

FHWA'S PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT LINKAGES QUARTERLY UPDATE

Providing updates on recent PEL activities, events and resources



Planning and Environment Linkages (PEL) is a Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) initiative that represents an approach to transportation decision-making that considers environmental, community, and economic goals early in the planning stage and carries them through project development, design, and construction.

The goal of PEL is to create a seamless decision-making process that minimizes duplication of effort, promotes environmental stewardship, and reduces delays from planning to project implementation. PEL lays the foundation for a broad consensus on goals and priorities for transportation related processes.

FY 2009 Quarter 2 Updates

Environmental Consultation Peer Exchange on Successful Coordination Practices:

On January 27, 2009, FHWA hosted a peer exchange to discuss successful coordination among environmental resource agencies, State Departments of Transportation (DOTs), and Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) during the transportation planning and project development processes. The purpose of the peer exchange was to: 1) showcase examples of how State DOTs and MPOs conduct consultations with resource agencies; and 2) identify approaches and notable practices that can best facilitate integration of transportation planning and the environmental review process, while fully meeting the consultation requirements of Section 6001 of SAFETEA-LU. More information on the practices highlighted and participants' recommendations for future work in this area can be found at the PEL website's Publications section (<http://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/integ/publications.asp>) and in the April 2009 edition of *Successes in Stewardship* (<http://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/stmrlnlg/newsletters/apr09nl.asp>).

Linking Conservation and Transportation Planning (LCTP) Workshops: The Pennsylvania Division Office of FHWA hosted a LCTP workshop in January with PennDOT, MPOs/RPOs, resource agencies, and conservation groups. This 1.5 day event provided an opportunity for the groups to explain their roles and showcase conservation planning tools in light of linking conservation and transportation decision making. The focus of the workshop was to explore how an integrated, ecological approach could be accomplished using existing tools, as well as to explore new or improved opportunities for data sharing and collaborative decision making. More information on previous LCTP workshops, sample presentations, and related resources are available online at http://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/integ/resources_training.asp.

PEL Website Updates:

- PEL Implementation (<http://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/integ/implementation.asp>) – New examples of applications and resources were added to this section, which provides a set of tools designed to help agencies identify areas where they can strengthen planning and environment linkages.
- Effective Practices (<http://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/integ/practices.asp>) – Effective PEL practices were re-organized into three areas for easy use: Long-Range Planning, Corridor Planning, and Linking Planning and NEPA.

Upcoming Events

LCTP Workshops — Both Nevada and New York will be hosting LCTP workshops in the coming months. Stay tuned for more information on the results of these workshops.

Looking for More PEL Information? — Visit the PEL website (<http://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/integ/index.asp>) for information on publications, training and workshops, data and analysis tools, and much more.