January 18, 2011

Prof. Nina-Marie Lister
Professional Advisor, ARC International Design Competition Jury
Ryerson University
Toronto, ON
Canada

Re: ARC DESIGN COMPETITION JURY REPORT / Recommendation of HNTB+MVVA

Dear Professor Lister,

Pursuant to our deliberations as part of the ARC International Wildlife Crossing Infrastructure Design Competition, we are writing to confirm our unanimous recommendation that the project / team led by HNTB with MVVA be selected as the winning scheme.

Following our visit to the site, our review of the five finalist projects and, our discussions on site in Vail, we are pleased to reiterate our commitment to the project. We feel that the proposed ecological integration, transportation improvement, and educational value of the Vail wildlife crossing structure justify the efforts of the ARC team and the competition process. The topic is an important one for wildlife conservation, highway safety, and design culture, deserving of international as well as national attention. Equally, it promises to be significant locally, and across the region. We collectively remain committed to its realization, as one prototypical installation of what could be an infrastructural series of similar wildlife crossing structures.

Our deliberations regarding the competition entries responded to and were motivated by a dual mandate. On the one hand, we were charged with identifying a particular and specific design proposal, one that offered a practical and direct solution to the problem at hand through design. On the other hand, we were equally committed to identifying a team capable of delivering the proposed project both in technical capacity and seasoned experience. We were seeking a design solution that represented a robust synthesis of knowledge across a range of disciplines from landscape ecology to transportation engineering. We were looking for a team with a sense of suitability and fit for the particular challenges of the Vail site; a team equally capable of making a national or international argument on behalf of this type of landscape infrastructure.

We brought to our work a collective appetite for solutions that were direct, clear-sighted, and daring. Equally, we were compelled by deep knowledge of the ecological and infrastructural possibilities of a large civil engineering project. We were motivated by the belief that good design can be simple, and that design is capable of shedding light on the most complex of challenges.

We were favorably impressed with all five of the finalist projects. Among our impressions of the five finalists, we were collectively struck by three things:

* The quality and innovation of design proposals submitted by finalist teams.

* The thoroughness of research into the problem and the potential for prototypical solutions.

* The potential impact and historic importance of proposals for the practices of landscape architecture, ecology, and engineering.

In examining each of the five finalists' projects, we became convinced that each had strengths; but one had transcended the others.

The project / team directed by HNTB+MVVA was unanimously identified as the most elegant and compelling solution. Their proposal was at once simple and straightforward, while embodying the complexity and contradictions inherent in the competition brief.

The HNTB+MVVA proposal makes use of known technology as well as construction techniques that are well established. These techniques are ordered in such a way as to service an overriding concern for the construction of wildlife crossings that would bear little trace of the structure below. In this regard, the HNTB+MVVA proposal combined brilliantly an overarching focus on wildlife habitat, behavior, and viability with a practical intelligence regarding the making of such a work of infrastructure.

The scheme marries well a simple elegance with a brute force. It effectively recasts ordinary materials and methods of construction into a potentially transcendent work of design. In this regard it gives us confidence that it could be credibly imagined as a regional infrastructure across the inter-mountain west.

Ultimately, one juror summed up our collective thoughts most fully:

> "The winning proposal by HNTB+MVVA is not only eminently possible; it has the capacity to transform what we think of as possible."

[signed]

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Charles Waldheim
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