

AASHTO

Standing Committee of Environment

2008-2009 Strategic Plan

VISION

A national, regional and local intermodal transportation system that is safe, economical, efficient, environmentally sound, and aesthetically and culturally sensitive.

MISSION

The AASHTO Standing Committee on Environment (SCOE) provides policy and technical support to the AASHTO Board of Directors and member departments to integrate environmental stewardship and streamlining goals into transportation decisions and activities.

GOALS AND STRATEGIES

The following are the goals established by SCOE to implement its Mission.

1. Develop and disseminate tools and best practices for integrating environmental considerations into all stages of transportation decision-making (project development, planning, design, construction and maintenance).
2. Provide leadership to member states to achieve the organizational capacity to incorporate environmental stewardship and streamlining goals into their organizations.
3. Identify, prioritize, oversee and disseminate environment/transportation research.
4. Monitor and actively participate in the development of environmental guidance, policy, regulations and legislation.
5. Promote the development and use of Best Management Practices (BMPs) to protect the environment and encourage sharing of these practices among the member departments.
6. Serve as an information resource for the member departments and AASHTO Board of Directors.
7. Support the goals and guide the work of the Center for Environmental Excellence by AASHTO.
8. Coordinate and promote SCOE goals and member state initiatives with other AASHTO committees, TRB, USDOT, environmental regulatory and resource agencies, non-governmental organizations, and state, industry and local trade associations.

SCOE's work is accomplished through subcommittees, ad hoc task groups, the Center for Environmental Excellence by AASHTO, the Environmental Technical Assistance Program (ETAP) and other operating divisions of the full Committee. Each Subcommittee has developed more specific goals and strategies to implement SCOE goals.

SCOE SubCommittee Goals

Environmental Process and Analysis Sub-Committee Goals and Strategies Strategies for Implementation of SCOE's Goals

SCOE Goal 1: Develop and disseminate tools and best practices for integrating environmental considerations into all stages of transportation decision-making (project development, planning, design, construction and maintenance).

- **Strategy 1.1:** Participate in various teams focused on Reauthorization and “Transportation Policy Future Team” /cross section of AASHTO Committees to provide input and direction on national policy related to environmental process and analysis.
- **Strategy 1.2:** Work with other AASHTO Committees and TRB Committees to improve the system level planning process as related to environmental requirements and activities.
- **Strategy 1.3:** Work with other SCOE Sub-committees on cross-cutting issues, such as construction and maintenance practices, environmental enhancements, environmental management systems, land use and smart growth, noise, sustainability, indirect and cumulative impacts, Section 4(f), etc.

SCOE Goal 2: Provide leadership to member states to achieve the organizational capacity to incorporate environmental stewardship and streamlining goals into their organizations.

- **Strategy 2.1:** Support efforts to improve the efficiency, knowledge and confidence as well as effectiveness of environmental processes within State Transportation Agencies and with federal administrative process improvement efforts.
- **Strategy 2.2:** Continue to explore EMS and other compliance assurance processes as way to improve environmental conditions and demonstrate environmental performance.
- **Strategy 2.3:** Research and provide information on effective organizational structures and management practices for achieving environmental stewardship in transportation agencies.
- **Strategy 2.4:** Continue support of CSS Task Force initiatives.

SCOE Goal 3: Identify, prioritize, oversee and disseminate environmental/transportation research.

- **Strategy 3.1:** Identify, communicate, promote and support environmental research that directly connects to State Transportation Agencies' transportation program and mission.
- **Strategy 3.2:** Yearly, prioritize research efforts and provide recommendations for necessary research to NCHRP, 25-25, etc.

- **Strategy 3.3:** Partner/combine efforts to follow a strategic approach, maximizing opportunities to fund identified research priorities through interaction with NCHRP, STEP, 25-25 and other entities as appropriate.

SCOE Goal 4: Monitor and actively participate in the development of environmental guidance, policy, regulations and legislation.

- **Strategy 4.1:** Support FHWA Environmental Competency Building Initiative and coordinate with State Transportation Agencies, ACEC and others in efforts of education and training for improving the quality of NEPA documents.
- **Strategy 4.2:** Support FHWA's effort to rewrite 23 CFR 771 and the Technical Advisory by providing necessary work teams and coordination with FHWA.
- **Strategy 4.3:** Focus on quality initiatives for better environmental and NEPA documents.

SCOE Goal 5: Promote the development and use of Best Management Practices (BMPs) to protect the environment and encourage sharing of these practices among the member departments.

- **Strategy 5.1:** Summarize state practices and lessons learned.
- **Strategy 5.2:** Update and disseminate current state stewardship principles and guidelines on a periodic basis. Coordinate work with the Center to accomplish tasks.

SCOE Goal 6: Serve as an information resource for the member departments and AASHTO Board of Directors.

- **Strategy 6.1:** Identify quality education and training opportunities.
- **Strategy 6.2:** Provide summary of Sub-committee activities at SCOE annual meeting, noting accomplishments and setting goals for coming year.
- **Strategy 6.3:** Explore ways to communicate SCOE expertise and accomplishments to State Transportation Agencies and the consultant community.

SCOE Goal 7: Support the goals and guide the work of the Center for Environmental Excellence by AASHTO.

- **Strategy 7.1:** Utilize the Center for Environmental Excellence by AASHTO to improve member states' understanding of SAFETEA-LU and emerging environmental regulations (CWA, ESA, AASTO etc.) implementation.
- **Strategy 7.2:** Assist and utilize the Center to communicate and share environmental training and educational offerings that are available nationally.
- **Strategy 7.3:** Through the Center -- provide State Transportation Agencies with materials, strategies and networking to obtain and keep qualified employees.
- **Strategy 7.4:** Insure the Center is aware of all ongoing transportation agency environmental research.

SCOE Goal 8: Coordinate and promote SCOE goals and member state initiatives with other AASHTO committees, TRB, USDOT, environmental regulatory and resource agencies, non-governmental organizations, and state, industry and local trade associations.

- **Strategy 8.1:** Identify potential strategic partnerships to enhance communication.
- **Strategy 8.2:** Encourage the use and communication of Federal Transportation Liaisons such as FHWA funded positions with USFWS, USACE, ACHP, etc.
- **Strategy 8.3:** Communicate regularly with Sub-committee members and friends through the use of regularly scheduled conference calls, email updates, web sites, etc.
- **Strategy 8.4:** Encourage Sub-committee member liaison roles with other Sub-committees, TRB, etc.

Community and Cultural Concerns Sub-Committee Goals and Strategies Strategies for Implementation of SCOE's Goals

SCOE Goal 1: Develop and disseminate tools and best practices for integrating environmental considerations into all stages of transportation decision-making (project development, planning, design, construction and maintenance).

- **Strategy 1.1:** Work with other SCOE Sub-committees on cross-cutting issues, such as construction and maintenance practices, environmental enhancements, environmental management systems, land use and smart growth, noise, sustainability, indirect and cumulative impacts, Section 4(f), etc.

SCOE Goal 2: Provide leadership to member states to achieve the organizational capacity to incorporate environmental stewardship and streamlining goals into their organizations.

- **Strategy 2.1:** Encourage interactive meetings and the dissemination of information among community and cultural resource groups.
- **Strategy 2.2:** Provide guidance to member departments, to assist them in resolving transportation project issues relating to community and cultural resources.
- **Strategy 2.3:** Sustain and diversify membership on the Community and Cultural Concerns Sub-committee.

SCOE Goal 3: Identify, prioritize, oversee and disseminate environmental/transportation research.

- **Strategy 3.1:** Yearly, prioritize research efforts and provide recommendations for necessary research to NCHRP, 25-25, etc.
- **Strategy 3.2:** Partner/combine efforts to follow a strategic approach, maximizing opportunities to fund identified research priorities through interaction with NCHRP, STEP, 25-25 and other entities as appropriate.

SCOE Goal 4: Monitor and actively participate in the development of environmental guidance, policy, regulations and legislation.

- **Strategy 4.1:** At the annual meeting of the Sub-committee, identify and prioritize emerging topics of particular importance to member states. As appropriate, form task groups and/or utilize the Center or CTAP consultants to address these topics, which may include:

Historic Bridges
Native American Issues
Unique Cultural Resources
Cultural Landscapes
Historic Roads

Context Sensitive Solutions
Environmental Justice
Community Impacts

SCOE Goal 5: Promote the development and use of Best Management Practices (BMPs) to protect the environment and encourage sharing of these practices among the member departments.

- **Strategy 5.1:** Summarize state practices and lessons learned.
- **Strategy 5.2:** Update the Cultural Resources Handbook of best practices and disseminate to SCOE members.

SCOE Goal 6: Serve as an information resource for the member departments and AASHTO Board of Directors.

- **Strategy 6.1:** Provide summary of Sub-committee activities at SCOE annual meeting, noting accomplishments and setting goals for coming year.

SCOE Goal 7: Support the goals and guide the work of the Center for Environmental Excellence by AASHTO.

- **Strategy 7.1:** Utilize the Center experts and CTAP consultants.
- **Strategy 7.2:** Share state practices through the Center web site.

SCOE Goal 8: Coordinate and promote SCOE goals and member state initiatives with other AASHTO committees, TRB, USDOT, environmental regulatory and resource agencies, non-governmental organizations, and state, industry and local trade associations.

- **Strategy 8.1:** Publish information on community and cultural resources issues in the ETAP Alerts.
- **Strategy 8.2:** Coordinate community and cultural resource activity with the appropriate TRB Committees and other AASHTO committees.
- **Strategy 8.3:** Assess the Sub-committee's accomplishments as part of the Annual Meeting.

Natural Systems and Ecological Communities Sub-Committee Goals and Strategies Strategies for Implementation of SCOE's Goals

SCOE Goal 1: Develop and disseminate tools and best practices for integrating environmental considerations into all stages of transportation decision-making (project development, planning, design, construction and maintenance).

- **Strategy 1.1:** Work with other SCOE Sub-committees on cross-cutting issues, such as construction and maintenance practices, environmental enhancements, environmental management systems, land use and smart growth, noise, sustainability, indirect and cumulative impacts, Section 4(f), etc.

SCOE Goal 2: Provide leadership to member states to achieve the organizational capacity to incorporate environmental stewardship and streamlining goals into their organizations.

- **Strategy 2.1:** Encourage interactive meetings and the dissemination of information among natural resource groups.
- **Strategy 2.2:** Provide guidance to member departments, to assist them in resolving transportation project issues relating to natural resources.

SCOE Goal 3: Identify, prioritize, oversee and disseminate environmental/transportation research.

- **Strategy 3.1:** Yearly, prioritize research efforts and provide recommendations for necessary research to NCHRP, 25-25, etc.
- **Strategy 3.2:** Partner/combine efforts to follow a strategic approach, maximizing opportunities to fund identified research priorities through interaction with NCHRP, STEP, 25-25 and other entities as appropriate.

SCOE Goal 4: Monitor and actively participate in the development of environmental guidance, policy, regulations and legislation.

- **Strategy 4.1:** Inform State Transportation Agencies on emerging regulations and legislative actions, so that they are able to influence national policy and improve implementation of programs.
- **Strategy 4.2:** Form a transportation consensus and actively participate at the federal level in implementation of Clean Water Act, Endangered Species Act, Migratory Bird Act, and other regulations and legislative reauthorizations.
- **Strategy 4.3:** Renew regulation to determine impacts and attempt to influence a change in policy direction, as appropriate.
- **Strategy 4.4:** Target, on an annual basis, the committee's efforts, to a minimum of two emerging issues, operating activities and technologies of particular importance to member departments. These may include natural resources issues such as:

Storm Water Runoff and nonpoint source pollution
Endangered Species
Habitat Conservation Planning
Watershed Management
Migratory Birds
TMDLS
Wetlands and Mitigation
Indirect and Cumulative Impacts

SCOE Goal 5: Promote the development and use of Best Management Practices (BMPs) to protect the environment and encourage sharing of these practices among the member departments.

- **Strategy 5.1:** Summarize state practices and lessons learned.
- **Strategy 5.2:** Update and disseminate current state stewardship principles and guidelines on a periodic basis. Coordinate work with the Center to accomplish tasks.

SCOE Goal 6: Serve as an information resource for the member departments and AASHTO Board of Directors.

- **Strategy 6.1:** Provide summary of Sub-committee activities at SCOE annual meeting, noting accomplishments and setting goals for coming year.

SCOE Goal 7: Support the goals and guide the work of the Center for Environmental Excellence by AASHTO.

- **Strategy 7.1:** Utilize the Center experts and CTAP consultants.
- **Strategy 7.2:** Use the Center to expand and disseminate information on best science and research in the environmental area.
- **Strategy 7.3:** Track water and ESA lawsuits and post related information on the Center web site.
- **Strategy 7.4:** Report to the Center changes to DOT procedures to regional issues caused by resource issues such as agency preferences.

SCOE Goal 8: Coordinate and promote SCOE goals and member state initiatives with other AASHTO committees, TRB, USDOT, environmental regulatory and resource agencies, non-governmental organizations, and state, industry and local trade associations.

- **Strategy 8.1:** Assess the Sub-committee's accomplishments as part of the Annual Meeting.
- **Strategy 8.2:** Coordinate with appropriate TRB Committees and other AASHTO committees on natural resources issues.
- **Strategy 8.3:** Facilitate meetings, discussions and the dissemination of information among groups interested in natural resource issues.

Air Quality, Climate Change and Energy Sub-Committee Goals and Strategies Strategies for Implementation of SCOE's Goals

SCOE Goal 1: Develop and disseminate tools and best practices for integrating environmental considerations into all stages of transportation decision-making (project development, planning, design, construction and maintenance).

- **Strategy 1.1:** Work with other SCOE Sub-committees on cross-cutting issues, such as construction and maintenance practices, environmental enhancements, environmental management systems, land use and smart growth, noise, sustainability, indirect and cumulative impacts, Section 4(f), etc.
- **Strategy 1.2:** Publish information and new developments in air quality, emissions and energy in Air Quality Alerts.

SCOE Goal 2: Provide leadership to member states to achieve the organizational capacity to incorporate environmental stewardship and streamlining goals into their organizations.

- **Strategy 2.1:** Encourage interactive meetings and the dissemination of information among natural resource groups.
- **Strategy 2.2:** Provide guidance to member departments, to assist them in resolving transportation project issues relating to air quality and energy issues.
- **Strategy 2.3:** Rely on air quality, emissions and energy related subject area experts to provide expertise, as appropriate.

SCOE Goal 3: Identify, prioritize, oversee and disseminate environmental/transportation research.

- **Strategy 3.1:** Yearly, prioritize research efforts and provide recommendations for necessary research to meet timely air quality, emissions and energy related needs to NCHRP, 25-25, etc.
- **Strategy 3.2:** Partner/combine efforts to follow a strategic approach, maximizing opportunities to fund identified research priorities through interaction with NCHRP, STEP, 25-25 and other entities as appropriate.
- **Strategy 3.3:** Seek AASHTO support for enhanced activities.

SCOE Goal 4: Monitor and actively participate in the development of environmental guidance, policy, regulations and legislation.

- **Strategy 4.1:** Inform State Transportation Agencies on emerging regulations and legislative actions, so that they are able to influence national policy and improve implementation of programs.
- **Strategy 4.2:** Seek member views on national air quality, emissions and energy related issues and develop a consensus AASHTO view.

- **Strategy 4.3:** Target, issues and technologies and funding opportunities that are of particular importance to the States. These may include: conformity; CMAQ; modeling; NAAQS implementation; alternative fuels; etc.

SCOE Goal 5: Promote the development and use of Best Management Practices (BMPs) to protect the environment and encourage sharing of these practices among the member departments.

- **Strategy 5.1:** Summarize state practices and lessons learned.
- **Strategy 5.2:** Update and disseminate current state stewardship principles and guidelines on a periodic basis. Coordinate work with the Center to accomplish tasks.

SCOE Goal 6: Serve as an information resource for the member departments and AASHTO Board of Directors.

- **Strategy 6.1:** Provide summary of Sub-committee activities at SCOE annual meeting, noting accomplishments and setting goals for coming year.
- **Strategy 6.2:** Keep state transportation decision makers informed on air quality, emissions and energy related issues.
- **Strategy 6.3:** Work with AASHTO staff and support to disseminate AASHTO views at the national level.
- **Strategy 6.4:** Participate in national and regional discussions on transportation air quality, emissions and energy.
- **Strategy 6.5:** As needed, work with the Standing Committee on Planning and other AASHTO Committees on issues of mutual concern.
- **Strategy 6.6:** In addition to the annual Sub-committee meeting held as part of the SCOE annual meeting, establish a second regular Sub-committee meeting and routine conference calls.

SCOE Goal 7: Support the goals and guide the work of the Center for Environmental Excellence by AASHTO.

- **Strategy 7.1:** Utilize the Center experts and CTAP consultants.
- **Strategy 7.2:** Use the Center to expand and disseminate information on best science and research in the environmental area.
- **Strategy 7.3:** Develop a list of air quality, emissions and energy related subject area experts from state transportation agencies to be a resource for the Sub-committee to call upon as needed and to serve as a link to the Center for Environmental Excellence.

SCOE Goal 8: Coordinate and promote SCOE goals and member state initiatives with other AASHTO committees, TRB, USDOT, environmental regulatory and resource agencies, non-governmental organizations, and state, industry and local trade associations.

- **Strategy 8.1:** Assess the Sub-committee's accomplishments as part of the Annual Meeting.
- **Strategy 8.2:** Coordinate with appropriate TRB Committees including, but not limited to, the Transportation and Air Quality Committee, Energy Committee and the Alternative Fuels Committee and other AASHTO committees on air quality and energy issues.
- **Strategy 8.3:** Develop partnerships with cognizant organizations in the national air quality and energy community such as ECOS, NACAA, AMPO, NARC, NGA, NASEO, NARIC and others, and with multi-state air quality consortia such as NESCAUM, MARAMA and WRAP.
- **Strategy 8.4:** Regularly review and, as needed, update the Sub-committee goals and strategies.