
Streamlining Transportation Corridor Planning Processes and Validating the Application of CRS&SI Technologies for Environmental Impact Assessments

SWOT and Brainstorming Notes

Outline

- Section 1: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) Analysis
- Section 2: Brainstorming
 - Summarize (Major Opportunities)
 - Synthesize (Methods and Tactics to Address SWOT)
 - Refine (Approach to Achieve Desired Outcomes)

Section 1

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

SWOT Analysis

SWOT - Strengths

- Good ground work for research, Good foundation
- Traditional EIS recently completed for study area
- Rich Data Set
- National & Local Advisory board
- Multi State - More reviews, more people looking
- Technology
 - Readiness
 - Cost
- Leverage statewide data
- Accurate ground truth data
- EIS – Rigorous

SWOT - Weaknesses

- Multi State
 - Different operating structure
 - More reviews, more people looking
- EIS
 - Time consuming
 - Can not please everyone
 - Too structured
 - People intensive

SWOT - Opportunities

- Early exchange with resource agencies
- Mitigation banking evaluation
- Identifying critical habitat
- Early mitigation
- Identifying regional watershed, wetland, ECO, cultural, CSS issues
- Remote sensing with cultural landscapes
- CITIZEN groups? / Engagement
- Lack of data
- Interactive engagement
- Multi Disciplinary
- Integrate corridor management
- Better visualization tools
- MPO needs and values
- CSS
- Rapid impact assessment
- To limit / focus field activities / eliminate non-viable alternatives

SWOT - Threats

- Resource agency acceptance
- DOT acceptance
 - Staff
 - Cost
 - ETC
- Lack of confidence in data
- Data
 - Dependence
 - Lack of confidence
 - Accuracy
 - Communication
- Politics
- Citizen groups
- MPO work ability / usability

Section 2

Brainstorming

Summarize Major Opportunities

Synthesize Methods and Tactics

Refine Approach to Achieve Desired Outcomes

Summarize Major Opportunities

- Identify low-hanging fruit for injecting data/tools/technologies into pre-NEPA processes that will enable enhanced screening/constraints analysis as well as identification of avoidance areas that are mutually understood by DOT and resource agencies.
- Develop strategies/methods for communicating, visualizing, exchanging specific resource agency issues of concern for a given project and collection of resource agencies so that key resource agency concerns can be rapidly quantified and mitigation options presented.
- Look at things like 20 year plan to identify opportunities to “get ahead” of environmental issues that can not be easily minimized and develop basis for common agreement with resource agencies that these are viable directions.

Summarize Major Opportunities (continued)

- Provide best available data to enable an informed conversation. Other issues will be raised and documented as they arise, but these “data enabled” decision processes may benefit significantly from appropriate injection of data/tools/and applicable products.
- Injecting qualitative attribution to the matrix of impacts as well as contextual basis for evaluating relative impacts for alternative assessment – “context and intensity” (Paul’s comments).

Synthesize Methods and Tactics

- Community of Practice: Connectivity to major event for gathering feedback, gaining perspective,
- December 14 – TRB GIS Meeting – DC – Environmental Forum
- Annual TRB Meeting, SCOE, SCOP, FHWA Environmental
 - Sunday Workshops - 8:00 – 12:00 (GIS Application in Linking Planning and NEPA.
 - Sunday Workshop – 1:30 -(Remote Sensing for Transportation Application)
 - Identify location for Sunday evening meeting
 - Ecological Award and Technical Assistance Teams
 - Abstracts and info exchange to enhance linking of related activities
 - Hosted charrette on “Conservation and Planning Workshop”
 - PEL (Planning, Environment Linkages to States)
- Annual Workshops
- Center for Environmental Excellence – People, ideas, methods, data, and marketing
- On-going research solicitations: NCHRP, TRB, FHWA/US DOT
- For team directions and refining our scope, items that are identified and occur “below the line” of what our funding can achieve there are opportunities to gather together additional resources to build on activities
- Linking via the web to connect better into the sponsor, related agency interests, and participant resources.

Refine Approach to Achieve Desired Outcomes

- By January, develop
 - Attributed schedule of activities
 - Suggested meeting approach w/ level of effort not burdensome
 - Proposal for future “physical meeting of group” such that people can plan and budget to get together at the same location
 - Do we want to think about a meeting for “Memphis in Fall 2008”
 - Can we also think about scheduling a “Peer Exchange” for the results to present our results and outcome to the community of practitioners (April/May 2009)
 - Delivery/dissemination of final results (see previous slide for delivery)
 - Methods
 - Publication
 - Forums