



## **Environmental Coordinators Conference September 20 – 22, 2011**

### **Day 1**

#### **Introduction and Welcome**

Mark Marek, Interim Director of Environmental Affairs Division (ENV) (no PowerPoint used)

#### **Changes at TxDOT**

Lisa Hart (no PowerPoint used)

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 (PowerPoint unavailable)

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**

Lisa Hart and Mike Leary (PowerPoint unavailable)

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**

**1** Bryan Ellis

An overview of the proposal to streamline the environmental process.

#### **ENV Structure and the New Environmental Processes**

**2** 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)**

**3** 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 (no PowerPoint used)

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**

### **4** 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.

### **5** 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**

### **6** 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.

### **7** 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.

## **8** New Agreements with USFWS and TWPD

Stirling Robertson

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

Stirling Robertson

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

## **Agreements in Progress:**

### **TCEQ**

#### **9** Tim Wood

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

### **THC MOU and SHPO PA**

#### **10** 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.

#### **11** 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**

**12** 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.

## **Day 2**

### **Project Development Plan (PDP-12) Resource Availability Update**

**13** Doug Eichorst

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 PDP 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**

**14** Lain Ellis

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**

**15** 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.

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

**16** Sai Kolla Maya and Coleman

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**

### **17** Daniel Harris

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

Open Discussion/Question and Answer Session

## **Day 3**

### **Room 1**

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

### **18** 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

### **19** 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

### **20** Tim Wood

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

### **21** Jose Campos

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

### **22** Jackie Ploch

Transportation Conformity 101 and the NAAQS

### **Room 2**

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

### **23** 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 (no PowerPoint used)

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

[24](#) 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 (PowerPoint unavailable)

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.

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

[25](#) Renee Benn, [26](#) Shonda Mace, and [27](#) 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 and also includes elements of ADA projects. We'll examine components of the Project Coordination Request (PCR) for historical studies and discuss elements of the ADA projects. ENV offers encore presentations and fieldwork training in a District office near you.

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

[28](#) Layde Philips

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

**Room 3**

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

ENV's Branch Managers:

[29](#) Jenise Walton, Bruce Jensen (no PowerPoint used), and [30](#) Scott Pletka

SOUs 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

**31** 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

**32** John Campbell Director of ROW 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

**33** 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

**34** Stirling Robertson and Amy Turner

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

Stirling Robertson and Tanya Sommer (PowerPoint unavailable)

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

**35 and 36** Jeffery 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 HGM. The stream tool also will be explained.

3:30-5:00 Integrating Planning and NEPA

**37** Melissa Neeley

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.