

**EXECUTIVE TRANSPORTATION AND ENVIRONMENT COUNCIL
MEETING SUMMARY**

DATE: Monday, April 6, 2009

TIME: 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

PLACE: Federal Highway Administration
2520 West 4700 South, Suite 9A
Salt Lake City, Utah

THOSE PRESENT:

Larry Crist, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Jason Gipson, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Larry Svoboda, Environmental Protection Agency
Robin Coursen, Environmental Protection Agency
Bryan Cawley, Federal Highway Administration
Edward Woolford, Federal Highway Administration
Roland Stanger, Federal Highway Administration
Matt Craddock, Bureau of Land Management
Mike Nelson, Bureau of Land Management
Michael Styler, Utah Department of Natural Resources
Bill Sinclair, Department of Environmental Quality
Bryce Bird, Utah Division of Air Quality
Lori Hunsaker, State Historic Preservation Office
John Njord, Utah Department of Transportation
Jim McMinimee Utah Department of Transportation
Becky Stromness, Utah Department of Transportation
Julie Lewis, Utah Department of Transportation

ITEM ONE: CHAIR WELCOME

Bryan Cawley called the meeting to order and welcomed those attending. He distributed a pamphlet outlining the Utah Division of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Office. Last week, President Obama nominated Victor Mendez to be the head of the FHWA National Office. John Njord said Mr. Mendez was the Deputy Director for the Arizona Department of Transportation. John has known Mr. Mendez for 10-12 years, and he is an engineer by trade. He looks forward to working with Mr. Mendez in this capacity. Bryan said James Christian has been appointed as the new FHWA Division Administrator in Utah. Mr. Christian should arrive in Utah by June or July. Paul Ziman will also join the Utah FHWA Office from the Idaho FHWA Office.

ITEM TWO: HOST PRESENTATION – AMERICAN RECOVERY AND REINVESTMENT ACT (ARRA) AGENCY PARTNERSHIPS

Ed Woodford gave a general review of the ETEC objectives. He discussed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), which was enacted on February 17, 2009. From this Act, Utah received \$213,545,653 for transportation infrastructure. John said this was actually a small percentage of the entire stimulus package. Many people thought this stimulus money was all about transportation, but the funds actually went to other agencies as well, such as the Department of Health, etc. Part of the law states the funds have to be obligated within 120 days (by June 2009).

Ed referred to a handout, which outlined the Utah Department of Transportation (UDOT) Economic Recovery Projects and Recommended Enhancement Projects. He explained the various Utah projects and how they are dispersed across the state. Ed discussed NEPA Compliance. Sixty-two (62) of these recovery projects have completed the NEPA Process, and 26 are incomplete. John said if other states do not get their funding obligated within 120 days, Utah will be prepared to offer more projects if there is unobligated money.

Ed referred to the Recovery Website, located at www.recovery.gov. Status on the Recovery Projects can be accessed from this website. UDOT's web page, www.udot.utah.gov also lists these projects and their status. John said UDOT has received a great deal of E-mails regarding wildlife crossings and using ARRA funds for these projects. UDOT is responding that there are wildlife connectivity projects being done in Summit County/Parleys Canyon and Utah County/Provo Canyon.

Ed reviewed the completed NEPA documents reviewed by FHWA (seven EISs and ten EAs). FHWA has improved the rate of this review process in the last three years. Once these projects are through the environmental review process, they can move to construction. Ed also discussed the FY 2009 Anticipated Documents for EISs and EAs (six total) they would like to see completed this year.

Ed reviewed the 2009 Risk Assessment. FHWA Program Managers are completing the FY 2009 Risk Assessment, which is due by April 10, 2009. The FY 2008 Assessment outlined ways for FHWA to work with various state and federal agencies to work on better coordination procedures, etc.

Ed said with ETEC, our intent is to improve communications between transportation and resource agencies so we can move these documents forward. Larry Svoboda asked when FHWA looked at money distribution on these projects, how much was spent on EISs and EAs. Ed said more money is usually spent on EISs. **NOTE:** *Ed later provided the following breakdown to be included in the minutes:*

Estimated Recovery Act Funds*

Environmental Impact Statements:	12.87%	\$ 27,859,849.80
Environmental Assessments:	1.27%	\$ 2,740,661.10
Categorical Exclusions (C-List):	6.59%	\$ 14,269,295.00
Categorical Exclusions (D-List):	79.28%	\$171,668,053.80

*Total value is based on a project estimate, therefore, the total amount may exceed appropriated amount.

ITEM THREE: LUNCH SERVED

ITEM FOUR: UDOT ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAM OVERVIEW - REVIEW OF PROJECTS COMPLETED LAST YEAR AND CURRENT PROJECTS UNDERWAY

Becky Stromness presented the UDOT Environmental Program for 2009 and referred to the handout provided. She reviewed the EIS and EA documents completed in 2008 and thanked everyone for their efforts on those completed projects.

Becky provided a statewide overview of projects. There are 11 active documents (5 EIS, 5 EA, and 1 SES). Planned projects include the 1800 North Railroad Overpass and Widening in Clearfield and SR-67 (Legacy North). The proposed “Utah Lake Crossing” is still in the proposal stage. Jason Gipson said there has been some miscommunication to date on this project. It will be interesting to see if the project progresses to a stage where they can actually review it.

Becky reviewed and discussed the 2009 Environmental Projects by UDOT Regions, including their purpose, environmental issues, expected completion dates, etc. Jason said it is helpful to have information about these projects up front rather than an after thought. Becky said they need to do a better job educating local governments earlier in the process so the locals understand all the issues associated with preparing a NEPA document.

John said in all the years UDOT has dealt with local governments, there is a wide spectrum of some who are experienced in these matters and some who are not. It is an education process to understand and learn about the NEPA process. Jason said they are trying to get more information about the USACE program and processes to the local governments. John said UDOT visits the counties each year.

Action Item: John asked Jim McMinimee to follow through with Jason Gipson on UDOT’s schedule for these local government visits. Possibly, Jason could coordinate with UDOT on this process. Larry said it is helpful to be proactive in these processes. Jim said UDOT could work with the federal agencies on what they would like to let the local governments know, attend some of the meetings, work with them on their outreach efforts, etc.

Lori Hunsaker asked if UDOT has been working with Draper City regarding the Galena

Property as a possible transit site. John said UDOT has a representative coordinating with Draper City and the Utah Transit Authority (UTA) on this matter. UDOT has emphasized to UTA this matter is a delicate process with the archaeological sites involved. UTA seems determined this will be their site. Lori said Draper City has begun to stake the road. She is scheduled to meet with Jason Davis, UDOT Region Two, tomorrow regarding this matter. To date, the Department of Natural Resources has not traded this land to Draper City.

Becky presented the UDOT Environmental Documents Milestone Report for 2009 and the Statewide Environmental Document Schedule as of April 2009. Bryan thanked Becky for her presentation.

ITEM FIVE: OPEN AGENCY ISSUES

Bryce Bird provided an update on non-attainment areas since the last ETEC Meeting. The Utah State Legislature passed a concurrent resolution, and the Utah Congressional Delegation asked the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to reconsider the Box Elder County Non-Attainment. Governor Huntsman also made a recommendation to EPA on this matter. Bryce said the recommended areas will now only include Salt Lake County, Weber County, and Davis County. The bottom line is that if we reduce emissions along the Wasatch Front, the benefit will be seen in the outlying areas.

Larry Svoboda said the Ozone Study should be completed soon. Larry said he is spending a large percentage of his time on documents regarding climate change. It is becoming more important in actions from Congress and litigation due to a minimal amount of work on this matter. Ed said FHWA had a meeting about a year ago to use standard template language for Utah, Colorado, and Idaho on this matter. Larry said things have changed tremendously with climate change matters over the last few months and will continue to change. He would like to hear challenges we are faced with.

Lori asked about impacts to the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) regarding the economic stimulus projects. She asked if these projects are truly ready to go and have been through the required reviews at SHPO. It was indicated the projects selected for stimulus money were those that had few impacts and generally did not need any reviews by other agencies. It is anticipated there will be very few stimulus projects that will need review by SHPO. John said if redistribution occurs with money states were not able to obligate within the designated time frames, they are not sure how it would occur.

Jason asked about the I-15 CORE Project in Utah County. John said the focus right now is American Fork to Provo. It is unlikely the project will get to Santaquin at this point, but we may get to Spanish Fork. John said the project should be under construction by next year. Jason said if there are any changes to what the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has already permitted to let him know.

ITEM SIX: SCHEDULE NEXT MEETING

The next ETEC Meeting is scheduled for Monday, June 29, 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Larry Svoboda, Environmental Protection Agency, will host the meeting. The meeting will be held at the EPA Office in Denver, Colorado. More details will follow.

ADJOURNED AT 1:15 P.M.