

## BICYCLISTS, PEDESTRIANS AND TRAIL USERS: YOUR TRANSPORTATION ALLIES



### TELE-WORKSHOP SPOTLIGHT SPEAKERS

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As the FHWA Trails and Enhancements Program Manager in Washington, D.C., Christopher Douwes manages contracts for research, technology development and technical assistance for trail-related activities. He also participates on the National Trails Training Partnership and represented the USDOT/FHWA on the Access Board's Outdoor Developed Areas committee.

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John Fegan has held the position of Bicycle and Pedestrian Program Manager for the FHWA since 1991. He has also held the same position for the Office of the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Transportation since 1991. John provides interpretation of Federal transportation legislation regarding bicyclists and pedestrians, and offers technical assistance in implementing programs for nonmotorized users of our nation's transportation system.

#### Michael O'Loughlin



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For over 20 years, Michael O'Loughlin has served as a transportation planner with the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT). He has worked as a liaison among seven of Indiana's metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) and served as an INDOT district liaison. Michael was one of the authors of Indiana's first long-range, multimodal transportation plan. Since 1993, he has been the State's Bicycle, Pedestrian & Byway Program Manager, and in 1997 he assumed the responsibilities of Byway Program Manager.

## REVVING TRANSPORTATION RESOURCES

Byways have become popular destinations for bicyclists, recreational trail users and pedestrians. Today, each State has a bicycle/pedestrian coordinator, reflecting the increased significance of multi-use routes.

The roundtable discussion focused on how to access resources, such as funding, safety education and technical assistance, provided by government organizations that promote pedestrian, bicycle and trail uses. The panelists also touched on why the bike/ped/trail-user perspective is important to byways as well as how the local transportation planning process can affect byways.

"Really think of bicyclists and pedestrians as users of your byways—additional constituent groups that share a lot of the same objectives as your other users," said John Fegan.

John began the discussion by reminding listeners that pedestrians include people with disabilities, older visitors and young people, among others. Similarly, bicyclists include serious riders touring across the State or country, as well as casual riders, such as young families. Plans for bicyclists and pedestrians should consider the variety of users within each group.



John said, "I strongly encourage bicycle/pedestrian aspects on every transportation project. It's not mandated. The Federal leadership feels strongly that bicyclists and pedestrians are legitimate users of our transportation system, particularly so on scenic byways."

According to John, there's been a twenty-fold increase since 1990 in the amount of Federal funds for pedestrian/bicycle projects administered through State/regional planning processes.

"When you spend money on bicycle projects funded by Federal programs, there needs to be a transportation function—traveling from Point A to Point B—and not recreational use only," he explained.

Conversely, Recreational Trails / Transportation Enhancements must have some aspect of recreation as well as surface travel, noted

Christopher Douwes. It's currently a \$60 million program, and project funds are typically administered under a State resource agency. Each State decides its own list of eligible categories, from construction to maintenance. This is a major difference from the National Scenic Byways Program process. There, byways apply to Washington, D.C., for discretionary dollars. Under the Recreational Trails / Transportation Enhancements Program, each State receives money. States solicit applications and award the money.

"Find your friend in the State Trail Administrator or Manager," advised Christopher.

He added, "There's significant overlap between Transportation Enhancements and National Scenic Byways." One exception is in the corridor management area, which is not eligible for funding through TE and receives consideration from the National Scenic Byways Program.

Christopher emphasized that Transportation Enhancements Program projects must relate to surface transportation. The projects can fall under twelve eligible categories, including bicycle/pedestrian, scenic highway, historic preservation, archaeological research and environmental mitigation—among others.

"If you think you have a Recreational Trails / Transportation Enhancements project, then define what you want. Know who supports it and who might oppose it. Consider the project's impact, such as its effects on historic resources or the environment. Similar to National Scenic Byways, when you fill out an application, fill it out completely. When selected, be sure you can actually do the work," Christopher said.

**"Every visitor who gets out of the car becomes a pedestrian."**  
Christopher B. Douwes

Michael O'Loughlin agreed that administrative details differ in each State, but carefully finding the right partner can leverage greater resources.

"Among the National Scenic Byways Program, Transportation Enhancements, Recreational Trails Program, and the Bicycle/Pedestrian program, there is a group of allies out there for the byways," said Michael. "These folks are allies trying to create and improve facilities.

Enhancements draw people, bring additional audiences and broaden markets. That's a perspective byway folks don't always have. Byway visitors largely travel by car or bus at highway speed. But pedestrians and bicyclists take in the byway at a different pace, and they're in a better position to take in the things—the resources you're trying to protect and promote—along the byway."

Michael continued, "Your allies can help bridge the gap between speeding visitors and those who stop and read interpretive panels, visit museums, see the vistas, and appreciate the resistance to outdoor signage. The bike/ped community can provide resources, advocacy and partnerships. They're a base of support. They can advise you when you're applying for treatments for enhancements. Talk to them. They can advise what elements would broaden appeal and 'score points.' They're valuable resources for insights and contacts."

Expanding your resources and welcoming diverse users will be topics for future Byway events, including the National Scenic Byways Conference in Cleveland, Ohio, scheduled for October 16-19, 2005. ★

## Resources

### Bicycle and Pedestrian Program:

[www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bikeped/](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bikeped/)

### Highway Safety Research Center at the University of North Carolina:

[www.hsrrc.unc.edu/](http://www.hsrrc.unc.edu/)

Includes links to publications and other sites.

### National Trails Training Partnership:

[www.NTTP.net](http://www.NTTP.net)

The National Trails Training Partnership is an alliance of Federal agencies, training providers, nationwide supporters, and providers of products and services.

### National Trails System:

[www.nps.gov/nts/](http://www.nps.gov/nts/)

The National Trails System is the network of scenic, historic, and recreation trails created by the National Trails System Act of 1968. These trails provide for outdoor recreation needs, promote the enjoyment, appreciation, and preservation of open-air, outdoor areas and historic resources, and encourage public access

and citizen involvement. The program consists of Congressionally-designated National Scenic Trails and National Historic Trails, and also administratively designated National Recreation Trails.

### National Transportation

#### Enhancements Clearinghouse:

[www.enhancements.org](http://www.enhancements.org)

Provides support for potential project sponsors and the States.

#### Pedestrian and Bicycle

#### Information Center:

[www.pedbikeinfo.org](http://www.pedbikeinfo.org)

Bicycle and Pedestrian Clearinghouse at the Highway Safety Research Center in North Carolina University; contains links to four websites from there.

#### Recreational Trails Program:

[www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/rectrails/](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/rectrails/)

#### Recreational Trails Program State Trail

Administrators: [www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/rectrails/rtpstate.htm](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/rectrails/rtpstate.htm)

#### Recreational Trails Program Publications:

[www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/rectrails/publications.htm](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/rectrails/publications.htm)

#### Selecting Roadway Design Treatments to Accommodate Bicycles:

[http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/ped\\_bike/docs/select.pdf](http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/ped_bike/docs/select.pdf)  
[http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/ped\\_bike/docs/tables.pdf](http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/ped_bike/docs/tables.pdf)

#### State Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinators:

<http://design.transportation.org/?siteid=59&pageid=852>

#### Transportation Enhancement Activities:

[www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/te/](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/te/)

#### Transportation Enhancement State

#### Program Managers:

[www.enhancements.org/statecontacts\\_TE.asp](http://www.enhancements.org/statecontacts_TE.asp)

# Q&A

**Q. Do National Scenic Byways have to accommodate bicycles/pedestrians? And, if so, does the Americans with Disabilities Act apply?**

**A.** No, we simply encourage byways to provide bike/ped facilities. ADA does apply to these facilities. Remember, though, that bicyclists and pedestrians are a growing constituency. And partnerships are huge! These TE/Rec Trail/Bike-Ped groups are your contacts. As marketing audiences and allies, they are beneficial and helpful for byways. Think in terms of partnerships and what appeals to that group not in cars. Michael said, "When project applications come in, I'm looking for bike racks, safe parking areas, water access. Try to have projects satisfy as many needs as possible: make them good for physical health, good for preserving resources, good for tourism."

**Q. I understand feasibility studies, but I want to know more about the in-between steps like acquisition of right-of-way and design of trails in difficult terrain. How do we handle those?**

**A.** Look to the Transportation Enhancement Program for engineering assistance. For planning, that's tougher. Plans are outside of TE. Look for other mechanisms intermingled with private/public sections along the byway. If the in-between element is project-related, it's possibly eligible. However, many States require a developed project before you submit the application. It can vary from State to State. Preliminary engineering and environmental impact studies could be

eligible from the Federal viewpoint, but States might not agree with that. Under Recreational Trails, it's expected that planning be done before you pursue project development. Reauthorization will allow RTP funds to be matched using the costs required for planning and environment assessment that take place within 18 months prior to project approval. Depending on the description of the facility for bike/peds, such as improving or enhancing appreciation of a byway, the project may be eligible for byway funds. Byways projects should encourage access for all people.

**Q. What type of funding is available? When do you know if you should go for scenic byway grants or TE funds?**

**A.** Think about the type of project. Are you looking to expand shoulders for bikes/peds? Or will you paint bike lines? Or are you creating shared-use paths, not just for bikes? When we fund off-road projects, the Federal requirement is for nonmotorized use. It's also about the type of road. Is it an arterial or major urban route? That might qualify for regular surface transportation funds. You might get TE funds; then again, large projects may not have enough money from TE funds alone. Recreational Trails dollars cannot be used for roads. Look at all possible funding sources and see what fits. Talk the same language as the planners do. You may also have to overcome the willingness and/or ability of local jurisdictions. Consider the planning process, too. The governor of each State designates each metropolitan planning organization (MPO) in urban areas of 50,000+ populations. Local

Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs) also handle transportation planning, including nonmotorized uses. The State DOTs oversee Regional Planning Commissions, while unincorporated or rural areas are programmed through State DOTs using Federal dollars.

**Q. Here's a hypothetical situation. Say that I'm a byway leader and I need to determine if bicycle use can be done safely and accommodated on our byway. What do I do?**

**A.** Determine if you're in an urbanized area or not, because the MPO could assist if you're urban. Look at the key characteristics. It's helpful to know your jurisdiction, such as a city highway or State road. Specific factors that byway people should evaluate:

- Determine volume or average daily traffic and what kind – RVs? Trucks? Cars?
- What kinds of lane – two-lane road with parking on both sides? Four lanes with shoulders?

Then check [AASHTO Guide for Bicycle Facilities](#) and the [Guide for Planning and Maintenance of Pedestrian Facilities](#).

Other selection guides have become available over the years, too, including publications from the Highway Safety Research Center at the University of North Carolina. Talk to your State Bike/Ped manager. Then you can start shaping your decisions and plans.



## **America's Byways Resource Center**

provides information, connections and expertise that help build better byways. State coordinators, local groups, volunteers and organizations with ties to nationally designated scenic byways look to us for hands-on assistance in planning, preserving, promoting and managing scenic byways.

Please join us for 2005 Tele-Workshops  
focusing on the following topics:

September 7

### **Making the Leap: A Motivational Discussion**

with Dennis Mertzig, Life Coach

November 2

### **Legal Issues and Ethics**

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