Hurricane Ike provided a reminder of the power of Mother Nature! We were lucky here in the College Station area, experiencing only rain and strong winds. Houston, Galveston, and other surrounding areas were not so lucky. SPP&Eer’s in the Galveston and Houston offices are still dealing with the aftermath of Ike.

Linda Cherrington and Ryan Taylor had to evacuate Galveston on Wednesday, September 10th. Linda relocated to her sister’s house in Houston and Ryan flew to Lubbock to stay with his parent’s. Linda weathered the storm at her sister’s, but they were without power for a number of days.

Linda and her husband have returned to their home in Galveston, which came through the storm in relatively good shape. Linda is telecommuting from home with full electricity, internet service, water, and sewer. Linda’s mother-in-law’s house was completely destroyed, however.

Jeff Arndt, who lives to the west of downtown Houston was without water for a day and without electricity for five days. He was able to work out of a friend’s house, who had power restored sooner.

Suzie Edrington and her family are still without power. They do have water and are using a generator to run the refrigerator, but have been making use of their “camping cooking” skills.

Andy Mullins was without power for four days, but had no major damage at this house. He worked in Austin, supporting TxDOT TP&P, during the outage.

Ryan is staying in the Dallas area and working out of the Arlington Office on a temporary basis. He was able to return to Galveston last weekend to check on his apartment. The things he left behind during the evacuation were all still there and in relatively good condition.

L.D. White, who lives in Madisonville, lost electricity on Friday night. Power was restored to his house on Wednesday, although it took longer in other parts of town. Poonam Wiles’ sister’s home in Clear Lake was completely destroyed.

TOG researchers in the Houston Office provided assistance to TxDOT before, during, and after Ike. Researchers will also be assisting in analyzing what worked during the evacuation, and areas for improvement.

Thanks to Linda, Jeff, Ryan, Suzie, Andy, L.D., and everyone in the Houston Office for continuing to get work done under very difficult circumstances. Also, thanks to Holly Crenshaw and her staff for staying on top of the situation and coordinating with TAMUG and the Houston Office management company.

Thanks!

Katie
Staff Activities

TRB 13th International HOV/HOT Conference

The SPP&E was well represented at the TRB 13th International HOV/HOT Conference, held in Minneapolis on September 7-9. Katie Turnbull served as chair of the Conference Planning Team. She moderated the opening session and gave a presentation, That Was Then/This Is Now — Changes Since the 1988 HOV Conference in Minneapolis, during the session. Katie also gave a presentation, The National UPA Evaluation, in one of the breakout sessions. Ginger Goodin chaired the TRB HOV Systems Committee meeting, provided a welcome during the opening session, and gave a breakout session presentation, Carpool Preferences in New Managed Lanes: Addressing the Question “HOT or NOT?” She also presented the HOV Committee Awards at the closing luncheon.

Stephen Ranft gave a breakout presentation, Overview of Curb/Pylon Separation System in Dallas. Scott Cooner moderated a breakout session and assisted with Stephen’s presentation. Robert Benz from the Houston Office moderated a breakout session. Jason Crawford and Todd Carlson facilitated the Research Forum on Congestion and Environmental Analysis held Tuesday afternoon as part of an FHWA-sponsored research project. David Ungemah and Bill Eisele did not attend the conference, but they assisted with a presentation by Myron Swisher, AECOM, on hybrid vehicle impacts on HOV and managed lane facilities. Casey Dusza also assisted on Ginger’s presentation.

TRB Tools of the Trade Conference — Transportation Planning in Small and Medium-Sized Communities

The SPP&E was also well represented at the TRB 2009 Tools of the Trade Conference — Transportation Planning in Small and Medium-Sized Communities, held in Portland, OR September 17-19. Jason Crawford presented a paper, Practitioner Resources for Implementing Mobility Monitoring in Small to Medium-Sized Communities. Bill Eisele presented a paper, Low-Cost Data Collection for Mobility Monitoring in Small to Medium-Sized Communities: Travel Time Data Collection, Intersection Studies and Traffic Counts. Bill Frawley, presented a paper, Random Selection of Traffic Count Locations and Development Statistically Valid Median Traffic Volume for Local Street VMT. Montie Wade moderated a session on Financial Strategy Alternatives and served on the Conference Planning Committee. In addition, Melissa Tooley, UTCM, moderated a session on Rural Transportation Planning: Planning for Rapid Growth and Effective Regional Efforts.

TRB Conference on North America Freight Flow — Understanding Changes and Improving Data Sources

Juan Villa served as Chair of the Planning Team for the TRB Conference on North American Freight Flows — Understanding Changes and Improving Data Sources, held in Irvine, CA, September 22-23. Juan spoke at the opening and the closing sessions. Katie Turnbull is acting as the conference rapporteur, and is completing the proceeding for TRB.

From Left: Alicia Norton, FHWA; Juan Villa, TTI; and Anne Goodchild, University of Washington
Photo by Katie Turnbull
Years of Service

The following SPP&Eer’s reached special anniversaries with TTI in August.

Jason Beesinger, Transportation Planning — 5 years
Teresa Qu, Mobility Analysis — 10 years

Calendar of Events

OCTOBER 14-15 — TRANSPORTATION SHORT COURSE, RUDDER THEATER COMPLEX, COLLEGE STATION

NOVEMBER 4-6 — RESEARCH MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETINGS, SAN ANTONIO

NOVEMBER 17 — RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT SEMINAR, INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY DISCLOSURE PROCESS AND MANAGEMENT, TTI POLICY, AND INVENTION GUIDELINES, 12:00 NOON—1:00 P.M.

NOVEMBER 27-28 — THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY

Birthdays

October
Phillip Reeder 10/3
Ed Hard 10/11
Christy Harris 10/14
Katie Turnbull 10/15
Patti Ellis 10/15
David Pearson 10/21
Bill Eisele 10/26
Tina Geiselbrecht 10/29

November
Eun Sug Park 11/7
John Lowery 11/7
Dennis Perkinson 11/13
Bill Stockton 11/21
Jennifer Barry 11/22

TxDOT RMC Meetings

TxDOT has provided preliminary agendas for the RMC meetings, November 4-6, in San Antonio. The general schedules for RMC 2 and RMC 4 are provided below.

RMC 2 — Transportation Planning
Wednesday, November 5
1:00-3:15 p.m. — Introductions and FY 2010 Problem Statements
3:30-5:00 p.m. — Executive Session (TxDOT Only)
Thursday, November 6
8:00 a.m.—12:00 Noon — Open Session on Recently Completed Projects and Presentations

RMC 4 — Traffic Operations
Tuesday, November 4
1:00-5:00 p.m. — Welcome, FY 2010 Problem Statements, Project Presentations
Wednesday, November 5
8:00 a.m.—12:00 Noon — Executive Session (TxDOT Only)