

NACE News



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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Phillip M. Demery, P.E., Transportation and Public Works Director, Sonoma County, CA

Last month I attended the Iowa County Engineers Association (ICEA) conference located at the Iowa State University campus in Ames, Iowa. There are 99 Counties in Iowa with an approximate population of 3 million. Similar to other state affiliates, their Board is comprised of elected officers as well as elected representatives from 6 geographic Districts.

The conference was very well attended and consisted of concurrent sessions addressing operational efficiencies, technology applications, bridges, and asphalt/concrete paving. In terms of green technologies, not only has Iowa jurisdictions placed over 100,000 tons of Warm Mix Asphalt over the past 6 years, but they also have experience using recycled materials such as Recycled Asphalt Shingles (RAS) in their HMA design. The IDOT is expected to write a specification for use of RAS in October 2011. Two of the conference events that were both unique and impressive were an award luncheon recognizing the service of County Technicians and a banquet recognizing their County Engineers.



(L-R): Todd Kinney, ICEA Vice President, Danny Waid, ICEA President, Phil Demery, NACE President, Todd Fonkert, outgoing ICEA President.

Both events included college instructors/professors as well as student scholarship recipients.

The Keynote speaker for the Conference was Dave Sheffield, a motivational speaker that works with companies going through significant change. One of his messages was to eliminate the "Time Vampires" that suck the productivity out of your day. This must explain why we are so tired at the end of the day when it didn't seem like we got much accom-

plished.

The ICEA is another one of our strong associations in support of NACE. It was great to visit with NACE Former Leaders, current members in NACE leadership positions and undoubtedly some future NACE leaders within the ICEA. I had a wonderful time and want to thank the Association for being such great hosts. The weather was so cold in Iowa that it took 2 days for my eyeballs to thaw out upon my return to California. I now know why the people from Iowa are so friendly and warm – survival!

Finally I would like to congratulate George Johnson, Director of Transportation and Land Management Agency for Riverside County, CA on being named as the NACE Western Region Vice President. George was previously the NACE State Director representing California. Last month we reported that Ryan Lopossa left County service in Washington State and as such resigned as the NACE Western Region Vice President. We wish Ryan the best of luck in his new endeavors and thank him for efforts in support of NACE.

CONGRATULATIONS TO GEORGE JOHNSON, NEW NACE WESTERN REGION VICE PRESIDENT



George Johnson currently serves as the Director of the Transportation and Land Management Agency for Riverside County, California. Riverside County is the fourth largest of California's 58 counties with a geographic area of 7,200 square miles, a population of 2.1 million people and a county road system totaling 2,600 miles.

The Transportation and Land Management Agency is comprised of six departments: Transportation, Planning, Building and Safety, Code Enforcement, Environmental Programs and Administrative Services, with 800 employees and an annual budget exceeding \$200 million. Under his direction, the Transportation Department has developed a very aggressive Transportation Improvement Program through a combination of local, state and federal funds, totaling over \$1.5 billion worth of projects to be delivered over a ten-year timeframe. George has overseen the successful delivery of numerous large scale transportation projects including bridges, freeway interchanges, state highways and various county road projects, all involving extensive coordination with transportation and environmental agencies at the federal, state, regional and local level.

See "NACE Western Region VP" continued page 2.

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MICA PLANS FIELD HEARINGS BEFORE DRAFTING LEGISLATION

(AASHTO Journal)

House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman John Mica said he intends to hold field hearings or "listening sessions" outside of Washington beginning in mid-February to get more input from local and regional officials on what should be in the next federal surface transportation reauthorization legislation.

Mica, R-Florida, told The Journal of Commerce that his top priority is to complete legislation to reauthorize the Federal Aviation Administration. Congress has passed 17 FAA extensions since Sept. 30, 2007, pending passage of a new aviation bill, "so I've got to get that out first," he said.

"But running parallel will be the surface and transit bill," said Mica. "The first thing I plan to do is a series of hearings around the country, and listening sessions, and we're going to start that probably about the 18th of February."

Federal highway and transit programs are continuing under their sixth short-term extension by Congress since the 2005 surface transportation authorization known as "SAFETEA-LU" expired Sept. 30, 2009. Current authority expires March 4. As the new House T&I Committee chairman, Mica will take the lead in crafting a reauthorization measure this year in the House.

While he did not give a target period for getting a bill through his committee or the House, Mica has previously said he wants to move legislation as early as possible in 2011 to prevent major initiatives getting caught up in the 2012 presidential election campaign.

Mica described his goals for surface transportation reauthorization: retool some current highway, bridge, and transit programs to save money; speed up projects to release funds already approved; spur greater use of infrastructure loans from existing federal government programs; and give more incentives to private firms to invest in transportation projects.

However, he said that "rather than me scribble out my ideas ... we're going to be listening; we're going to be soliciting good ideas" from others. "So we're going to take the effort on the road."

The T&I Committee has not yet announced the total number of and locations for the field hearings.

"I hope to have a whole list of new financing ideas and how we can cut some of the red tape, learning from people first-hand and also educating members" of the committee, Mica said.

He added that 19 of the T&I committee's 33 Republicans are new to the panel, "so we'll be in some of those districts and then we'll be around the country. And then we'll come back, we'll draft it -- in hopefully a bipartisan manner," then try to move the bill through Congress.

The Senate Environment and Public Works Committee will hold its first surface transportation reauthorization hearing this Congress on Jan. 26. American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials President Susan Martinovich, Nevada transportation director, is scheduled to testify.

MICA ANNOUNCES TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMEN AND MEMBERSHIPS:

For more information see:

<http://republicans.transportation.house.gov/news/PRArticle.aspx?NewsID=1033>

"NACE Western Region VP" continued from page 1.

George has been a member of the County Engineers Association of California since 1996, where he has actively served on CEAC's Transportation, Land Use, Flood Control and Oversight Committees. His active involvement in CEAC was recognized as he was selected to serve as the CEAC President in 2008. Upon successful completion of his term as President of CEAC, George was accepted into the California Loyal Order of Dedicated Servants (CLODS), an honor bestowed upon CEAC Past Presidents. George continues to represent CEAC as one of six county representatives on the statewide City, County, State, Federal Cooperative Committee which meets bi-monthly to improve transportation project delivery in coordination with the State DOT (Caltrans) and FHWA. He also serves on the CEAC Board of Directors as the NACE Representative.

George has been a member of NACE since 2002 and has represented CEAC as California's state delegate to NACE since 2007. George has served on the NACE Federal Aid Program Streamlining Task Force since 2008 and is a member of the Pavement Preservation Committee. George regularly attends the NACE Western Regional meetings held annually in Arizona. George wants to advance NACE transportation priorities focused on improving county roadway safety and maintenance by increasing federal transportation funding and reducing project delivery time, in collaboration with NACo and our federal transportation partners.

CORPORATE SPOTLIGHT: RTVISION

NACE would like to thank RtVision for their Platinum Corporate Membership and for their support of NACE for the upcoming conference in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

RtVision is a software engineering organization dedicated to automating the flow of information for counties, cities, consultants and contractor firms, and suppliers. They provide innovative software solutions that streamline involved processes in a paperless environment. RtVision helps solve your manual, paper intensive processes that are time-consuming and costly, to streamlined processes, reporting and data management.

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NATIONAL LTAP ASSOCIATION MEETING AT TRB WASHINGTON, DC



(L-R): Ken Skorseth (SD), LTAP President, Tony Giancola, NACE Executive Director, and Dan Cady (NE), LTAP Liaison to NACE.

The National Local Technical Assistance Program Association (NLTAPA) met on January 23rd during the Transportation Research Board (TRB) conference. Tony Giancola gave a NACE update on partnership activities and legislative brief. For more information about LTAP/TTAP, see www.ltap.org

Mark your calendar for the National LTAP/TTAP conference: August 1-4, 2011 in Boston, MA. For more information, see www.boston2011.org.

VISIT OUR LOCAL ROADS MATTER! CAMPAIGN

Gain a wealth of information on how critical our local roads are:

<http://countyengineers.org/LRM/index.html>

NACE RESPONDS TO FHWA DOCKET ON MUTCD COMPLIANCE DATES

NACE has provided comments to the FHWA Docket which requested comments on the MUTCD compliance dates. To view the NACE comments (Legislative section of the NACE website): http://www.countyengineers.org/LegReg/Documents/NACECommentsFHWA_DocketMUTCDComplianceDates.pdf

TRB WEBINAR: TARGET-SETTING METHODS AND DATA MANAGEMENT TO SUPPORT PERFORMANCE-BASED RESOURCE ALLOCATION BY TRANSPORTATION AGENCIES

TRB will be conducting a web briefing or "webinar" on **February 23, 2011**, from 2:00 p.m.-3:30 p.m. EST that will explore the findings of **NCHRP Report 666**. The webinar will provide information to senior agency managers about the role of targets in performance-based resource allocation, factors influencing target setting, and approaches to target setting. Participants must register at least 24 hours prior to the start of the webinar, space is limited, and there is a fee for non-TRB Sponsor employees.

http://www.trb.org/Calendar/Blurbs/TRB_Webinar_TargetSetting_Methods_and_Data_Managem_164626.aspx

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS AVAILABLE FOR PIPELINE SAFETY

The Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Administration is now accepting applications for Technical Assistance Grants (TAG) **until Feb. 28**. The TAG program is designed to provide funding (up to \$50,000) to communities and non-profit groups for engineering or other scientific analysis of pipeline safety and/or to help promote public participation in official proceedings pertaining to pipeline safety. To learn more about the TAG program, contact James Davenport 202.661.8807 or see: <http://primis.phmsa.dot.gov/comm/DamagePreventionGrantsToStates.htm>

APPLICATIONS SOUGHT FOR 2011 NATIONAL ROADWAY SAFETY AWARDS

The Roadway Safety Foundation and the Federal Highway Administration are currently accepting applications for the 2011 National Roadway Safety Awards. RSF and FHWA recognize best practices in roadway safety improvements and publish the practices to help solve reoccurring roadway safety issues throughout the nation.

"We are very excited to begin the process once again of searching for and honoring high achievers in the field of roadway safety," said Greg Cohen, Executive Director of the Roadway Safety Foundation. "This biennial celebration is an exciting time for us, and for all of the applicants who are doing such tremendous work across the country to keep road users safe."

The competition includes three award categories: Infrastructure Improvements; Operational Improvements and Program Planning; and Development and Evaluation. Applicants can submit projects, programs, or activities that include effective and innovative safety agendas, and resourcefully employ various sources of aid including federal, state, local, and/or private sector funds.

Winners of the competition will receive an invitation to attend a national-level recognition event in Washington, DC; local and national media coverage opportunities; appearance in trade press and other RSF and FHWA publications and websites, and meeting opportunities with key roadway safety officials and legislators in Washington, DC.

The deadline for submissions is **May 1, 2011**. To learn more or to download an application, please visit www.roadwaysafety.org

TRAFFIC SAFETY FACTS 2009: EARLY EDITION

The U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration has released the Early Edition of its Traffic Safety Facts 2009 report. The report includes current 2009 data and final 2008 data. The report contains exposure data and other data points that customarily are not available until later. Instead of withholding the entire report until those data are available, the Early Edition is produced to allow access to the statistics that are currently available. For more information, see:

http://www.trb.org/Main/Blurbs/Traffic_Safety_Facts_2009_Early_Edition_164700.aspx

INTELLIGENT SOIL COMPACTION SYSTEMS

TRB's National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP) Report 676: Intelligent Soil Compaction Systems explores intelligent compaction, a new method of achieving and documenting compaction requirements. Intelligent compaction uses continuous compaction-roller vibration monitoring to assess mechanistic soil properties, continuous modification/adaptation of roller vibration amplitude and frequency to ensure optimum compaction, and full-time monitoring by an integrated global positioning system to provide a complete GPS-based record of the compacted area. For more information, see:

http://www.trb.org/Main/Blurbs/Intelligent_Soil_Compaction_Systems_164279.aspx

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THE SILENT CRISIS

By *Richie Beyer, County Engineer, Elmore County, AL and NACE Secretary-Treasurer*

Recently the Association of County Engineers of Alabama (ACEA) in cooperation with the Association of County Commissions of Alabama completed an update of our County Road and Bridge Needs Assessment. Unlike the past assessments, this undertaking was performed solely by a committee of County Engineers and their respective staffs. This approach proved to be a successful method to ensure accurate and complete data as well as placing the ACEA in a position to establish a systematic way to consistently update the statewide county infrastructure needs assessment. The previous edition was performed a little over a decade ago by a consultant.

Development of this needs assessment implements a new approach for our Association to deliver the desired data and message. In contrast to a more traditional, 1/4 to 1/2" thick or so publication full of charts and raw data, a publication and flyer were developed for consumption by the masses. Instead of focusing on the technical aspects and raw data like so many of us engineers like to do, we utilized the skills of committee members, our staffs, the media, and our skilled association communication personnel to develop condensed narrative driven formats. Another unique item is that the smaller flyer has been designed in such a way that each individual county can customize a section of the brochure to specifically highlight their needs. Out of this we hope to have two formats flexible enough to deliver our message in a easily digestible form to groups such as elected officials of all levels, industry representatives, the

business community, academia and most importantly, by the citizens we serve.

The third component of our needs assessment is one that we think the County Engineers that utilize the data will appreciate most. Our association website (www.acea-online.org) will soon house all the data that was used in the assessment process. This data will not only include the individual county data, but more importantly comparison data and cost estimates on various aspects of our county road and bridge network. With this data available online for mining, counties can analyze their needs and characteristics against similar sized counties or see how they compare with other entities with the ease of sorting data in a spreadsheet.

In keeping with the theme of updating this data, this digital method of delivering the needs assessment data online will allow us to quickly adapt our cost estimates to market conditions rather than implementing general estimations of the evolving needs of our 67 counties. Each and every chart and summary will tie directly back to the data contained in the shorter more narrative based flyer and publication.

Some quick observations found in our needs assessment show that Alabama counties collectively have a minimum annual need of **\$502 million** in today's dollars to keep pace with the deterioration of the our system. This annual need is in addition to the limited resources that are in place to perform basic maintenance functions

Based on the survey of counties, counties maintain approximately **43,284** miles of *paved* roads and **16,644** of *unpaved or dirt* roads. This same survey revealed that the 67

counties combined had approximately **\$369 million** of funds available for *basic operating costs* on their networks per year. Basic operating costs would include routine patching of roads, right-of-way mowing and clearing, sign maintenance and ditch cleaning as examples. The basic operating costs are funded almost exclusively from the Counties' portion of the state *gasoline* tax. *No proceeds from the state diesel fuel tax* go toward the maintenance and upkeep of the County Road system. These basic operating costs typically do not include any appreciable funding for items such as resurfacing and/or reconstruction of roads for most of our counties.

As part of the \$ 502 million annual investment, the counties' 8650 bridges would require \$ 88 million to provide for adequate repair and replacement of bridges on a 50 year lifecycle. Alabama county bridges by category resulted in the following breakdown including today's estimated replacement cost:

Structurally Deficient: \$607 Million 1302 bridges or 15%; **Functionally Obsolete:** \$622 Million 1116 bridges or 13%; **School Bus Posted Bridges:** \$459 Million 1086 bridges or 13%; **50 Year Old Bridges:** \$1.33 Billion 2675 bridges or 30%.

While utilizing technology in this manner seems rather intuitive, it has been a challenging undertaking. However, the Association of County Engineers of Alabama envisions that through continued and varied education techniques this updated data can help bring appropriate attention to this silent crisis. Our focus is to get that attention before bridges collapse, roads fail, and most importantly before more people lose their life on Alabama's county road and bridge system.



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LOCAL ROADS AND ENERGY DEVELOPMENT

By Timothy J. Hens, P.E., Superintendent Genesee County Highway Department and NACE State Director

With a national focus on using domestic and renewable sources of energy, many county governments have recently been approached by energy companies seeking to develop large commercial wind turbine farms or to drill for natural gas. These projects require the development of a significant infrastructure in order to construct and maintain production and transmission equipment. These developments often have a significant effect on local roads and bridges.

Upstate New York is no stranger to this type of development. Sitting on top of the natural gas rich Marcellus Shale formation that also covers much of West Virginia and Pennsylvania has made the Southern Tier of New York the target of gas drillers. In addition, being downwind from two of the Great Lakes has encouraged the development of wind farms in Western New York and upstate in the Tug Hill Region east of Lake Ontario.

The Marcellus Shale formation in New York is located approximately 2,000 to 5,000 feet from the surface. To extract natural gas at this depth, well drillers are required to fracture the shale so that gas may be released. The process currently being used is called hydrofracturing or “fracking” and requires substantial amounts of water and chemicals to be pumped into and out of the well under high pressure. Due to the rural locations of many of these wells, water must be trucked to the site. Each well may require anywhere between 2 and 6 million gallons of water to be fracked; or approximately 750 to 1000 tanker trucks. Over 1400 wells were developed in Pennsylvania in 2009 alone.

Wind turbines have been installed in rural areas across New York and many of the “farms” consist of up to sixty 490 foot tall turbines. The turbine blades are approximately 180 feet long and are delivered in one piece and the tower bases can weigh up to 200,000 pounds per section. The construction of the foundations and access roads alone require millions of tons of crushed stone and thousands of yards of concrete. All of the materials are transported over rural local roads.

The weight and frequency of trucks, equipment and oversized loads has created significant damage to local roads; especially during the spring months when the frost is working out of the ground. This damage has concerned County and Town Highway Superin-

tendents in New York. While New York has placed a temporary moratorium on Marcellus Shale hydrofracking until environmental issues can be worked out, wind farm development continues. Highway Superintendents have been looking for ways to deal with road damage before and after it occurs.

Damaged roads can be load posted to prevent further damage under New York Highway Law. However, New York Highway Law also prohibits the banning of specific industries from roads to avoid damage in the first place. A recent State Court of Appeals case rejected a New York law that banned regional trash haulers from using local and state routes to access a landfill located near the Finger Lakes.

Many Highway Superintendents are afraid that those responsible for the damage will walk away after the turbines and wells are installed and that the municipality will be left on the hook to deal with the damages. Many municipalities are now making sure that potential highway, culvert and bridge damage is addressed in Environmental Impact Statements filed before the project begins and many are entering into Road Use Agreements with development companies and passing Local Laws to give the Road Use Agreement more teeth.

A Road Use Agreement requires a pre-survey and assessment of road conditions, usually through video recording and logging with GPS. The agreements also set parameters for the developer to cover the costs of any improvements required prior to development such as widening. Additionally, the developer is also required to either repair or provide funding for the repair of any damage that occurs during development. So far, it seems like energy companies are willing to deal with the side effects of their development.

NACE 2011 REMINDERS

Join us for the curling event at NACE 2011, Saturday April 16, 2011.

http://www.mncountyengineers.org/home/p2_articleid/44

Have you made your hotel reservations at the Hilton Minneapolis?

<http://www.countyengineers.org/events/annualconf/Pages/NACE2010-Hotel.aspx>

Look in the next NACE News for information and sign-up for the optional technical tours, Tuesday April 19th

**New at NACE 2011:
Women's Networking Event
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VIEW FROM NORTH DAKOTA

By Marcus Hall, County Engineer, Burleigh County, ND and North Dakota State Director

Here is something that I think most of you thought you would never read, “Tom Stoner is my hero.” Well maybe that is a bit much, but I would say that his opinion is one that I greatly respect. In the February 2010 NACE Newsletter, Tom wrote about his frustration with politicians from coast to coast that don’t have the guts to tell their constituents the truth and (I am paraphrasing) prefer to play the fiddle while Rome burns. I thought at the time that Tom hit the nail right on the head, and unfortunately very little has changed in the past year.

Granted we now have a new makeup in Congress, and if history is any predictor of the future, when we have split party government we have a better chance of passing some type of bi-partisan transportation package. But one thing for sure is that the funding levels will not be anything close to what is needed to sustain our current transportation system.

And that brings me to one truth that I think we are all facing which is we do not and will not have the resources needed to do the job we believe needs to be done. Even coming from a state that has avoided the hard times the rest of the nation is facing we share these same problems. Our state has a budget surplus, and several legislators are talking about increases in the annual county highway fund allotment. But even with slight increases in our funding, the fact remains that we cannot maintain the existing transportation system at the current levels.

That leads me to the point of this article. We can no longer use money to solve problems that arise in the concept/design phase of projects. It seems to me that any time some special interest group has a problem with a project, we throw money at it and the problem goes away. Case in point, I just recently observed an urban roadway project in which the initial estimate was \$8 million, but several groups (bikers, pedestrian, environmentalist, neighborhood watch, and area politicians) had problems with the design. So the solution was to throw money at it and we ended up with miles of opulent retaining walls and separate use paths for a final cost of \$28 million. Of course they found the money and built the project, but where did the money come from? It was taken from routine maintenance projects such as chip seals, overlays, and minor reconstruction projects. I often joke that we have a great two mile segment of roadway that we can’t get to because the rest of the

See "North Dakota" continued page 6.

