case basis.
 - Demonstrate a better way to mitigate impacts; pursue opportunities.
- Use Pittman Robertson funds
- Work with or develop a non-profit for:
 - Fundraising
 - Partnership with wildlife and transportation discussions
 - Accept donations
- Develop habitat stamp
- Specialty License Plates – tie toward education and advocacy effort

- Consider federal funding sources, particularly USFWS
 - habitat for mitigation
- Consider re-prioritizing funding at CDOT
- Communicate with tribal partners on funding options
- Prioritize funding needs by data/research findings
- Explore Big Game Auction and Raffle funds as a potential partner in the funding.
 - Auction and Raffle funds could be on par with some of the smaller community and private donations listed.
- Ensure funding for monitoring and research, not only project budgets.
 - Dedicate funds for collecting performance measure data
 - Dedicate long-term funds for monitoring – long-term funding.
- ADA (5 years) – dedicate money for Wildlife Crossings crossings when ADA expires
- Explore Sponsorship opportunities for crossings
 - Motor Assist Program as a model – “Overpass sponsored by X”
- Ensure “appealing optics”
 - For example, use Highway 9 to model possibilities and secure bigger potential for philanthropic opportunities
 - Expand outreach efforts and grow the program
 - Use overhead funding to demonstrate successful projects. Tell success stories
 - Secure long-term maintenance funding for these types projects.
- CO tax return checkoff donations

2. Staffing

- Consider a dedicated staff within each leadership agency to work full time on the issue.
- Explore cost sharing options between agencies for staff position(s)

Next Steps: Compile a list of funding priorities and projects based on data and research findings – match these to funding opportunities. Research funding options and next steps to achieve funding. Work with champion legislators to understand opportunities for change in legislation. Outreach to federal agencies, foundations and non-profits.

THEME 5: Advance Education around Wildlife and Transportation Issues in CO

Goal: Raise awareness of the issues and needs related to Wildlife issues and engage the broader community in problem-solving.

Suggested Actions:

1. Develop Communication and Messaging Campaigns and Strategies

- Craft a persuasive argument, augmented with video and experiences to convey the urgency of issue.
- Demonstrate that wildlife crossings work, are long-lived, and are effective to the general public – videos and data and photos
- Use effective signage on roads
 - Work with FHWA to ensure they meet signage standards
- Communicate the benefit and costs of animal/vehicular collisions holistically (value of animals, time and EMS response).
- Engage youth and their families through the schools
 - Build a passion at a young age for wildlife;
 - Comic book, e.g. geese in Alaska. Local parents read this to their kids.
- Need for professional information campaigns
- Implement a communication and media strategy – focused and poignant messages.
- Determine the audience
 - West Slope and Front Range
 - Target the message focus on safety or tourism and cater argument in order to be most persuasive based on interests
 - Tailor campaigns for unique partners and champions (i.e. ski country, sportsmen, etc)
 - Work with sportsmen and tourism groups to communicate this impact on Sportsmen and tourists.
 - This will help us understand partners and communication strategies; need to get the right information out to the right groups
- Creating a sense of urgency – increasing traffic volumes produce greater barrier to wildlife movements, creating greater wildlife-motorist conflict. Large herds are being impacted by collisions
- Create a fact sheet
- Initiate local agency engagement
 - Make presentations and raise awareness
- Driver education – skills to see/avoid; people don't understand risk, cost and why to mitigate

2. Structural changes

- Tie mission statements of CPW and CDOT together to make a compelling case; need a slogan

- Highlight and demonstrate the ability to work together to accomplish goals., i.e. State Hwy 9
- Pursue the idea of shared stewardship/responsibility
- Ensure education – legislators, TPRs, local level
 - CDOT/CPW could help craft message, but may be better to come from others
- Safety/cost of big game is strong selling point
- Ensure that education is both internal to agencies/organizations as well as external
- Design contests – RoadX bike/ped
 - Develop new partnerships and promotion of the contest raise awareness
 - 2010 resulted in ARC solutions

Next Steps: Develop a cohesive education and communication strategy and campaign. Determine phased-in implementation method.

II. DAY TWO OUTCOMES

What are the key issues and obstacles to implementing a wildlife and transportation program?

- Peoples' time
- Coordination of efforts
- Prioritizing the list of projects. Taking the time to develop and implement a process to come together and agree on priorities
- Not all stakeholders understand what the goal is or how to explain it to their management.
 - A concise vision will help other agencies take this back to management and explain or suggest how to move forward.
 - Need to define and refine what the goal is as well as the process, mission, and areas of focus. (USFS)
 - USFS not sure what role it can play (Planning? Implementation? Scoping?)
 - Need precision and focus
- Need to develop a sense of urgency to work on this problem.
 - Need urgency for political support and fundraising
 - Need public to have a sense of urgency.
- Raise awareness & get these issues on the general public's radar.
- Education

- Public and decision makers still need evidence that these wildlife crossing and efforts work.

Advice for Next Steps

- Need a clear and concise statement about purpose and what the effort will accomplish
- CDOT and CPW express their commitment to moving forward and supporting Wildlife and Transportation efforts
- When coming to the legislators for money and support, need to help decision-makers understand successful projects.
 - Demonstrate that agencies and partners have “skin in the game”.
 - As part of project, come prepared.
 - Talk about a LEAN process. E.g. these are the improvements we have made in this process and this is what we do to save money
- Poll the public – understand current public sentiment.
- Ensure statewide education and importance.
- Engage additional individuals, organizations and agencies
- Put wildlife and transportation data sharing on the agenda in regular CDOT meetings with counties
- Focus on media opportunities and messaging
- Develop a target for fundraising
- Ensure the right people are in the room to make decisions and get answers.
- Use the Outcomes of this Summit as a template
 - Go to local areas and start that conversation to initiate projects

III. SUGGESTED SHORT-TERM ACTIONS & NEXT STEPS

1. Schedule a 1 or 2 day Staff-Level Workshop to share information.
 - Option 1: Limited staff workshop
 - Option 2: Open Summit to agency and non-agency staff.
2. Workshop with Transportation Commission
3. **AUGUST 10th and 11th - Parks & Wildlife Commission meeting in Trinidad**
 - Contact Patt Dorsey
 - 15 minutes on agenda
 - Here is what the Summit was and here are some of the next steps
4. **OCTOBER 12: TERC – liaison David Singer**
 - Brandon Marette (CPW) has offered to help
 - 20 minute summary and vision
 - Emphasize partnerships and goodwill

5. Potential to approach a group like the Colorado Chapter of the Wildlife Society regarding their Annual Meeting in February.
 - o See if they would be interested in hosting or co-host a 1-day workshop focusing on Wildlife and Transportation.
6. Joint workshop for both commissions (CPW and CDOT)
 - o Show progress being made
 - o Problem, Solutions and Cost Implications
 - o Outline priorities and focus area – workshop those
 - o Urgency
 - o Presenting information from Summit
7. Organizing the Commission leadership
 - o Go to the legislator with concrete ask
 - o Wildlife Prioritization Study – multi-year needs for funding
 - o Joint budget request

IV. ACRONYMS

- TERC - Transportation Environmental Resource Council
- USFS - United States Forest Service
- CDOT - Colorado Department of Transportation
- CPW - Colorado Parks and Wildlife
- USFWS - United States Fish and Wildlife
- TLR - Transportation Legislation Review
- FHWA - Federal Highways Administration
- MOU - Memorandum of Understanding