CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSE

The purpose of this Manual is to provide transportation planners, project analysts, project engineers, project managers, and other practitioners with sufficient information to consider as they review qualifying transportation projects during the Efficient Transportation Decision Making (ETDM) Process Planning and Programming Screens. It is the procedure by which qualifying projects are screened through the ETDM process. This Manual also provides guidance for involving potentially affected communities and stakeholders in the project’s transportation planning phase.

FDOT, FHWA, and state and federal partners, began developing the ETDM process in 1999 to support environmental streamlining objectives identified in Section 1309 of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) (Pub. L. No. 105-178). The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), included a process for conducting “Efficient Environmental Reviews for Project Decision Making” for highway projects under Section 6002 (b) of the bill. In December 2005, FHWA recognized the ETDM process as satisfying the statutory requirements of SAFETEA-LU Section 6002(b) and being acceptable for use on federal-aid projects. SAFETEA-LU Section 6002 was codified as 23 U.S.C. § 139. The ETDM process is consistent with the streamlining objectives of subsequent amendments to 23 U.S.C. §§ 139 and 168 through the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21) and the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation (FAST) Act.

On March 16, 2006, the FDOT Secretary approved Procedure Number 650-000-002, which established statewide use of the Manual, as well as the process by which the Manual, or portions thereof, will be subsequently revised and updated.

This Manual supports project development in conjunction with related Office of Environmental Management (OEM) Handbooks, the Environmental Screening Tool (EST), and the two-part Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Manual (Procedure Number 650-000-001). The PD&E Manual describes the process for satisfying the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other related federal and state laws, rules, and regulations.

Transportation professionals use this Manual during the Planning phase of transportation project delivery, specifically the ETDM Planning and Programming Screens. The Manual is organized as follows:

Chapter 1 – Describes the purpose and organization of the Manual

Chapter 2 – Describes the ETDM process in general
Chapter 3 – Details Planning Screen procedures

Chapter 4 – Details Programming Screen procedures

Chapter 5 – Discusses the transition from the ETDM process to the PD&E phase

Chapter 6 – Describes procedures for managing data through the EST

Acronyms – Provides a list of acronyms used in the Manual

This Manual and the PD&E Manual are both available at the FDOT Office of Environmental Management (OEM) website (http://www.fdot.gov/environment/).

1.2 AUTHORITY

This Manual was developed under the authority of Section 334.044 and Section 339.155, Florida Statutes.

The Manual supports objectives identified in the following:

1. Title 23 United States Code (U.S.C.), Highways, as amended
5. 49 CFR Part 613 [Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Planning]
6. 23 CFR Part 771 (Environmental Impact and Related Procedures)
7. Title 42 U.S.C. Chapter 55, National Environmental Policy, as amended
8. 40 CFR §§ 1500 – 1508 (Council on Environmental Quality regulations implementing NEPA)
9. State and federal agency ETDM agreements (various dates)
10. Memorandum of Understanding dated 12/14/2016 and executed by FHWA and FDOT concerning the State of Florida’s participation in the Surface Transportation Project Delivery Program pursuant to 23 U.S.C. § 327

1.3 SCOPE

The following FDOT offices use this Manual: Environmental Management, Planning, and Design offices. Manual users outside FDOT include Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPOs), Transportation Planning Organization (TPOs), other Environmental Technical Advisory Team (ETAT) members, consultants, and other state and federal agencies.
1.4 INCORPORATION BY REFERENCE

This Manual is hereby incorporated by Procedure No. 650-000-002 and made a part of the Standard Operating System of FDOT (see Procedure No. 025-020-002).

1.5 DISTRIBUTION

Copies of this Manual may be obtained by downloading and printing from the OEM Website: http://www.fdot.gov/environment/.

1.6 REVISIONS

While OEM has the ultimate responsibility for the development of, and updates to, this Manual, the Districts share in this responsibility as well. OEM regularly evaluates and updates the Manual in response to changing environmental requirements, standards, and policies to ensure consistency with the procedures established by the FDOT Forms and Procedures Office. Revisions to chapters are made on an as-needed basis that considers the last revision date, current information, District-identified issues and suggested modifications, changes in other FDOT Manuals, or changes in federal or state law, rule, policy or guidance.

OEM annually reviews the chapters of this Manual to ensure they are current and up to date. Revisions are incorporated into the Manual over the course of the following year. As chapters are updated, they are also checked for consistency and for opportunities to clarify, simplify, and focus process and procedures.

Major changes, substantive revisions, or additions (i.e., policy changes, new chapters) to the Manual are approved by the Executive Team through the process established in Procedure No. 025-020-002, Standard Operating System.

1.7 TRAINING

Training courses available from FDOT pertaining to this Manual include Efficient Transportation Decision Making Overview (BT-19-0045) and courses on the use of the EST. This training is required for users of the secure EST website and is highly recommended for others engaged in the ETDM process.

FDOT offers additional courses covering procedures supportive of the FDOT environmental programs and the ETDM process. Training opportunities on related subjects may become available based on user-identified needs. See the OEM Training Website: http://www.fdot.gov/environment/sched/train1.shtm for more training opportunities. Additional training is available for authorized users through the EST.

1.8 FORMS

The results of the Planning and Programming Screens completed during the ETDM process are documented within the EST. Interaction with this database system is managed by the FDOT ETDM Coordinators, who are responsible for advancing projects through the Planning
and Programming Screens and working with the Project Managers to maintain the project database during the PD&E phase. Persons involved with the Planning and Programming Screens provide input directly into forms that exist within the EST. Results are stored in the Environmental Electronic Document Management System. All forms required by the ETDM process are provided within the EST. Information about accessing and using the EST is available in the *Environmental Screening Tool Handbook*.

### 1.9 REFERENCES


23 CFR Part 450. Appendix A. Linking the Transportation Planning and NEPA Processes,


Fixing America’s Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act), (Pub. L. 112-141, 2015).


Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Act (Pub L. 112-141) 2012.


Section 334.044, Florida Statutes. Florida Transportation Plan.

Section 339.155, Florida Statutes. Transportation Planning.


1.10 HISTORY

03/2006: Original publication

07/2013: Updated to reflect current laws, requirements, and practices

12/2015: Edited to reduce redundancy with Chapter 2 and references to CEMO changed to SEMO

05/2017: Updated to incorporate requirements of the Memorandum of Understanding dated 12/14/2016 and executed by FHWA and FDOT concerning the State of Florida’s participation in the Surface Transportation Project Delivery Program pursuant to 23 U.S.C. § 327

03/2019: Pen and ink update to FDOT website links.