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Media Contacts: Jeffrey Beard, American Council of Engineering Companies, 202-347-7474, jbeard@acec.org
Julia Anastasio, American Public Works Association, 202-408-9541, janastasio@apwa.net
Joan Buhrman, American Society of Civil Engineers, 703-295-6406, jbuhrman@asce.org

New Organization to Develop Tool for Measuring Infrastructure Sustainability *Institute for Sustainable Infrastructure Founded by National Engineering and Public Works Associations*

Washington, DC—A new, independent non-profit organization tasked with developing and administering a sustainability rating system for North American infrastructure—the Institute for Sustainable Infrastructure (ISI)—will hold its first board meeting later this week on February 8 and 9. The organization was founded by the American Council of Engineering Companies (ACEC), the American Public Works Association (APWA) and the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE).

The ISI rating system is founded on the “triple bottom line” concept of sustainability, which includes environmental, economic and social considerations, and it is designed to identify the benefits of sustainable practice for owners, regulators and practitioners. It represents the only comprehensive assessment system that strives to improve a project’s social and environmental performance, while also accounting for economic benefits and creating a better long-term value for the community.

The rating system will be formally launched in the summer of 2011 as a voluntary, web-based product. However, unlike other tools, the ISI system will include an option for third-party verification, and will be applicable to a wide range of infrastructure projects, from roads and bridges to energy and water systems. Its robust, objective and transparent methods will also promote community and policy acceptance of sustainable solutions and encourage knowledge sharing, innovation and collaboration in the design, construction and maintenance of infrastructure.

“This is a groundbreaking effort that will give federal, state and local government agencies a new way to plan and carry out infrastructure projects that achieve broader and longer-term benefits for the American people,” said ACEC Chairman and ISI Board member Jerry Stump. “Right now government agencies lack a comprehensive measuring tool that will assess major infrastructure projects in terms of sustainability and other societal needs – the new ISI rating system will fill this need.”

“The public works professional of the future must be equipped with the knowledge and skills in creating the livable communities of the 21st century, said APWA President George R. Crombie, MPA. “APWA’s collaboration with ASCE and ACEC in the development of a sustainability rating system provides a pathway forward in developing an accord between the manmade and natural environment. The goals of this initiative are to create the principles and measuring tools that will assist the public works profession in designing projects that are in harmony with the environment, and improve the quality of life of those served. The challenge before us is not what we can build, but can we build in a sustainable manner meeting the goals of the triple bottom line.”

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“As a profession, civil engineers are committed to sustainable practice, so as an organization, ASCE has committed to leading the way forward,” said Kathy J. Caldwell, P.E., ASCE president. “Being one of the founding members of ISI is a key part of that commitment, and we are very excited to add it to our roster of sustainability initiatives. Not only will this new partnership allow us to create a product the marketplace is demanding, it will ultimately help us to create an atmosphere of acceptance for sustainable infrastructure solutions.”

The rating system will be performance-based and adaptable based on project size and complexity, allowing state and federal agencies to use it for the very largest projects, while allowing local governments to use it for smaller projects. The system will also include an option for self-assessment as well as third-party certification.

The new organization’s nine-member board of directors will include representatives from the three founding organizations. From ACEC: Gerald Stump, P.E., COO, Wilbur Smith Associates; Terry F. Neimeyer, P.E., Chairman and CEO, KCI Technologies; Timothy Psomas, P.E., FACEC, Exec. Eng.; Chairman, Psomas Engineering. From APWA: Vicki Vikery Quiram, P.E., Public Works Director, Westwood, MA; Howard B. LaFever, BCEE, P.E., Principal, GHD, Inc.; Larry Stevens, PE, Senior Project Manager, Howard R. Green Company. From ASCE: Christine F. Andersen, Public Works Director, Santa Barbara, Calif.; Peter D. Binney, P.E., National Director of Sustainable Infrastructure, Merrick and Company; and D. Wayne Klotz, P.E., D.WRE, F.ASCE, President, Klotz Associates and Past President, ASCE.

ISI membership will be open to individuals, organizations and agencies, and the organization will also be developing certification and continuing education programs for rating system users.

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