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### **1. President's Message – Leslie E. Wildesen, Ph.D.**

Welcome to 2003. I hope your holidays were as cheerful and relaxing as ours were.

As ETCI enters its 10<sup>th</sup> year of helping federal agencies and their contractors streamline and strengthen their NEPA processes, the Council on Environmental Quality is continuing to examine the workings of environmental impact assessment in America. You can read all about it at their web site, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/ceq/>. Most of the review comments are particularly thoughtful and interesting. It is clear that while there is a lot of misunderstanding of NEPA, there also are a lot of success stories.

My favorite success story is one from the US Department of Energy: preparing an EIS on a controversial project at Hanford ended up saving the agency at least 10 times the cost of the EIS because of the alternative selected. Do you have a success story to share? Contact us and we'll be happy to spread the word!

### **2. NEPA – An Infinite Solution to a Finite Problem?**

In our NEPA Toolbox™ workshops, we often refer to Xeno's Paradox: in order to walk across a room, you have to walk half way, then half way again, and again, and again. So, it seems, you can never walk completely across the room, because there is always that tiny increment of "half of what is left" to cross.

In real life, of course, we all walk across rooms all the time.

Recently a participant described Xeno's Paradox as "an infinite solution to a finite problem" – which is sometimes how people view the NEPA process. It seems to go on and on infinitely, while "the project" is a finite task that can be completed in a timely way if only it can get started!

On the other hand, NEPA can be viewed as a finite solution to an infinite problem: a "decision" gets made at a point in time, a "project" gets completed, but the *impacts* of that activity on the landscape, the air and water, and people's social and economic environment may go on forever.

That is a major difficulty in evaluating indirect and cumulative impacts. Scientists often get very uncomfortable when they can't deal quantitatively with environmental impacts, but must confront incremental (infinite) impacts that depend as much on observers' beliefs and perceptions as on technical data.

One approach to a solution is to make sure the discussion of the evaluation is bounded by clear definitions of time, space, and significance parameters. Phrases such as "as of [date], in the area shown on [map], we believe the impacts to be [X]" where "X" is some measurable factor such as parts per million, eligibility for the National Register of Historic Places, or a semi-quantitative rating on a perceptual scale backed up by real data.

Courts want to make sure you have taken a "hard look" at the implications of your proposals in order to make an "informed" decision – they do not require you to use a crystal ball, or to go beyond the validity of your data.

### **3. Project spotlight**

Since mid-2001, we have been working with SAIC and Wilson and Company engineers on a Regional Cumulative Effects Analysis for 4 Colorado Department of Transportation projects in the Colorado Springs area. The final report is almost out, and will be available on CDOT's web site; a limited number of CD-ROM copies also will be available. Visit <http://www.interstate25.com>, and click on Regional Cumulative Effects Analysis.

### **4. Swimming downstream – The ViewPoints Strategy™, revisited**

Long-time readers of OnTrack will remember the perceptual position exercise we call The ViewPoints Strategy™, from Issue 6 (available in the OnTrack archive on our web site: click on Links and Resources, then OnTrack Archive). That article described how to use "past," "present" and "future" positions to gain insight on environmental impact analysis.

There are lots of ways to use the "same" three perceptual positions to enhance your awareness of and appreciation for different points of view.

Try, for example, the following sets of three perceptual positions, and notice how they contribute to a new understanding of your situation:

- You, your Opponents, the Judge

- Generating an idea, Developing an implementation strategy, Evaluating the Strategy (this is the tool used by Walt Disney for all his projects)
- Writing, Reviewing, Revising an EA or EIS

You can also include the past-present-future time dimension by creating a 3-by-3 matrix, like this:

	PAST	PRESENT	FUTURE	
OTHER				
YOU				
OBSERVER				

## 5. Training Spotlight

ETCI continues to design and develop custom in-house training for our clients. Recent projects include a new two-part NEPA course for the US Coast Guard, and a special workshop for the Forest Service on integrating cultural heritage management activities with Forest planning under the National Forest Management Act.

As an EPA WasteWise company, ETCI is committed to reducing its ecological footprint by reducing its reliance on paper, toxic inks, and air travel. This electronic version of OnTrack is one factor in our overall effort. Our new Distance Learning Curriculum (DLC) is another, that can help

*you* save energy – and money! – too. More details about the DLC are on our home page, <http://www.envirotrain.com>. Scroll down to just above the GSA logo, and click through to the DLC information.

## **6. What We Do – NEW! How to Get ETCI’s NEPA Toolbox™ Training for Individuals and Small Groups**

Before you read on, stop and think about the variety of state and federal agencies you deal with in the NEPA process: your own (or your client’s); the Fish and Wildlife Service; the State Historic Preservation Office; the Forest Service or BLM; the US Department of Energy or Department of Defense agencies; Army Corps of Engineers; Federal Highway Administration; State Fish and Game; and you operate in states with or without their own versions of NEPA; and so on.

You know each of them has their own unique list of Categorical Exclusions; their own unique organizational structure and decision-making hierarchy; their own unique missions, projects, budget authorities, constituents, and histories.

Why then, would you expect to learn specific tools and strategies applicable to *your unique problems* in a room filled with *them*?

Some of you know that we hosted mixed-agency (“public”) workshops for a while here in Denver. We did it because we know that many of you do not have the 5-6 NEPA-related staff it takes to bring us in-house with a custom or tailored workshop. We knew that was not the most effective way to get you what you need, which is real hands-on problem-solving experiences using your own unique NEPA guidance, projects, and challenges. But we bowed to your requests for mixed-agency training, until we could put suitable programs in place to meet your needs more effectively.

Well, we think we have those programs now: Proponent Sponsored Training™ and our new Distance Learning Curriculum. Together with our NEPACoach™ program of project-focused training and consulting, they provide a spectrum of strategies for getting the help you need, when and how you need it.

So if you have 1-2-3 people who need NEPA related training, contact us to determine which ETCI program is best for you. More information on all three is available on our web site, or by calling us direct.

## **7. Contact us**

To find out more about any ETCI training or consulting services, to get a copy of OnTrack Online #1, or to unsubscribe to OnTrack Online, call, write, fax or email us:

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>ETCI, Inc. • 7461 E. Archer Place • Denver, CO 80230</b> <b>Voice 720.859.0380 Fax 720.859.0381 email <a href="mailto:info@envirotrain.com">info@envirotrain.com</a></b> <b><a href="http://www.envirotrain.com">http://www.envirotrain.com</a></b></p>
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# What We Do

<p><b>Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)</b></p> <p>We focus on streamlining your internal processes and helping you understand the why's and how's as well as the what's of the NEPA process.</p> <p><b>Training:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NEPA Toolbox™ courses             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Essentials for NEPA Practitioners</li> <li>• Facilitating the NEPA Process</li> <li>• EAs with FOCUS™</li> <li>• Assessing Cumulative Impacts</li> <li>• Integrating NEPA and Section 106</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Preparing NEPA Documents</li> <li>• Reviewing EAs and EISs</li> <li>• Managing EIA Scopes of Work</li> <li>• Advanced NEPA Topics</li> </ul> <p><b>Consulting:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coaching Interdisciplinary Teams</li> <li>• Scoping and Public Involvement</li> <li>• Preparing EAs and EISs</li> <li>• Identifying Stakeholders (see also PI, below)</li> <li>• “Beyond Phase I” Due Diligence Audits</li> <li>• Endangered Species, Wetlands surveys</li> </ul>	<p><b>Environmental Management Systems (EMS)</b></p> <p>By highlighting the <i>Five Big EMS Questions</i>, we help you determine the benefits your organization will get from an EMS, and how to prepare for certification, audits, and greater public scrutiny.</p> <p><b>Training:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ISO 14001 for Leaders and Managers</li> <li>• Conducting Gap Analyses</li> <li>• Environmental Impacts of My Job in Our Organization</li> <li>• Preparing for EPA Environmental Management Reviews</li> <li>• Greening your Organization</li> <li>• The Next Industrial Revolution: The Natural Step</li> </ul> <p><b>Consulting:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preparing for ISO 14001 Certification</li> <li>• Conducting Gap Analyses</li> <li>• Applying “The Natural Step” Principles</li> <li>• Creating a Sustainable Organization</li> </ul>
<p><b>Cultural Resource Management (CRM)</b></p> <p>We can help you avoid cultural resource conflicts, and understand the complex legal requirements of US archaeology and historic preservation law.</p> <p><b>Training:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CRM for Managers</li> <li>• Fundamentals of the Section 106 Process</li> <li>• Project Planning for Cultural Resource Compliance</li> <li>• Heritage Preservation Planning</li> </ul> <p><b>Consulting:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heritage Preservation Planning</li> <li>• Preparing Cultural Property Advisory Committee Requests (International)</li> <li>• “Beyond Phase I” Due Diligence Audits</li> <li>• Cultural Resource Overviews and Surveys</li> <li>• Regulatory Compliance Assistance</li> </ul>	<p><b>Public Involvement (PI)</b></p> <p>Public involvement is increasingly a part of EIA, EMS, and CRM activities in the US and abroad. Let our team of experienced public involvement professionals design a training or a PI plan for your next project or your ongoing program.</p> <p><b>Training:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Positive Public Involvement</li> <li>• Identifying Stakeholders</li> <li>• Presentation Skills for PI Professionals</li> <li>• Advanced Skills for Meeting Facilitators</li> <li>• Developing Public Involvement Plans</li> </ul> <p><b>Consulting:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public Involvement Planning</li> <li>• Public Meeting Facilitation</li> <li>• Content Analysis</li> </ul>