

Texas Department of Transportation
Environmental Coordinators Conference
September 20 – 22, 2011

Day 1	Changes and Updates
Day 2	New Tools and Processes
Day 3	Training Breakout Sessions

Day 1 (8:30 to 5): Changes and Updates

Registration/Meet and Greet

Introduction and Welcome

Mark Marek, Interim Director of TxDOT Environmental Affairs Division (ENV)

Changes at TxDOT

Lisa Hart

An overview of ENV's advisory role in implementing TxDOT's environmental program

Every Day Counts (EDC): Nationwide and Texas Efforts – Initiatives and Status

Greg Punske

FHWA's EDC initiative identifies innovative potential methods to shorten project delivery. We'll focus on the EDC initiative as it relates to TxDOT and Texas transportation projects.

FHWA Categorical Exclusion (CE) Programmatic Agreement (PA) Program

Mike Leary and Lisa Hart

We will focus on the status of the revisions to this FHWA-TxDOT agreement and explain how the revisions aid local government and TxDOT projects.

Vision of the "New" Environmental Processes

Bryan Ellis

An overview of the proposal to streamline the environmental process. The proposed process will put all stakeholders on the same page by identifying environmental tasks and responsibilities in a predictable order, starting at the project planning stage. Learn how this will benefit everyone by reducing surprises and preventing last-minute project approval delays.

ENV Structure and the New Environmental Processes

Brandy Huston

Further examination of the vision behind the "New" Environmental Process concept as well as the roles and responsibilities involved to implement the new processes

Open Discussion/Question and Answer Session

TxDOT's Environmental Management System (EMS) and the Role of the Standing Committee on Environmental Management (SCEM)

Richard Skopik

EMS and the role of SCEM

- Lessons learned from the EMS Pilot
- Implementation
- Training contractors and TxDOT employees

Legislative Update and New Rules

Rich O'Connell

The 2011 Texas Legislature set new technical review deadlines for environmental review documents. Learn how to comply with the new laws (Senate Bill 1420, House Bill 630, and Senate Bill 548). We'll also discuss the process for projects with a local government sponsor.

Task Forces and New Programs: Modernization

Dan Perge

The Revised Project Implementation Process Framework Team is a work group composed of district, region, ENV, and FHWA staff. The team examines the environmental process to identify methods of making environmental review faster and more predictable. We'll discuss their progress in developing a process that emphasizes planning. We'll also hear their recommendations on how to handle work that is already underway.

Kelly Selman

The Modernization Employee Workgroup, a part of TxDOT's ongoing modernization program, attempts to streamline the environmental process. Hear their recommendations for future development.

New and Existing Tools: Overview

Regional Studies: Existing and Proposed

Jim Barta

Regional studies support early coordination and early project development for specific technical impacts in a regional environmental area. The studies help streamline the environmental processes. Learn how to update previously-completed regional studies to comply with more current rules and regulations.

Standards of Uniformity (SOUs) and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs): Existing and Proposed

Jim Barta

SOUs establish required criteria for technical reports and are used to determine whether the technical reports are considered acceptable. SOPs establish the uniform methods/procedures for performing the technical studies. Learn how to use SOPs and SOUS to generate environmental reports and review documents that provide acceptable documentation the first time.

New Agreements with USFWS

Stirling Robertson

An overview of the interagency transportation liaison agreement between TxDOT and USFWS

Agreements in Progress:

TPWD

Stirling Robertson

An update of the coordination Memorandum of Uniformity (MOU) between TPWD and TxDOT

TCEQ

Tim Wood

An update of the TCEQ MOU with regards to air and water quality

THC MOU and SHPO PA

Scott Pletka and Bruce Jensen

A report on the current efforts to revise the existing MOU and PA with the Texas Historical Commission (THC) and the Texas State Historic Preservation Office (TSHPO). We'll discuss how the proposed changes can streamline coordination.

Renee Benn

Learn about streetscape and sidewalk project guidelines and how to use the Project Coordination Request (PCR) form. This presentation will be of special interest to local and county governments.

Region Service Level Agreements (SLA) Update

Bryan Ellis

During a report on the current status of the SLAs governing the interactions between Districts, Regions, and ENV, you'll hear a summary of TxDOT's efforts to streamline the environmental process through an emphasis on planning and establishing mutual expectations. Learn how the new process is consistent with Sunset provisions that establish procedures for review of projects with local government sponsors. Learn how Primavera (6) (TxDOT's new tool for managing and scheduling) fits into the picture.

Open Discussion/Question and Answer Session

Day 2 (8:30-5:00): New Tools and Processes

Project Development Plan (PDP-12) Resource Availability Update

Tim Powers

TxDOT is developing its four-year PDP-12 to establish a letting schedule and a plan for addressing backlog projects. One of the goals of PD-12 is to develop an inventory of TxDOT's environmental skill sets. This inventory will help the agency manage available personnel and identify staffing gaps requiring contracted consultants. We'll discuss the current state of the FTE analysis and what the analysis means for local government and TxDOT projects.

Scoping: Agreement of Roles and Responsibilities to Resolve Environmental Issues Related to TxDOT and Local Government Projects

Speakers to be announced

An overview of the roles and responsibilities for resolving environmental issues related to TxDOT and local government projects.

P6 Environmental Templates: How to Build Environmental Time Lines for TxDOT and Local Government Projects

Douglas Mack

The environmental business processes related to advance planning are being mapped to identify and build realistic and appropriate P(6) time lines. This discussion focuses on developing the templates, the problems and issues that went into creating the templates, and interim solutions that can be adopted until TxDOT expands its Project Management capabilities.

Open Discussion/Question and Answer Session

The Texas Environmental Compliance Oversight System (ECOS): An Overview and Update

Maya Coleman and Sai Kolla

The TxDOT existing desktop Environmental Tracking System (ETS) will be replaced by the Texas ECOS web application with the target implementation date of October 24, 2011. Texas ECOS will integrate with TxDOT enterprise systems to provide enhanced tracking, reporting, and metrics for environmental issues through a seamless web application. Learn how the new solution will provide a collaborative tool for operations across functional areas.

Environmental Report Requirements

Daniel Harris

We'll discuss new procedures for reporting the status of TxDOT environmental reviews to the Texas Transportation Commission and the legislature.

Open Discussion/Question and Answer Session

Day 3: Training Breakout Sessions

Room 1

8:30-10:00 Senate Bill (SB 1420) Interim Procedures

Brandy Houston

TxDOT's SB 1420 takes effect September 1, 2011 and makes a number of changes to the environmental process. This session will cover the process envisioned to implement the sunset bill and help local governments to apply this process to their projects between September 1 and the adoption of new administrative rules.

10:30-12:00 Scoping: Let's Make a Deal

Lain Ellis

Lack of mutual expectations can lead to last-minute surprises for environmental documents submitted for review when all the time and money are gone. One way to increase predictability is to reach an agreement on environmental tasks and deliverables at project start-up. The potential for surprises will be limited if everyone is on the same page.

1:30-3:00 Air Issues

Tim Wood

We'll discuss the air quality technical SOU and SOP and the revisions to the air quality guidelines.

Jose Campos

Project and Planning Consistency - Why it's Important to Timely Project Development

Jackie Ploch

Transportation Conformity 101 and the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS)

3:30-5:00 Administrative Record

Speakers to be determined

Maintaining an accurate and up-to-date project file is an important task in any NEPA study, regardless of whether litigation is anticipated. The project file allows the project team to locate important documents quickly, which reduces inefficiency and duplication of effort, while also reducing the risk of overlooking information. The project file also enables an agency to respond to document requests under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and similar state public records laws. Preparing the administrative record for a complex project can be a major challenge. Project managers have concerns about which documents to include and the process for compiling a strong record. This presentation will address these and other key issues for project managers to consider.

Room 2**8:30-10:00 Water, Biology, and Pollution Prevention and Abatement Issues: What's New**

Rodney Concienne

Brief updates on Water, Biology, and ENV's internal operations related to these issues, pending regulations, studies, SOU/SOPs, and engineering and scientific services contracting.

10:30-12:00 Title VI Guidance for Local Governments

Introduction

Brandy Huston

An Introduction to the *Title VI Technical Assistance Guide for Local Public Agencies*

Jessica Muller

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 forbids discrimination against anyone in the United States because of race, color, or national origin by any agency receiving federal funds. TxDOT and its sub-recipients of federal aid funds must ensure that all of its programs and activities are operated in a nondiscriminatory manner regardless of funding source. Learn how to use this guide to avoid violations of the law.

Using 2010 Census Data for Environmental Justice Documentation

Lacey Loftin and Paula Cantrell, Dallas Regional Census Office

Environmental Justice Documentation (EJD) will be using the 2010 Census products as they roll out over the course of this year. We'll discuss American FactFinder vs. geographic interfaces. We'll also cover the schedule of data availability and the revised sources for that data.

- 2010 Census data, American Community Survey data: What to Use and When to Use It
- 2010 Data Products and Release Schedule

1:30-3:00 Historic Studies: Process and SOUs

Renee Benn, Shonda Mace, and Carolyn Nelson

For local and county government transit/planning/environmental staff, design engineers, landscape designers, and planning agency staff:

This session outlines the planning and coordination processes for federally funded projects under either the Transportation Enhancement (TE) or Safe Routes to Schools (SRTS) programs. Discussion will also address elements of Americans with Disability Act (ADA) projects. We'll examine components of the Project Coordination Request (PCR) for historical.

ENV offers encore presentations and fieldwork training in a District office near you by special arrangement with the ENV's Historical Studies Branch.

3:30-5:00 Environmental Management System (EMS): Statewide Implementation Plan

Layde Philips

TxDOT's EMS Implementation Plan: Roles, Tools and Training

- COP (EMS) History

- CAFO Process critical Path Time-Line
- Overview of the Statewide COP (EMS)
- Implementation Manual and EMS Tools
- Deliverables

Room 3

8:30-10:00 How to Use SOUs and Regional Studies

ENV's Branch Managers: Jenise Walton, Rodney Concienne, Bruce Jensen, and Scott Pletka

SOU's establish required criteria for technical reports. SOPs establish the uniform methods/procedures for performing the technical studies. Learn how to use these tools to generate environmental reports and environmental review documents.

10:30-12:00 Overview of 2011 Noise Guidelines

Ray Umscheid

An overview of the TxDOT's 2011 Guidelines for Analysis and Abatement of Roadway Traffic Noise. Learn about the changes in the noise guidelines brought about by 23 CFR 772 and how they impact your projects.

1:30-3:00 Environmental Considerations for Early Right of Way Acquisition

John Campbell, Director, TxDOT Right of Way Division

- Public Outreach
- Concurrent early acquisition and environmental clearance activity
- Previous efforts by TxDOT's Environmental Affairs and Right of Way Divisions to develop guidance for early right-of-way acquisition

3:30-5:00 Projects With/Without FHWA Funding: Understanding the Different Requirements

Lain Ellis

Federal and state environmental requirements apply to projects in confusing ways. FHWA participation requires compliance with FHWA regulations, but even if FHWA doesn't participate, there are still numerous state and federal laws that are triggered in complex ways. TxDOT compliance, review, and approval requirements vary widely as a result. Learn about the rules and how they affect you and your work.

Room 4

8:30-10:00 Topics with Texas Parks and Wildlife

Stirling Robertson and Amy Turner

10:30-12:00 Topics with US Fish and Wildlife Services

Stirling Robertson and Tanya Sommer

1:30-3:00 An Overview of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Regulatory Process and Functional Assessments

Jeffrey Pinsky

An overview of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Regulatory process. Learn about jurisdiction, the permit evaluation process, mitigation, and functional assessments including the Hydrogeomorphic Functional Assessment. The stream tool also will be explained.

3:30-5:00 Integrating Planning and NEPA

Speaker to be announced

The Planning and Environment Linkages policy is an outgrowth of FHWA's "Every Day Counts" policy to promote coordination, environmental stewardship, stakeholder support, and project streamlining. An investigation into the incorporation of environmental and community assessment analyses into the transportation planning process will be included.

Additional Offsite ECOS Training

Texas ECOS Individual Module hands-on individual computer training will be held Friday, September 23. Please contact Maya.Coleman@txdot.gov to preregister for this class since space is limited. **This class is open to anyone currently using ETS.**

9:00 – 12:00 Training for Biology and Water Forms

1:00 – 4:00 Training for Environmental Document Preparation and Review, Public Involvement, Archeology, Historical Studies, and Pollution, Prevention, and Abatement Forms

Speaker Biographies

Jim Barta is the Director of the ENV's Technical Services Section and supervises ENV's technical staff. He has a BS in Engineering from Texas A&M.

Renee Benn is a member of ENV's Historical Studies team and has conducted Section 106 coordination throughout the state. She has an MS in Historic Preservation from Eastern Michigan University.

John Campbell, P. E., is the Director of TxDOT's Right of Way Division. He holds a BS in Civil Engineering from Texas A&M and an MS in Business Administration from UT/Dallas.

Jose Campos is a planner with FHWA, focusing on the Austin and Houston Districts. He is also the Intermodal Team Leader.

Paula Cantrell has been with the Census Bureau at the Dallas Regional Office since January 2010, assisting with the dissemination of Census data to the public.

Maya Coleman is a GIS and IT project manager with ENV. She has trained in Geography with an emphasis in GIS at UT/Austin and has extensive work experience.

Rodney Concienne, P.G., is the manager of ENV's Pollution Prevention and Abatement Branch. Previously, he was a project manager in TCEQ's Remediation Division.

Bryan Ellis is the Environmental Coordinator of TxDOT's South Region. He currently serves on the Environmental Framework team, the Environmental Rule Revision team, and the PDP 2012 team.

Lain Ellis, Ph.D., is an Environmental Policy Analyst with ENV. He was a principal developer of the Scientific Services Contract Program, the FHWA/TxDOT PA for Cultural Resources, and the PCE program.

Daniel Harris, Project Manager, is a 12-year veteran of ENV. He has an MS in Historic Preservation Planning from Eastern Michigan University.

Lisa Hart is ENV's Programs Management Section Director. She has a BA in Anthropology and a MA in Architecture from UT/Austin.

Brandy Huston is in ENV's Programs Management Section. She works on a variety of policy issues and serves as the Division's Legislative Coordinator.

Bruce Jensen manages ENV's Historical Studies team which oversees Section 106 compliance.

Sai Kolla is a Sybase and Oracle Certified Professional who works in business analysis and software application development for ENV.

Lacey Loftin works in the Partnership and Data Services group at the Census Bureau Dallas Regional Office. Previously, she served as a Congressional Liaison for the region during the 2010 Decennial Census.

Shonda Mace is a member of ENV's Historical Studies team. She has a B.A. in Archeology/Anthropology and an MS in Historic Preservation from UT/Austin.

Douglass Mack is in ENV's Programs Management Section. Previously, he worked in ENV's Pollution Prevention and Abatement Branch.

Mark A. Marek, P.E., is Director of the Design Division and Interim Director of ENV. He received his BS in Civil Engineering from UT/Austin in 1981 and his MS in Business Administration from Southwest Texas State in 1986.

Jessica Muller is a Title VI Specialist in the Contract Compliance Section of TxDOT's Office of Civil Rights.

Carolyn Nelson is a member of ENV's Historical Studies team. Previously, she has 20 years of experience working as a historian with nonprofit and business sectors and the National Park Service.

Richard O'Connell is an Associate General Counsel. He reviews environmental and permitting issues for TxDOT.

Dan Perge, P.E., a 24-year TxDOT veteran, is the Assistant Advanced Project Development Engineer in the Dallas District.

Jeffery Pinsky works in the Galveston District USACE Regulatory Branch. He has a BS in Marine Biology from Texas A&M/Galveston.

Layde Philips is ENV's EMS Program Manager. Previously, she spent 33 years in the semiconductor industry in quality management. She is a certified PMP.

Scott Pletka, Ph.D., is the supervisor of ENV's Archeological Studies Program.

Jackie Ploch is an Air Quality Specialist with ENV. Previously, she has more than 20 years of air quality experience in the public and private sectors.

Tim Powers is TxDOT's North Region Director, providing operational and project delivery support for 8 districts.

Stirling Robertson, Ph.D., is a member of ENV's Biological Resources Management Branch. He has a Ph.D. in Biology from the Florida Institute of Technology and an MS in Wildlife/Fisheries Sciences from Texas A&M.

Kelly Selman, P.E., is TxDOT's Dallas District Deputy Engineer. Previously, he was the Director of Transportation, Planning, and Development. He has a BS in Civil Engineering from Texas A&M.

Richard Skopik, P.E., is the Waco District Engineer and has more than 33 years with TxDOT. He is the chairman of the Standing Committee on Environmental Management (SCEM).

Tanya Sommer is the USFWS Branch Chief for the Consultations and Habitat Conservation Plan and is responsible for ESA consultations in central and western Texas.

Amy Turner, Ph.D. is a Habitat Assessment Biologist in TPWD's Wildlife Division, focusing on the Gulf Coast Prairies, Oak Woods, and Piney Woods ecoregions.

Ray Umscheid is the Noise Specialist for ENV. He has 6 years of experience performing noise analysis for transportation projects.

Jenise Walton is the Manager for ENV's Human Environment Branch. She has a BA in Geography- Urban and Regional Planning from Texas State University.

Tim Wood is ENV's Air Quality Coordinator. Previously, he worked in TCEQ's Ambient Air Monitoring Section. He has a BS in Environmental Science from the University of the Incarnate Word.