# Action against I-69 NAFTA Superhighway Required to Prevent Waste of Resources

Contributed by Greg Jalbert and Jan Lundberg
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Our old Alliance for a Paving Moratorium fought NAFTA Superhighways, particularly I-69, for years in the 1990s. Apart from the destruction to rural areas caused by more road-building, the Earth's ecosystems cannot take any more carbon emissions, or destabilization will occur that could be irreversible and catastrophic.
From highway systems to streets, the focus should not be expansion but repair, at best, to ensure a future equitable and sustainable for all beings.

Globalization in the manner of "free trade" agreements such as NAFTA are about maximizing petroleum-driven commerce for corporate profits. Impacts from ongoing motor-vehicle dependence and paving are almost the same as for climate change in general, and include agricultural production, sea level rise devastating coastal cities and island nations, drought, and forest fires.

Reports from the field:

Twenty years of crimes against democracy

by Steven Higgs

The last time anyone from the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) told the truth about the new-terrain Interstate 69/NAFTA Highway from Evansville to Bloomington was 20 years ago this week. On July 19, 1989, an Iowa consultant hired by the agency gathered a room full of Southwest Indiana public officials in Evansville to share the results of a feasibility study. Their conclusion: none of the routes evaluated “have a good enough cost-benefit ratio to justify their construction,” the Bloomington Herald-Times reported the next day.

But before the “Southwest Indiana Highway Feasibility Study” had been bound and formally released seven months later, liars, thieves and bullies hijacked the process. And in the two decades since honest professionals told them that Hoosier taxpayers cannot afford Evansville’s political blackmail, a bipartisan coalition of pork-meisters have flipped tens of millions of taxpayer dollars back and forth, reduced the noble acts of public comment and participation to thumb-twiddling, taken and destroyed four families’ homes, graded 1.77 miles of land and laid a couple hundred feet of concrete.

For more background, see bloomingtonalternative.com

Local activist Greg Buck suggests joining Clearinghouse for Actions Against Interstate 69 in Indiana:

http://groups.google.com/group/clearinghouse-for-actions-against-i-69-in-indiana

"This will give you a voice since influential parties take notice of the size of our membership." Buck's big picture focus is the Campaign for Sustainable Economics:
www.sustainableeconomics.org

The future, according to the Tokarskis

Thomas Tokarski is interviewed by television reporters at a public hearing in Bloomington in June 2005. Today he says that it is not too late for citizens to stop the Interstate 69/NAFTA Highway, if they get involved politically and demand that the state respect the basic tenets of democracy.

Sandra Tokarski said also in 2005 that transportation projects in other parts of Indiana are suffering from the money Gov. Mitch Daniels insists on spending on I-69.

by Steven Higgs

Editor's note: The following Q&A presents unedited answers from Thomas and Sandra Tokarski to questions from The Bloomington Alternative. The Tokarskis are long-time transportation activists and founding members of Citizens for Appropriate Rural Roads.

ALTERNATIVE: Let's start with where things stand today. As of a couple weeks ago, the state had graded 1.77 miles of roadway from I-164 north of Evansville, built one bridge and laid a couple hundred feet of onramps. Have you heard any reports on ongoing or planned construction?

[For the rest of the interview, go to
bloomingtonalternative.com]

U.S. Budget: How Much for Highways?

Congress is debating how much to spend fixing the nation's
transportation system. Rep. Jim Oberstar, a Minnesota Democrat, has
been pushing a six-year, $500 billion bill.  Culture Change will review it and suggest a biocentric position!

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The Alliance for a Paving Moratorium - archival page:

culturechange.org/apm_page.htm

Fact Sheets - archival:
culturechange.org/factsheet1.html