

Alternative Practices to Manage Highway Runoff, Webcast Series – Resources and Links

The Izaak Walton League of America  
<http://www.iwla.org/index.php?id=223>

*Is Highway Runoff a Serious Problem?*  
<http://www.tfhrcc.gov/hnr20/runoff/runoff.htm>

CalTrans Stormwater Management Plan  
<http://www.dot.ca.gov/bq/env/stormwater/pdf/CTSW-RT-02-008.pdf>

NCHRP 25-30 Temporary Bridging to Avoid or Minimize Impacts to Waters and Wetlands During Highway Construction  
<http://www.trb.org/trbnet/projectdisplay.asp?projectid=765>

### DEICING SALT

*De-Icing Salt is here to stay, but can be used more wisely*  
Todd Paddock and Cynthia Lister, Academy of Natural Sciences  
<http://www.saltinstitute.org/nas.html>

*Using Salt and Sand for Winter Road Maintenance*  
Wisconsin Transportation Bulletin No. 6: Using Salt and Sand for Winter Road Maintenance  
<http://www.usroads.com/journals/p/rmj/9712/rm971202.htm>

Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, Winter Road Management  
<http://www.deq.state.mi.us/documents/deq-swq-nps-wrm.pdf>

# Advocacy

Your most valuable tool for advocacy is knowledge. Now that you have a better understanding of how highways happen, this chapter compiles some good advice on how to put your newfound knowledge to work. If you find yourself in a situation where it is no longer appropriate to chain yourself to a tree, this information will help.



## ADVOCACY

If you've taken the initiative to read this guide, I don't have to convince you that this is a worthwhile issue for you, your organization or your community. Whether you are currently embroiled in a highway fight or just—wisely—trying to prevent one, there are certain steps you can take to prepare yourself.

- ▶ Reading this guide is an important first step—you're already on your way! Now find a place on your desk for it and keep it handy.
- ▶ Download or request copies of your state's long-range transportation plan and statewide transportation improvement program. If you live in a metropolitan area, obtain copies of your MPO plans as well. Request they put you on their mailing list.
- ▶ Learn the organizational structure of your state's transportation agency. Does it have a commission? What authority do they have? Do you have local or county transportation agencies too? How do they all interact? Does the governor run the show?
- ▶ Download or request a copy of your State Wildlife Action Plan. Contact the implementation coordinator and ask to be put on their mailing list.
- ▶ Take an inventory of public and protected resources in your area of interest (historic, natural, cultural, etc.). Read up on your forest, refuge and park plans and get on their mailing lists.
- ▶ Get to know your local land use planning and zoning policies. Do you have growth management? Do you have a town plan? Does it say anything about roads?
- ▶ Check state law for transportation related law that would help or hurt your cause. How much is the gas tax in your state and where does the money go?
- ▶ Bookmark your transportation agencies' and MPO's websites.
- ▶ Make a list of your elected officials. Find out if any of them serve on transportation related committees either in your state legislature or Congress.
- ▶ Make a list of other non-governmental organizations that share your values. Meet with these allies.
- ▶ Sign up for the Wildlife, Fisheries and Transportation listserv <http://www.itre.ncsu.edu/CTE/gateway/WFTlistserv.asp>
- ▶ Sign up for the Federal Register <http://listserv.access.gpo.gov/>.

## CASE STUDY: IT TAKES A VILLAGE

When the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans) proposed a bridge replacement project in the small village of Tunbridge, citizens and public officials rallied together. The project was unnecessarily large and out of scale for a small village setting. They spent a year negotiating with VTrans and eventually agreed on a modified and improved project design. Following the victory, citizen Jim Wick wrote, "*A State Highway Project in Your Town?: A Primer for Citizens and Public Officials.*" In this publication, Mr. Wick shares some of his wisdom as a veteran road warrior:

- 1 Build local support and be ready to do some work.
- 2 Build the discussion early.
- 3 Make a clear, simple case.
- 4 Get expert help (free).
- 5 Keep aware of project status.
- 6 Participate actively in the scoping process.
- 7 Influence your local regional Transportation Advisory Committee.
- 8 Attend hearings.
- 9 Obtain support from your legislative delegation.
- 10 Influence the Transportation Board.
- 11 Address transportation issues in your Town Plan.
- 12 Talk to your state wildlife or natural resources agency.
- 13 Identify historic resources on or near the project site.
- 14 Question the need for the project:
  - a. Gather data (traffic counts, accident records, sufficiency ratings, growth projections, freight needs, scenic/natural/historic features, tourism and recreation).
  - b. Insist on documentation.
  - c. Ask if the project will improve safety. Will it reduce safety elsewhere?
  - d. Offer alternative suggestions.
- 15 Do the project yourself.
- 16 Vote the project down.
- 17 Appeal to the National Advisory Council on Historic Preservation.
- 18 Mediate.
- 19 If all else fails, litigate.

If you are preparing your own campaign to stop or significantly improve a road project in your state or area of interest, use our handy "Watchdog Worksheet" at the end of this chapter to organize your information, resources and activities.



## WORKING WITH COALITIONS

*“Americans are a peculiar people... If, in a local community, a citizen becomes aware of a human need that is not met, he thereupon discusses the situation with his neighbors. Suddenly a committee comes into existence. The committee thereupon begins to operate on behalf of the need, and a new community function is established. It is like watching a miracle.” Alexis de Tocqueville, 1840*

It’s true; there is strength in numbers. The conflict between wildlife and transportation is so complex and so very daunting, no single citizen, group or interest can tackle it alone. Any worthwhile and successful attempt to make progress will require many and diverse interests. Coalitions harness the resources of member organizations to achieve common goals. Together, you can avoid duplication of effort and multiply your power. Don’t go it alone—conservationists unite!

Before forming a coalition, do some research and find if another organization is already in place. You may find that joining and revitalizing an existing effort is more effective than starting from scratch. Also keep in mind that a coalition need not be a formal affair; informal alliances can be just as effective without additional layers of bureaucracy.

### The TransWild Allianace

And speaking of coalitions, a handful of conservation organizations currently working on wildlife and transportation issues across the country established the TransWild Alliance in 2005. Conservation advocates have been struggling with the impacts of poorly planned highways for decades. Yet this issue is still new to the field of conservation, and many organizations have had difficulty learning and navigating the complicated world of transportation. With limited resources—staff, time and money—we have needed to partner with each other to affect change on Capitol Hill and on the ground. Together, we have developed an informal alliance among conservation organizations striving to influence transportation projects and policy and reduce impacts on wildlife. For our part, Defenders of Wildlife hopes to secure funding to develop support and networking tools necessary to formalize and strengthen the alliance.

COMING SOON!

<http://www.TransWildAlliance.org>

## FINDING PARTNERS

As a conservation advocate, you are almost certainly familiar with coalitions and probably a member of several. Conservation coalitions generally form around a particular region, resource, species, subject area, project or threat. Those of us who work on wildlife and transportation issues often find ourselves addressing all of the above at once. A highway project may pose a threat to a region that is home to precious resources, such as rivers or a national forest, and imperiled species—such as grizzly or salmon.

Highways touch everyone’s lives though—not just conservationists. As taxpayers, we all have a say in how our tax dollars are spent. As drivers, we seek mobility and safety. As citizens, we are invested in quality of services provided and our quality of life. We all have a stake in making the best decisions for our communities. There may be “neutral” or dormant groups who have yet to realize their ability to affect change. Some potential partners may be:

- ▶ Recreation enthusiasts (hiking, biking, climbing, birding, hunting/fishing)
- ▶ Citizen groups (Lions Club, Girl/Boy Scouts)
- ▶ Friends of refuge groups
- ▶ 1000 Friends groups
- ▶ Neighborhood associations
- ▶ Wildlife rescue/rehabilitators
- ▶ Highway safety proponents
- ▶ Species-specific protection or appreciation groups (Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation)
- ▶ Ecosystem-specific protection or appreciation groups (Southern Rockies Ecosystem Project)
- ▶ National and local conservation organizations (Defenders of Wildlife)
- ▶ National and local humane organizations (Humane Society of the United States)
- ▶ National and local smart growth organizations (Smart Growth America)
- ▶ Tax watchdog organizations.

*Instead of asking, “Who is like us?” ask “Who wins when we win?” Don’t rule out groups with different motivations.*  
**Robin Hood Marketing**

## BUILD A COALITION

**FORMING:** Define the coalition, develop the team, identify and recruit the right members.

**STORMING:** Create your vision and mission statements, decide on the right structure and leadership and organize around an appropriate structure.

**NORMING:** Manage volunteers and activities, communicate well and run effective meetings.

**PERFORMING:** Prioritize activities, develop, implement and review plans.

**REFORMING:** Celebrate success, review your mission and goals and share leadership.

*Tobacco Control Partners, 2007*

### COALITION HALL OF FAME

#### Tijeras Canyon Safe Passage Coalition

- ▶ Mission statement: *TCSPC is a group of organizations, agencies, and individuals working to provide safe crossings for wildlife and safer travel for people through Tijeras Canyon in New Mexico.*
- ▶ Coalition makeup: 25 groups, 23 citizen members
- ▶ Web address: <http://www.safepassagecoalition.org/>

#### I-90 Wildlife Bridges Coalition

- ▶ Mission statement: *Advocating high quality wildlife passage in the I-90 Expansion east of Snoqualmie Pass in the Cascade Mountains of Washington*
- ▶ Coalition makeup: 7 groups on the steering committee, 25 endorsing organizations, 11 endorsing businesses
- ▶ Web address: <http://www.i90wildlifebridges.org/>

#### Coalition for Sonoran Desert Protection

- ▶ Mission statement: *The Coalition's mission is to achieve the long-term conservation of biological diversity and ecological function of the Sonoran Desert through comprehensive land-use planning, with primary emphasis on Pima County's Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan.*
- ▶ Coalition makeup: 36 conservation and neighborhood groups, representing nearly 30,000 people
- ▶ Web address: <http://www.sonorandesert.org/>

## WORKING WITH GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

*"You can catch more flies with honey than with vinegar." -Proverb*

As conservation advocates, we are accustomed to working with government agencies, but all too often as combatants, rather than allies. Perhaps more than others, the issue of wildlife conservation and transportation lends itself to working collaboratively with government agencies, at the local, state and federal level. We have all been in situations where we want to reach across those physical, political or ideological boundaries and just do *something*. When faced with an impasse, why not try a non-traditional approach? If you are fortunate enough to have positive relationships with your agencies, you understand the value of good communication. If your group has quarreled with agencies in the past, building communication and relationships may be more difficult. Extend the olive branch. They may be looking forward to mending ties with the public and just waiting for the chance.

*"One of the first issues that arose was a defensive nature from the agency because they were used to being attacked by conservation organizations. They weren't prepared to sit down for brainstorming and open discussions."* **Conservation advocate**

*"Personally, I prefer partnerships, but our state just wants to build more and more roads and flat-out disagrees with us ideologically. While other advocates have been focused on partnerships, our role has been more adversarial."* **Conservation advocate**

While oversight and opposition should remain important tools in every advocate's toolbox, here are some tips on improving your working relationship with government agencies:

### 1. Understand the agency's mission

Transportation agencies have an important mission—safely and efficiently moving people and goods from one place to another. Yes, they have a moral, if not legal obligation to do so in the least environmentally destructive way possible and it's our job to continue reminding them of that fact. But if we are going to be effective in *our* mission, it is in our best interest to remember *their* mission.

Keep in mind, transportation professionals are not typically conservationists. They did not study wildlife biology in college and protecting wildlife is not necessarily their priority. They studied civil engineering, traffic dynamics, physics, statistics or community planning and their priority is building infrastructure. But we all have one thing in common—none of us went to school to sit behind a desk, write memos, fill out forms or sit through endless meetings.

## 2. Find allies within the agencies

Just because they didn't go to school to be wildlife conservationists doesn't mean there are no transportation professionals who care about wildlife or natural resources. In fact, there is a growing cadre of trained biologists and ecologists working within transportation agencies, most of whom are working in the environmental compliance divisions. Others may be outdoorsmen, recreationists or simply conscientious citizens who recognize



the devastating impacts of highways, and actively seek solutions. Depending upon the agency and their position within the agency, they may or may not be in a position to publicly vocalize their concerns. As such, they may welcome the chance to forge an alliance with a proactive group such as yours that can help them realize their ambitions. Agency allies can also be valuable sources of information on how the organization functions, who is who, where to find answers and when the best time is to

act. When working with agency allies, always respect their time, position and anonymity, at their request. Finally, be sure to show gratitude and recognize their contributions.

*“Many people within the transportation world care deeply about the environment and are conservation advocates themselves—from engineers to receptionists. Just because we work for a transportation agency doesn't mean we're not also conservation-minded.”*

**State transportation agency biologist**

## 3. Learn their language

As conservationists, we have our own language. We know a Section 7 from a Section 9, we know a BO from a CE, and we can spot a Section 404 violation from twenty paces. But do you know LOS from ADT? Do you know the shelf life of a LRTP? Probably not—but hopefully you will after reading this guide! Take time to understand some basic fundamentals of the world of transportation. Be an informed participant with credibility on the subject matter. Be prepared, consistent and articulate in all your communication with agency staff.

## 4. Keep lines of communication open

Throughout the course of your campaign or project, your relationship with the agency may hit an occasional snag. For instance, perhaps a draft EIS doesn't contain language that you had hoped for, essential funding fell through or maybe a negative story appears in the local paper and causes hard feelings between your group and the agency. Don't lose hope and don't let the issue

fester—contact the agency as soon as possible and request a meeting. Without losing sight of your ultimate conservation goal, ask yourself if this unforeseen event will completely derail your campaign. Be honest about your disappointment, but discuss how to move forward productively.

## 5. Be aware of power imbalances

You may find yourself with seemingly little or no influence over key decision-makers or crucial outcomes. You will never have more money than your government counterparts. You may never know more about the inside game of road-building or transportation policy than they do. However, power comes in many forms and you might have more than you think. Understand the law pertaining to the issue, mobilize diverse partners and stay in the game.

### Agencies You Should Get to Know

- ▶ State transportation agency
- ▶ Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
- ▶ Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO)
- ▶ Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC)
- ▶ Local planners
- ▶ State wildlife agency (Fish & Game department, division of wildlife, department of natural resources)
- ▶ U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), Department of Interior
- ▶ U.S. Forest Service (USFS), Department of Agriculture
- ▶ National Park Service (NPS), Department of Interior

Keep in mind that these agencies don't always see eye to eye either. Suggest a truce with a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), a non-regulatory agreement between two or more agencies. See the MOA template at the end of this chapter that can be tailored for their needs.

- One of the best ways to improve interagency coordination is a transportation-funded liaison or coordinator in your state resource or wildlife agencies. If your state transportation agency does not support liaison staff, suggest that they do.
- If your transportation agency is improving on wildlife issues, recognize their efforts. Consider nominating them for one of the many transportation award programs. See the Appendix for a list of the many transportation-related award programs.

### Helpful Hints From Agency Staff

Several transportation and resource agency professionals generously offered the following nuggets of wisdom and advice to conservationists working on wildlife and transportation conflicts:



- ▶ Have an understanding of the limitations of agency personnel and advocate effectively with your actions (e.g., volunteer to help where appropriate) rather than by rhetoric.
- ▶ There is a lot of potential to achieve good things, but it will take many years and lots of persistence by advocates and agencies.
- ▶ Be patient, polite and persistent.
- ▶ Become a local and be sensitive to local values.
- ▶ Try not to consider negotiations as an “Us vs. Them” scenario.
- ▶ Get past stereotyping. Don't be overly pessimistic about working with transportation agencies.
- ▶ Look for conservation opportunities at the planning, corridor and project levels.
- ▶ Be clear about what you want. Don't just ask for less impacts and more mitigation. Be clear about the goals you are seeking, the specific outcomes or project attributes you support and why.
- ▶ Be willing to invest in the solution. What are you bringing to the table to help create a solution?
- ▶ I'm here to help. Call if you need me.

#### HALL OF FAME: VERMONT IS KEEPING TRACK

A walk in the woods can open up a whole new world, if you have the right guide. To enlighten staff from all departments and levels, Vermont Agency of Transportation's (VTrans) conducts annual habitat connectivity training with Keeping Track®, a non-profit conservation organization based in northern New England. Since 2002, approximately 65 VTrans staff completed a special “Habitats and Highways” program. Participants are introduced to the habitats and needs of various native species, from moose and black bear to wood turtles and salamanders. Exposure to wildlife allows staff to see their work in another context and empowers them to reduce the impacts roads have on wildlife and habitat. “Far beyond my expectations, each department brought to the program a great diversity of personnel, from planners to engineers and executives down to junior staff. Not all of them were card-carrying natural resource enthusiasts when they began!” remarked Keeping Track director, Susan Morse. Inspired by Vermont's success, New Hampshire and Maine recently began their own Keeping Track programs.



Contact Keeping Track about providing training in your state or area of interest. <http://www.keepingtrack.org> Offer to help with this and other similar training, field trips or interdisciplinary, cross-training exercises among transportation, resource and conservation interests.

## WORKING WITH PUBLIC OFFICIALS

At some point in the course of your campaign, you might find it necessary to call upon the powers that be for support. Elected officials, from your town mayor to state legislators to Congress, can influence decisions regarding transportation and its impact on wildlife. You don't have to be a K Street lobbyist or high-dollar campaign contributor to meet with lawmakers. You just need to be informed, prepared and professional. In fact, elected officials would rather meet with you as a constituent than meet with a paid lobbyist.

If you can't get to Washington DC or your state capitol to meet with lawmakers, you can always call them, send a letter or meet with them in person when they return to their home districts on weekends, holidays or during district work periods. Legislators often hold town meetings or listening sessions to solicit constituents' input. You may also find elected officials willing to come to you. Do you have a meeting, event or perhaps a field trip to a project site that would be of interest to a local lawmaker? By inviting them to visit you, they can talk directly to other stakeholders, gain a greater understanding of the issue and see the impacts firsthand.

### When is it appropriate to contact public officials about wildlife and transportation issues?

Elected officials are powerful, but they aren't omnipotent. Before you contact your lawmakers, recognize the difference between what they can do and what they cannot. If you are trying to influence the intra-agency policies of your state transportation agency, or reverse a decision in an EIS, it is unlikely that your state senator can do much to help you. (See “Working with Government Agencies” above.) However, there are occasions when lawmakers can be your best friends. You may want to contact your public officials for the following:

- ▶ Voice your support for a conservation project or program funded or administered through his/her office.
- ▶ Voice your opposition to a road project or program funded or administered through his/her office.
- ▶ Ask the official to sponsor or co-sponsor a bill, amendment or rider.
- ▶ Ask for support or opposition to a bill, amendment or rider.
- ▶ Ask the official to send a letter on your behalf.
- ▶ Invite him/her to attend or speak at an event.
- ▶ Ask your legislative representative to make a floor statement.
- ▶ Request funding for wildlife and transportation related research.
- ▶ Request funding or support for wildlife crossings.

## What is the best way to communicate with public officials about wildlife and transportation issues?

There are several ways to make contact with your elected officials. Depending upon your needs, you may choose to call, send a letter or meet with them in person. If you are simply inquiring about their position on a particular matter or you want to voice your opposition to a bill, a phone call or letter will suffice. If you have more substantial requests, you may want to schedule a face-to-face meeting.

In any communication with public officials on wildlife and transportation issues, keep in mind that while this is an age-old problem, solutions are still relatively new. Your lawmakers may not be familiar with the subject, may not understand the importance or the relevance to them and their constituents. Be prepared to provide a quick primer on the issue.

### *E-mail*

Many of us have become so dependent on e-mail, we no longer use other methods of communication. However, e-mail may not be the most effective way to correspond with public officials. Since the meteoric rise in electronic communication, many special interests (including conservationists) have used e-mail and fax to bombard elected officials with information and bulk messages. As such, bulk or blast e-mails have lost effectiveness with elected officials.

A 2002 survey of Minnesota legislators found that e-mail is effective only under certain circumstances. If a legislator recognizes that the e-mail was personally written by a constituent, it can be almost as effective as sending a letter. However, “the problem with e-mail,” as one Minnesota legislator put it, “is that one does not have the time to respond to nonconstituents, but there is no easy, non-offensive way to sort out the ‘political spammers.’”

Once you’ve established a rapport with the official’s staff, e-mail may become a more appropriate and effective method of communication. Most staff use Blackberry devices and can respond to your message quickly. Do not abuse this by e-mailing too often. They are busy people and are likely to be working on a myriad of matters beyond yours.

*“Canned language is fine for letting me know there are a lot of people out there who are interested in this, or that some group has a following, but if you really want me to believe you care about this a lot, tell me in your own words.”* **Congressional staffer**

### *Phone call*

If you want information and you want it fast, nothing beats the old-fashioned phone call. You may not get the chance to speak directly to the public official, but his or her staff can answer questions and relay information. Phone calls are a good way to find out the lawmaker’s position on an issue, and a good way to voice your support or opposition on an issue or piece of legislation. As with any contact with public officials, be prepared before you begin. You may even want to script the call before you dial and have pen and paper ready to jot down notes.

### When you call...

- ▶ Tell them your name and where you live.
- ▶ Get straight to the point. Be clear about what information you are seeking or what action you wish your elected official to take.
- ▶ Be prepared to answer questions and support your point.
- ▶ Have specific information. The person answering the phone may not know the details of your issue, so make sure you give them specifics and make it clear where you stand.
- ▶ Be polite. You are an ambassador for your group, your position and your cause.

*“Remember that there are just a very few people answering phones and they take tons of calls. Kindness goes a long way for the folks who often have to deal with angry callers.”*

**Former Senate Chief of Staff**

## HOW DO I FIND CONTACT INFORMATION FOR MY ELECTED OFFICIALS?

Local government offices are listed in telephone directories and many have informational web pages. For contact information for everyone from the President, U.S. Congress (both House of Representatives and Senate) and your state legislators, go to: <http://www.firstgov.gov/Contact/Elected.shtml> or call 1 (800) FED INFO (1-800-333-4636).

### *Writing a Letter*

One letter from a conscientious constituent will carry more weight than hundreds of form e-mails. Handwritten letters are surprisingly rare and therefore more effective. For real results, write a letter to your public officials and make your case. The same general rules apply for letter writing as for phone calls:

- ▶ Address the letter correctly.
- ▶ Get right to the point. In the first paragraph, tell them who you are, where you are from and why you are writing. You need not include detailed personal information. If you actually wrote them a letter, you had them at “hello.”
- ▶ Stick to one issue per letter. No laundry lists.
- ▶ Support your point with facts and background information.
- ▶ Be specific about what action you want your elected official to take.
- ▶ Be polite. Do not preach or scold.
- ▶ Be brief. If possible, limit your letter to one page.
- ▶ Be sure to include your contact information.

*“The communication that Sen. Gramm values most certainly does not arrive by wire. It is the one where someone sat down at a kitchen table, got a sheet of lined paper and a No. 2 pencil, and poured their heart into a letter.” (Alperin, 2003)*

### Schedule a Meeting

So you’ve made calls, sent letters and exercised your First Amendment rights. Are you ready for a face-to-face meeting with an elected official? Personal visits are an excellent way to communicate on a personal level and reinforce that someone other than lobbyists are paying attention to the issues that effect your town or state. But keep in mind that they are busy people, just like you. Take ample time to prepare for an effective and productive meeting.

**Make an appointment.** Walk-ins might be welcome at the local salon, but they are less popular with elected officials. Call the office well in advance to request a meeting and tell the scheduler what the meeting will be about. Ask for a meeting during recess or district visits. Due to their tight and often fluctuating schedules, be flexible. Your appointment may be rescheduled or, more likely, you will be asked to meet with a staff person instead. Keep in mind that meeting with staff can be as productive as seeing the elected official in person.

**Be prepared.** Know your issue inside and out—have detailed fact sheets and background information ready to share. Bring informational materials you can leave with them, but don’t overwhelm them with long documents they don’t have time to read. Find out if this public official has already taken a stand on the issue, either by vote or a public statement.

**Bring allies.** Bring a *small* group of stakeholders, either from your coalition or representatives from other like-minded groups. If possible, bring an expert or community leader who can reinforce your position. Meet and rehearse with the group before the actual meeting. Choose one spokesperson that will spearhead the discus-

sion and act as point person for any follow-up. Assign key messages to group members so that everyone is heard.

**Be professional.** Be punctual, polite and dress appropriately. Introduce the group and thank them for taking time to meet with you.

**Be brief.** Stick to the subject and be respectful of their time. Save time to listen to what they have to say and answer questions. If you don’t have all the answers, commit to finding them and follow up.

**Make it local.** Explain how the issue will affect the official’s home district or issues he or she has shown interest in.

**Make “the ask.”** Don’t leave that meeting without asking the elected official to take action. Once you have informed them about your issue, tell them what to do about it. Make a direct request and get an answer. If you get a no, politely ask why and find out what it would take to get to yes.

**Make a graceful exit.** End the meeting on time. Sum up your main point, restate your “ask” and thank them again for their time. Leave them with your materials, contact information and a promise to follow up with additional information.

**Follow up.** Send a thank you note to the public official and any staff with whom you met. This will build a positive rapport with your legislator and his or her staff.

*“Meetings are fine, but come prepared and please try to make an appointment. I have people on my staff who know the details of this issue and it serves me and you better if they can be in the meeting and be prepared to hear you out. I really would like to see someone from back home, rather than a DC lobbyist. I want to know how this helps my home state/district first and foremost.” Congressional staffer*

### What not to do when communicating with public officials

- ▶ Don’t bother them with issues outside their jurisdiction or issues that don’t apply to their district or state.
- ▶ Don’t just educate the lawmaker. Tell them specifically what you want them to do.
- ▶ Don’t assume that access guarantees results.
- ▶ Don’t assume they are experts on the subject.
- ▶ Don’t assume they aren’t. Know your stuff.
- ▶ Don’t preach.
- ▶ Don’t threaten.
- ▶ Don’t forget to make “the ask.”
- ▶ Don’t overstay your welcome.



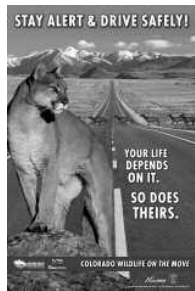
## COMMUNICATING YOUR MESSAGE

Now that you have partners, allies and friends in high places, you'll need some public support. The problem is, the general public knows very little about the conflict between wildlife and transportation. A 2006 study by the University of Denver found four major barriers to effective citizen participation in wildlife-sensitive transportation projects:

- 1 Lack of awareness—citizens are only minimally aware of wildlife and transportation issues
- 2 Public apathy or a lack of citizen interest in wildlife and transportation issues
- 3 Ineffective citizen participation techniques and processes
- 4 Poor communication with citizens.

While millions of people are involved in wildlife-vehicle collisions, very few people understand the full scope of ecological effects of roads upon wildlife. Even fewer are aware of methods to reduce these impacts or understand their own ability to participate in the process. It's our job to wake this sleeping giant and cultivate an informed citizen constituency.

**The Southern Rockies Ecosystem Project (SREP)** spearheaded an education and outreach campaign in Colorado that focuses on the human safety issue, while drawing attention to the plight of wildlife on our highways. The *Colorado Wildlife on the Move* campaign urges drivers to watch for wildlife on Colorado highways, especially during times when animals are migrating. SREP held a media conference with Colorado State Patrol and other partners that reached millions through television, radio and newspaper coverage. Campaign posters and driver tip sheets are displayed in rest stops, tourist information centers, rental car offices and other locations across the state.



**The I-90 Wildlife Bridges Coalition** educated elementary students across the state of Washington about issues surrounding wildlife and our roads with a specific focus on the I-90 Snoqualmie Pass East Project. They asked the children to express their thoughts through drawings that show how we can collaborate to benefit both animals and people in the I-90 Project. Coalition Director Charlie Raines and Washington's Secretary of Transportation Doug MacDonald selected the winning drawings.



*"The problem the environmental community has is they don't listen to their opponents. When I do my research, I spend more time studying the opposition argument because that's what I need to respond to. The environmental community never listens. If they listened, they would have realized very early on that they would find common ground with other allies."*

**Republican pollster, Frank Luntz**

*"If it's birds versus jobs, you're dead. You lose. If it's corporate greed versus protecting the forests, that's good."*

**Jon Haber of Fleishman-Hillard, strategic communications firm**

## FUNDRAISING

Unless you're independently wealthy, you may need to raise money to run your campaign. Fundraising is nothing new to conservationists; it can mean everything from "tin cupping" to receiving major, multi-year grants. But don't be overwhelmed. Reduced to its simplest expression, fundraising is the act of asking a person for a gift of money.

**Research prospective donors** Ask yourself, "Who would give us money to work on this issue?" List all the people, organizations, businesses, foundations and agencies that are touched by the wildlife and transportation conflict. Get creative.

**Now just ask** Send an introductory letter and follow up with a friendly phone call. Offer to meet over coffee to tell them more about your activities.

**Use the internet** to raise funds and build relationships with donors. Develop a website to tell the world about your campaign and add a mechanism for accepting donations.

**Host fundraising events** at or near your area of interest. Bring people to see the area, the species and the project site for themselves.

## Government Grants

Federal, state and local governments award hundreds of millions of dollars every year to nonprofit organizations. Winning a grant is a competitive process, and the best grant writers are the ones who know how to read a request for proposals (RFP), address the funder's goals, and provide the right documentation to support their plans.

The United States government provides "direct" and "pass through" grants. Direct grants, as the name implies, go directly from the government to your organization. Competition for direct grants is fierce. The federal government also gives monies to individual states for distribution as pass through grants. To be

considered for a pass through grant, you must go to the appropriate state agency. Since only in-state applicants are considered, competition is less intense. Government grants are either “competitive,” meaning applicants must compete for a share of the money or they are “formula,” meaning grants are allocated on the basis of a specific formula.



#### **CAUTION: BE CAREFUL WHAT YOU ASK FOR**

Government agencies may support your efforts to the extent that they are aligned with the agency’s priorities. They may not be so keen to give you money to support your efforts to oppose them. Once you accept money from a government agency, the dynamic of your relationship may change dramatically from advocate to employee.

#### **Where do I find information on government grants?**

The best source is the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance. Grants are divided into 20 main categories and almost 200 sub-categories. Each entry includes the following information:

- ▶ Name of the federal agency distributing the grant
- ▶ Federal legislation that authorized the funds for the grant program
- ▶ Program’s goals and objectives
- ▶ Financial assistance the program offers
- ▶ Non financial assistance
- ▶ Restrictions and eligibility requirements
- ▶ Application and selection processes
- ▶ Examples of projects that have been funded in the past
- ▶ Other government programs with similar objectives.

Grants.gov has information on 900 individual grant programs that provide more than \$350 billion in grants each year. The Federal Register, published by the U.S. Government Printing Office has announcements about federal grant programs and opportunities.

#### **Writing a grant proposal**

So you want to write a proposal? Now that you have defined your objectives and researched your potential funders, you’re ready for the next step. A proposal is a short, narrative document that describes your organization and pitches your idea to the granting agency. Proposals come in three forms:

- 1 Letter of intent – Typically two to three pages long, the letter of intent (LOI) describes your program in a nutshell and explains how it fits the needs of the granting agency. Based on the LOI, the granting agency can decide whether to ask for a longer, more detailed proposal.
- 2 Short proposal or letter proposal – Similar to a letter of intent, the letter proposal describes the project, the need and requests funds.

- 3 Long proposal – Most often used by foundations and government granters, the long proposal includes a cover letter, a proposal summary, and as many as ten pages of proposal text, followed by appendices that provide greater detail about the project.



*The Red Wolf Coalition and Defenders of Wildlife partnered with North Carolina Department of Transportation to install informational kiosks at rest stops to educate visitors about the ecological and economic benefits of red wolf restoration.*

#### **REFERENCES**

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- Survey of Minnesota legislators, 2002.  
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- E-Democracy: Legislative-Constituent Communications in Minnesota and Wisconsin.  
Retrieved from: <http://www.e-democracia.cl/revista/datos/ftp/m.pdf>
- Andresen, Katya. *Robin Hood Marketing: Stealing Corporate Savvy to Sell Just Causes*. Jossey-Bass. San Francisco, California. 2006.

## ADVOCACY RESOURCES

Defenders of Wildlife's Citizen Advocate Handbook  
<http://action.defenders.org/site/DocServer/AdvocateHandboo.pdf?docID=1001>

*Take Back Your Streets: How to Protect Communities from Asphalt and Traffic*  
Conservation Law Foundation  
<http://clf.org/general/index.asp?id=386>

### COALITION BUILDING

*Little Black Book: Coalition Building*  
People for the American Way Foundation  
[http://www.youngpeoplefor.org/pdf/COALITION\\_BUILDING\\_LBB.PDF](http://www.youngpeoplefor.org/pdf/COALITION_BUILDING_LBB.PDF)

*Coalition Building*  
Brad Spangler  
[http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/coalition\\_building/](http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/coalition_building/)

TransWild Alliance: *non-profit conservation organizations striving to influence transportation projects and policy and reduce impacts on wildlife*  
To join, email [twwhite@defenders.org](mailto:twwhite@defenders.org) and stay tuned for [www.TransWildAlliance.org](http://www.TransWildAlliance.org)

### WORKING WITH GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

Collaboration: A Guide for Environmental Advocates  
<http://www.audubon.org/campaign/pdf/collaboration.pdf#search='collaboration%20a%20guide%20for%20environmental%20advocates'>

Red Lodge Clearinghouse Newsletter: *to support, nurture and connect collaborative natural resource groups*  
<http://www.redlodgeclearinghouse.org/newslist/Subscribe.cfm>

How to Complain: Guidelines for Resolving Complaints  
[http://www.in.gov/dfi/education/how\\_to\\_complain.htm](http://www.in.gov/dfi/education/how_to_complain.htm)

### WORKING WITH PUBLIC OFFICIALS

*How to Make the System Work for We, the People*  
Global Exchange  
[http://www.circleoflifefoundation.org/education/sustainable/things/work\\_elect\\_edoffic.pdf](http://www.circleoflifefoundation.org/education/sustainable/things/work_elect_edoffic.pdf)

*Working with Elected Officials*  
American Civil Liberties Union  
[http://action.aclu.org/site/DocServer/working\\_with\\_officials.pdf?docID=103](http://action.aclu.org/site/DocServer/working_with_officials.pdf?docID=103)

## COMMUNICATIONS

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<http://www.wiley.com/WileyCDA/WileyTitle/productCd-0787981486.html>

*Designing a Communication Strategy: the 4-P Workshop*  
Conservation International, Washington, DC  
[http://www.conservation.org/ImageCache/CIWEB/content/downloads/4p\\_5f\\_workshop\\_2epdf/v1/4p\\_5fworkshop.pdf](http://www.conservation.org/ImageCache/CIWEB/content/downloads/4p_5f_workshop_2epdf/v1/4p_5fworkshop.pdf)

*Now Hear This: The Nine Laws of Successful Advocacy Communications*  
Fenton Communications, Washington, DC  
[http://www.fenton.com/pages/5\\_resources/pdf/Packard\\_Brochure.pdf](http://www.fenton.com/pages/5_resources/pdf/Packard_Brochure.pdf)

*The Environment: A Cleaner, Safer, Healthier America*  
Leaked memo from GOP messaging guru Frank Luntz  
[http://www.ewg.org/briefings/luntzmemo/pdf/LuntzResearch\\_environment.pdf](http://www.ewg.org/briefings/luntzmemo/pdf/LuntzResearch_environment.pdf)

### FUNDRAISING

EPA and Purdue University's Grant Writing Tutorial  
<http://www.purdue.edu/dp/envirosoft/grants/src/title.htm>

CONVIO: Using the Internet to Raise Funds and Build Donor Relationships  
[http://www.convio.com/site/PageServer?pagename=reg\\_SEMfrGuide&s\\_src=Yahoo&s\\_subsrc=70100000000REa&s\\_key=180-2407#](http://www.convio.com/site/PageServer?pagename=reg_SEMfrGuide&s_src=Yahoo&s_subsrc=70100000000REa&s_key=180-2407#)

GROUNDSPRING: Offers online fundraising solutions for nonprofits  
<http://www.groundspring.org>

Klein, K. 2000. *Fundraising for the Long Haul*. Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, California.  
<http://www.josseybass.com/WileyCDA/WileyTitle/productCd-0787961736.html>

Robinson, A. 2004. *Grassroots Grants: An Activist's Guide to Grantseeking, Second Edition*. Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, California.  
<http://www.josseybass.com/WileyCDA/WileyTitle/productCd-0787965782.html>

Robinson, A. 2004. *Big Gifts for Small Groups: A Board Member's 1-Hour Guide to Securing Gifts of \$500 to \$5,000*. Emerson & Church, Medfield, Massachusetts.

## SAMPLE LETTER TO YOUR TRANSPORTATION AGENCY

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Transportation agency  
Division of Planning  
Address  
City, State, Zip

I am writing today to express my concern about the rapid rate of loss of natural areas in our state/county. Unchecked development is claiming countless acres of land, and essential wildlife habitat. New roads and highways enable and encourage this loss by providing unmitigated access to once wild places.

In addition to the loss of habitat, roads and highways have extreme adverse effects on ecology. Countless animals are lost in collisions with vehicles. Once a road is built, the surrounding physical and chemical environment is so altered, many species will avoid the area. Transportation corridors can effectively wall off habitat for migratory species.

Transportation planners can go a long way to alleviate or aggravate this problem. In designing new roads, do you take wildlife and the preservation of natural areas into account? What steps do you take to avoid causing more damage and loss? How closely do you work with our state and federal wildlife agencies to prevent further endangering our wildlife?

I am one of a growing number of citizens who are concerned about the loss of irreplaceable natural areas and the corresponding pressure on wildlife. We support continued economic growth, but not at the expense of irreplaceable habitat and the unique beauty of our state/county.

Thank you and I look forward to receiving your response.

Sincerely,

*Your handwritten signature*

Name  
Address  
City, State Zip

## WATCHDOG WORKSHEET

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**Name:** Project name, number and designator

**State(s):** State or states in which the project takes place

**Project Lead:** Lead agency on the project

**Participating Agencies:** Other participating agencies

**Participating NGOs:** Local/regional/national conservation and other organizations with interest in project

**Project description:** All relevant information, including type of project, length, location, purpose and need

**Concerns:** Description of the potential impacts to wildlife

**Status:** Planning, design, review, permitting, construction phases. Give relevant dates for expected reviews, permits, comment periods, etc.

**Contacts:** Name, title, organization, address, phone, fax, e-mail for those involved

**Project Websites:** Links to all Web sites pertaining to the project

**Organization Websites:** Include websites of lead and participating agencies and organizations

**Media:** List of all media stories about the project, the area, impacts or species of concern

**Action:** List of actions, both completed and planned

**Additional information:** Photos, maps and documents pertaining to the project, the area of interest and impacts to species of concern

## SAMPLE BLANK MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT

MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT  
BETWEEN AGENCY OF TRANSPORTATION  
AND AGENCY OF NATURAL RESOURCES,  
FISH AND WILDLIFE DEPARTMENT  
REGARDING TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE  
AND FISH AND WILDLIFE RESOURCES

**THIS MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT** (“Agreement” or “MOA”), is entered into this [date] day of [month], [year], by and between the Agency of Natural Resources, Fish and Wild Department ([state Fish & Wildlife Dept. abbreviation]), and the Agency of Transportation ([state Transportation Dept. abbreviation]);

**WHEREAS**, the parties desire to improve accommodation of wildlife and aquatic organism movement around and through transportation systems and to minimize habitat fragmentation resulting from the presence of transportation infrastructure; and

**WHEREAS**, the parties desire to reduce the potential for wildlife collisions along transportation infrastructure through improved planning for fish and wildlife impacts from transportation infrastructure;

**NOW, THEREFORE**, the parties agree as follows:

**1. Inter-agency Committee.** The parties will convene an inter-agency committee co-chaired by the Secretary of Transportation and the Commissioner of Fish and Wildlife or their designee(s). The Committee will include representatives from the [state Fish & Wildlife Dept. abbreviation] Wildlife and Fisheries divisions [or other appropriate division] and the [state Transportation Dept. abbreviation] Program Development and Policy Planning division [or other appropriate division] and will meet quarterly or as needed to oversee the activities identified below.

**2. Identification of Transportation Impacts on Fish and Wildlife Resources.** The parties will identify the impacts of highways on the state’s fish and wildlife resources, including but not limited to: (a) wildlife mortality from vehicle collisions; (b) direct and indirect effects to habitat from the existing transportation system; (c) increased traffic; (d) proposed highway expansions; (e) reducing wildlife and aquatic organism passage; and (f) effects of vehicle emissions on ecological health.

**3. Minimization of Transportation Impacts on Fish and Wildlife Resources.** To address the issues identified in Paragraph 2, above, the parties will work together to minimize transportation impacts on fish and wildlife resources. This effort will include the following:

- (a) Investigating use of underpasses, bridge extensions, culvert installations and modifications and associated fencing, land conservation and other techniques to facilitate and guide wildlife movement across highways.
- (b) Continuing GIS and other modeling techniques to help predict wildlife movement and associated linkage habitats.
- (c) Coordinating between the agencies to better plan, predict problems, and evaluate resources in advance of project design to help minimize conflicts regarding specific species, habitats, and indirect and cumulative impacts during regulatory and environmental review processes.
- (d) Planning for mitigation at the watershed or bioregional level when feasible and appropriate, rather than mitigating transportation impacts on a case-by-case basis, with the goal of reducing mitigation costs and achieving greater overall ecological benefit.
- (e) Conducting research and establishing policy regarding culvert installation practices and design guidance for aquatic organism passage.
- (f) Participating in inter-agency and other efforts to address air quality and its effect on the state’s wildlife, fisheries and ecological health.
- (g) Keeping up-to-do on national and international developments, by sharing information, exploring research and funding opportunities from governmental and non-profit sources, and participating in relevant regional, national and international conferences.
- (h) Continuing to facilitate regional conferences and workshops among the New England states on matters relating to the interaction between transportation planning and development and fish and wildlife conservation.

**4. Duration; Termination.** This MOA will remain in effect for an indeterminate period. Either party may terminate this MOA upon ninety (90) days’ notice to the other party.

AGENCY OF TRANSPORTATION \_\_\_\_\_ (signature)

ACENCY OF NATURAL RESOURCES \_\_\_\_\_ (signature)

DEPARTMENT OF FISH & WILDLIFE \_\_\_\_\_ (signature)

## HOW TO WRITE A LETTER TO YOUR ELECTED OFFICIALS

Letter writing is still the most popular choice for communicating with elected officials. You can write a personal letter, or participate in an organized campaign and send a signed postcard. You can mail, fax or e-mail your letter. Each method has its positives and negatives and is treated differently depending on the office. The most important thing is that your message is getting to your elected officials.

Regardless of the method you use to write your legislator, you must include the following basics:

- ▶ **The purpose of your communication.** Address only one issue in each letter, and, if possible, keep it to one page.
- ▶ **Your personal perspective.** Tell your representative why you care about this issue and why they should.
- ▶ **The associated bill number if there is one (for example H.R.#, or S.#)**
- ▶ **Your full name and return address.**

The general form for a letter to an elected official is:

Date

The Honorable Joan Doe  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510  
RE: Wildlife and highways

Dear Senator Doe,

First paragraph: I am a resident of Anytown, State and I am writing today because I am concerned about...

Second paragraph: This is important because...(facts, specific examples)

Third paragraph: Specifically, I am writing to ask you to...

Thank you for your kind consideration of this matter.

Sincerely, (your handwritten signature)

Name  
Title  
Address  
Phone number

## HOW TO WRITE A GRANT PROPOSAL

Most grantors will provide their own application forms or basic guidelines, but in some cases you will need to start from scratch. While grants can come from a variety of sources such as foundations or government agencies, most require the same basic information in the grant proposal. Here are the most common sections of a grant proposal and the information you should include:

- ▶ Your **cover letter** should include a two to three sentence summary of your proposal. Give a brief description of your organization, mission, and an overview of your accomplishments. Make your case for why the grantor should invest in your vision.
- ▶ A **problem or needs statement** should demonstrate the importance, urgency and relevance of your proposal. Be clear and assume that the reader doesn't already know everything about the issue. Convince the grantor that you are the right organization for the job.
- ▶ The bulk of your proposal is found in the **work plan**, which includes your target audience and any planning or research you may have done to prepare. Describe the proposed activities, when and where they are to take place and project start and end dates. List the project lead and other involved staff along with their qualifications.
- ▶ Tell your prospective grantor your anticipated **outcomes** and how the project will improve the situation.
- ▶ Include information on **other funding** you can use for the proposed project. Grantors rarely want to be the sole source of support for a project. Be sure to mention any in-kind contributions such as supplies or work space.
- ▶ Attach a **budget** showing the various project costs including staff salaries, direct expenses and administrative or overhead expenses.
- ▶ Grantors are likely to request **additional materials**, such as proof of your tax-exempt status, a list of your board members, last year's financial statement and budgets for the current fiscal year.

## HOW TO WRITE A PRESS RELEASE

Are you doing something newsworthy and want to tell the world about it? Then a press release may be just the ticket. A press release is a written statement to announce a news item such as a scheduled event, a victory or to generate a feature story. While nothing will guarantee your story will be picked up, you can improve your chances with a well crafted, professional press release.

**Is your news newsworthy?** Just because you're excited about it doesn't make it news.

**Give your story a news hook** by being unique, unusual or by tying it to a current event or issue.

**Start strong.** Tell your story succinctly in the headline and first paragraph.

**Just the facts, ma'am.** Don't embellish. Answer the who, what, when, where, why and how.

**Keep it short.** Avoid unnecessary adjectives and make every word count.

**Use correct grammar** and spelling. No jargon, no acronyms, no CAPS and no exclamation points!!!

**Make it easy.** Journalists are busy people; the easier you make their jobs, the more likely they are to cover your issue.

### IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date

Contact: Provide contact info for the story

### Headline Announces Story at the Top, Keep it Under 80 Characters

Subheadline: One short sentence on why the headline matters; brief elaboration on main message or introduction of secondary message.

City, State – Use the lead sentence to provide a brief synopsis of the information you are presenting. Don't assume that the reader has read your headlines; the first one or two sentences have to capture the reader's attention immediately.

First quote: 2-3 sentence quote from an identified source explaining your organization's position/reaction/comment on the main message of the release.

Use the next 1-2 paragraphs to expand on the opening paragraph and provide backup data or history that further underscores your message.

Secondary quotes: These further expand upon your organization's position or give other stakeholders an opportunity to comment.

Optional additional factual "context" paragraphs.

About Conservation Group: Close with organizational information and website.

###

Remember: Just like news stories, press releases use short sentences and paragraphs. Keep paragraphs to four lines or less. The entire press release should ideally be no more than one page or a page and a half at the most. The tone should be objective and neutral except within quotes; if you find "I," "you," or "we" outside a direct quote, start over. And when crafting your quotes, remember that the average newspaper reader absorbs information at an eight grade reading level, so avoid overly "wonky" words or phrases.

## HOW TO WRITE A LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Letters to the editor are great advocacy tools. They reach a large audience, including elected officials. They can bring up information not addressed in a news article and illustrate more widespread support for or against an issue. Following are some tips to help ensure success in getting your letter published and a sample outline to guide you as you write your own:

- ▶ **Know the newspaper's policy.** Call the newspaper or check its Web site for its requirements for printing letters from readers. Some newspapers have strict word-count limits; others only accept letters from people who live in the community. Many newspapers even have forms on their Web sites for submitting letters.
- ▶ **Focus on the message.** As you write, always keep in mind what you want the reader to come away with after reading your letter. Don't make the editor wonder what you're trying to say.
- ▶ **Be concise.** Keep your letter brief (150 to 200 words) and limited to one topic. If your letter is too long or complicated, it may be edited or discounted altogether. You can be direct, engaging and even controversial, but never defamatory or obscene—no matter how provoked you are.
- ▶ **Type and proof it.** Handwritten letters can be tough to read. Don't chance it—type your letter and proofread it carefully; letters with mistakes may be discarded quickly.
- ▶ **Refer to specific articles in the paper.** While some papers print general commentary, your chances of getting printed increase if your letter refers to a specific article. However, don't do a lengthy rehash of the article, simply refer to it briefly. For example, "I strongly disagree with (author's name) narrow view on habitat protection (op-ed title, date)"... "I am deeply saddened to read that Representative Doe is supporting this destructive and unnecessary road project (article title, date)"... "I am happy this paper has taken up the charge for protection of endangered species (op-ed title, date) and I hope Senator Doe listens to this message when casting her vote."
- ▶ **Be timely.** When responding to an article, submit your letter to the editor as soon as possible. You want the original article to be fresh in the mind of the audience.
- ▶ **Get personal.** The best letters contain attention-getting information or personal anecdotes. Refer to personal stories to make your point. Use personal examples whenever you can.
- ▶ **Include your contact information.** Many newspapers will print a letter only after verifying the identity and address of the author. Provide your full name, address, ZIP code and daytime telephone number so the newspaper can easily contact you to verify your letter or to discuss editorial changes prior to publication.
- ▶ **Don't give up.** Most publications are very selective. The smaller the newspaper's circulation, the better your chances of getting your letter printed. Don't keep calling to check on the status of your letter. If your letter isn't selected, don't be discouraged. You can send a revised letter with a different angle at another time. Be aware, too, that many publications have guidelines about repeatedly printing letters from a single individual, so don't expect to have your letters printed on a regular basis.
- ▶ **Share your success.** If your letter is published, don't stop there. Send the clip to your elected officials so they see what their constituents are writing and reading about. Don't forget to send a copy to Defenders of Wildlife, too. It's your voice that helps us all succeed in our work and we want to hear it.



## HOW TO WRITE A RESEARCH PROBLEM STATEMENT

Research institutions and government agencies often solicit problem statements to identify ideas for research that is needed to address existing or anticipated issues. Submitted problem statements form the basis of their research program and are then funded and implemented. Conservationists can contribute by suggesting research problems regarding wildlife-transportation conflicts and by participating in or conducting the research. Research is conducted in all areas of transportation, including policy, planning, engineering, operations, maintenance, mitigation and administration.

**Problem title** - The title should be no more than 10 words.

**Research problem statement** - In no more than three paragraphs, provide a general description of the problem or need.

**Objectives** - Include a clear, concise statement of the objectives (anticipated products) that are expected to be met by this particular research.

**Research proposed** - Provide a statement of the specific research proposed, how it relates to the general problem statement and, if possible, the research approach and the tasks envisioned.

**Estimate of the problem funding** - Include an estimate of the funds necessary to accomplish the objectives. A detailed budget is generally not necessary.

**Research period** - Provide an estimate of the period of time needed to complete the research, including 3 months for review and revision of a draft final report.

**Urgency and payoff potential** - Include a statement concerning the urgency of this particular research. Identify and, if possible, quantify the potential and magnitude of payoff from the achievement of the project objectives. Any institutional, political, or socio-economic barriers to implementation of the anticipated research products should also be identified.

**Relationship to sponsor's strategic goals and policy initiatives** - Categorize this problem statement using the sponsoring agency or organization's strategic initiatives and priorities.

**Related research** - If available, provide information on other research—completed, in progress, or pending—that is closely relevant to the proposed problem.

**Person(s) developing the problem** - Provide the specifics (i.e., name, title, address, telephone, and fax numbers) for the person(s) who developed the problem.

**Process used to develop problem statement** - State whether this problem statement is the product of an individual or group.

**Date and submitted by** - Provide the specifics of the person(s) who submitted the problem and the date of submission.