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## **TASK FORCE ON ECOLOGY AND TRANSPORTATION**

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After two years of effort to reconstitute the group working toward a permanent place for ecological issues within the Transportation Research Board, we have been approved as the Task Force on Ecology and Transportation. We still have a long way to go to develop our role and mission and to demonstrate the TRB's need for a full committee to deal with what has become known as road ecology. The next few months will be critical as we establish the membership to take on the task of organization and further refining the mission of the Task Force. I want to thank those of you attending ICOET for your seminal role in getting the Task Force off the ground. Many of you have worked to develop the proposal to TRB and put together programs which helped to demonstrate the level of interest in ecology and transportation within TRB. ICOET itself has provided the substance which helped convince the leadership in TRB that there is a need for the Task Force.

We have a business meeting tomorrow and I hope to have Kim Fisher from the Transportation Research Board explain our next steps and the technical requirements as a Task Force. We will also discuss the conference session that is being developed for TRB's annual meeting in January. This session is anticipated to bring the some of best new ideas from ICOET 2003 to the TRB audience and is a part of the Task Force's goal to forge close ties between ICOET and TRB. If you see several of us filling out forms during the paper sessions over the next few days, we are working to evaluate papers and new technology for this TRB session. Trish White is heading up a working group from the Task Force organizers to develop the conference session.

Our role as a Task Force will be to foster communication about current research and new technology in the applied science of transportation ecology as well as to identify needed areas for research for the future. I look forward to continuing to work with the ICOET organizing committee and nurturing the close relationship between TRB and ICOET.

**Biographical Sketch:** Mr. Linkous' undergraduate degree in life science was completed at Otterbein College and his master's in fishery management is from the Ohio State University. His employment at the Ohio Department of Transportation began as an Environmental Scientist in 1975. Since that time he has led the ecological unit within Ohio DOT's Office of Environmental Services and was the Assistant Administrator for the Ecological, Permits and Environmental Site Assessment Section. He is currently the Department's Environmental Liaison Officer with responsibility for working with agencies on programmatic agreements, serving as the agency representative to the Lake Erie Commission and the Ohio Water Resources Council, serving on committees for the Transportation Research Board, and leading Ohio DOT's MS4 stormwater management efforts. He has recently been named Chairperson of TRB's newly formed Task Force on Ecology and Transportation. Mr. Linkous has also served on the Organizing Committee for the 2001 and 2003 International Conferences on Ecology and Transportation.