

Environmental Program Performance Management
Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP)/
FDOT Central Environmental Management Office (CEMO)
Annual ETDM Program Review Meeting Notes



<i>Meeting Date and Location</i>	<i>Meeting Attendees</i>
June 14th, 2006 10:00 AM at Florida Department of Environmental Protection 3900 Commonwealth Boulevard Tallahassee, Florida 32399-3000	Buddy Cunill - FDOT Mary Harger - FDOT Carl McMurray - FDOT Sally Mann - FDEP Lauren P. Milligan - FDEP Bruce Barrett - URS Roosevelt Petithomme - URS

❑ **Purpose and Overview of the Annual Review Meeting**

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss how the ETDM process has been proceeding and gain an understanding of how the relationship and coordination efforts between the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP), Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) have improved since implementation of the Efficient Transportation Decision Making (ETDM) process. Prior to the meeting, the FDEP provided a “draft copy” of the agency’s 2006 Annual Report, which served as a guide for discussion at the meeting.

❑ **Business Relations and Processes Before ETDM**

Prior to implementation of the ETDM process, there was little direct communication between FDOT and FDEP. Typically, FDEP received the Advance Notification (AN) letter and assigned it to one of the four regional reviewers based on project location. The regional reviewer would then coordinate with 6 – 8 state agencies plus internal FDEP reviewers to obtain comments on the proposed project. Communications outside of the AN response letter usually dealt with controversial projects. If a proposed project raised concerns, the FDOT would schedule an interagency coordination meeting to discuss potential problems or issues that could occur as a result of the project. Two examples of controversial projects that resulted in interagency meetings were State Road 40 and Suncoast Parkway Phases I and II.

Prior to ETDM implementation, FDEP reviewed an average of 43 projects per year and spent an estimated 4 hours reviewing each project. Ms. Milligan stated that FDEP did not have any involvement in the Project Development and Environment (PD&E) or permitting phases of a project, except in FDEP’s Northwest District Office in Pensacola, which is responsible for issuing Stormwater and Wetland Resource Permits to FDOT District 3. Ms. Milligan stated that the FDEP office in Tallahassee seldom receives any feedback from the FDOT after submitting its comments on a project’s AN.

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The Office of Intergovernmental Programs (OIP) within the FDEP houses the Florida State Clearinghouse and provides coordination services for a broad range of activities subject to State and Departmental review. Ms. Milligan determines where proposed FDOT projects need to be sent for review. She routinely coordinates with 6 - 8 agencies, including Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Florida Department of Community Affairs, the State Historic Preservation Office, Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, the Water Management Districts, the Regional Planning Councils (RPC) and County Planning Departments. The RPC coordinates with local government entities and serves as a regional clearinghouse. Ms. Milligan stated that FDEP has a 60-day turnaround time for each Clearinghouse project. During that time period, the State Application Identifier number is assigned and the state clearance letter is developed. The reviewing agencies have 30 days from the date on which the project is received (by the Clearinghouse) within which to provide comments.

❑ **Business Relations and Processes After ETDM**

Since the implementation of ETDM, FDEP has not changed its organization or utilized any of the funds provided via the initial funding agreement; however, FDEP plans to hire a full-time employee in the Northwest District Office, with funds from its renewed funding agreement. Ms. Mann and Ms. Milligan stated they are waiting to see how OIP's work load is affected before determining whether they will need to hire additional staff to complete the proposed Indirect and Cumulative Effects (ICE) reviews. FDEP feels that ICE reviews should be addressed at the local level (MPOs or local planning departments) or that FDOT should hire consultants to complete the reviews, with state agency verification and comment. FDEP expressed staffing and legal concerns surrounding the ICE reviews. Mr. Cunill indicated that the ICE reviews should not become a complicated issue and that the reviews should be based upon scenario-building and adherence to the local comprehensive plan. He said that he would discuss this with Larry Barfield.

All parties agreed that communication between the agencies has greatly increased as a result of ETDM. The ETAT meetings provide an opportunity to discuss upcoming projects and meet other ETAT members. This is also an opportunity for advanced problem-solving. Ms. Mann stated that she and Lynn Griffin are currently working with Robert Downie to establish the appropriate federal consistency review language to be used in the Environmental Screening Tool (EST) for project ANs. Ms. Mann stated that ETDM is enabling early review and input on proposed projects and is reducing paperwork. FDOT handles distribution via the EST, which is a savings. Mr. Barrett added that the new on-line invoicing system that URS Corporation is currently developing will further assist in the efforts to reduce paper. Ms. Mann stated that reductions in time will ultimately translate into cost savings.

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Ms. Milligan mentioned that the EST is a great tool, but that the Geographic Information System (GIS) portion slows down FDEP review due to the multiple data layers that are in place for other agencies. She stated that FDEP uses its own GIS system containing DEP-relevant layers independent of the EST. FDEP staff is currently spending approximately 3 hours per project. FDEP's new staff members will need EST training, along with staff from the Office of Greenways and Trails who are now involved in the process.

Ms. Mann stated that the ETDM program and process are good. She feels that the program builds trust between the agencies and thereby builds relationships.

❑ **Discussion of Performance Measures in EST**

Mr. Cunill led the discussion on performance measures, using the information included in the FDEP review packet. The packet provided a sample of the forms that will be used to evaluate program activities during Phase II of the Performance Management System. Mr. Petithomme stated that the performance measures system will be an on-line system. Currently, FDEP can view the agency's monthly participation rates in the EST.

❑ **Contract Management Discussion**

Mr. Cunill led the contract management discussion. He spoke about the renewal of the second generation agreements and FDEP's desire to hire a new staff person for the Northwest District Office. Ms. Mann stated that she would complete her review of the ETDM agreements in a few days and would provide FDOT with her comments and suggestions for possible changes.

❑ **Benefits of ETDM**

- Early involvement in FDOT projects
- Improved coordination between FDOT and FDEP
- More efficient review process
- Good relationship
- Builds trust
- Time savings (eventual cost reductions)
- More involvement (Office of Greenways and Trails)
- PD&E environmental documents on-line
- Early problem-solving
- Less paper
- Puts face to name

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❑ **Conclusion**

Overall, the FDEP is pleased with the ETDM program and is looking forward to continued participation in the program. The program has increased communication between the agencies and is also helping to build trust. ETDM has resulted in a reduction of paper through its utilization of the EST, which will ultimately result in cost savings. The meeting adjourned at approximately 12:36 pm.