



TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION



TXDOT ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAM – LESSONS AND OPPORTUNITIES

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Environmental Program

Ushering Projects through Environmental Review and Approval

Staffing

- **ENV – 80**
- **Districts – 90**

Environmental Program

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- *ENV – 80*
- *Districts – 90*

Responsibility for Approvals

- *Categorical Exclusions – Districts*
- *EAs and EISs - ENV*

Environmental Program

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Responsibility for Approvals

- ***Categorical Exclusions – Districts***
- ***EAs and EISs - ENV***

Production

- ***2017 – 2,948 projects approved***
 - *Compare to 2,157 in 2016, and 2,021 in 2015*
- ***2017 – 21 EA/FONSI approvals***
 - *Compare to 20 in 2016, and 32 in 2015*

Workflow Breakdown –

Electronic decision-making and file management system

Decisions, documentation, decisions, documentation,...

231 Decision Points in the NEPA / Environmental Review
Process

Note: No one project has all 231

Environmental Program

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Numbers to think about:

10..... the minimum number of decisions associated with an environmental approval (simple Categorical Exclusion)

X 2,948 projects approved in 2017

29,480 decisions / year

Environmental Program

Quality Assurance Reviews for Categorical Exclusions for 2017

317 CE Project files reviewed

District	CEs Reviewed	Gold Stars CEs	Observations
ABL	2	-	7
AMA	6	-	36
ATL	5	1	12
AUS	29	2	133
BMT	16	1	68
BRY	5	-	24
BWD	4	-	14
CHS	6	-	10
CRP	10	-	81
DAL	32	2	102
ELP	7	-	30
FTW	13	1	48
HOU	26	-	162
LBB	2	-	11
LFK	7	-	25
LRD	9	-	50
ODA	10	-	34
PAR	15	-	97
PHR	13	-	74
SAT	29	3	115
SJT	4	-	18
TYL	16	-	124
WAC	12	-	75
WFS	11	-	33
YKM	28	10	37
Statewide Total CEs Reviewed	317	20	1420

NEPA Assignment Metric --- EA Review Times*

- **FHWA Nationwide****
 - 14 to 41 months
- **TxDOT/FHWA prior to NEPA Assignment*****
 - Average: 30 months
- **TxDOT since NEPA Assignment******
 - Average: 18 months

* *The EA measure has been the best measure of performance. Categorical Exclusion determinations do not have a comparable pre-assignment baseline. TxDOT has not started and completed an EIS yet under NEPA Assignment.*

** *Source: Government Accountability Office report*

*** *The “prior to NEPA Assignment” was calculated by averaging the timeframe for 35 Environmental Assessments completed in the two years (2013-2014) prior to December 16, 2014.*

**** *55 EAs started and completed under NEPA Assignment as of July 1, 2018.*

Lessons and Opportunities

Lessons

- Total Buy-in is Important (Responsibility = Accountability)
- Need Rigorous QA / QC
- Sometimes the Answer is “No”

Opportunities

- Faster Decisions
- Flexibility / Adaptability
- Opportunity to Grow
- Prove that it can be done, setting the stage for other opportunities