

Participating and Cooperating Agencies

During the Programming Screen, agencies may be designated to serve as Participating or Cooperating Agencies during the preparation of the federal environmental document in the Project Development & Environment (PD&E) phase. For federal projects, these roles and that of the Lead Agency must be designated **prior to the Class of Action (COA) Determination**.

The Participating and Cooperating Agencies process goes as follows:

1. After a project's Lead Agency has been determined, FDOT ETDM Coordinators may send the Lead Agency recommendations to invite selected ETAT members to take part in a NEPA project in Participating or Cooperating Agency roles.
2. Alternatively, an ETAT member may also initiate the request to serve as a Participating or Cooperating Agency while submitting their Purpose and Need (P&N) review. A copy of the ETAT member's request goes to FDOT who recommends, does not recommend, or modifies their request and submits it to the Lead Agency with all other requests.
3. FDOT recommends Participating and Cooperating Agencies to the Lead Agency prior to submitting a COA proposal. This includes requests the Lead Agency or FDOT received from ETAT members to serve in one of these capacities during the review period.
4. As appropriate, the Lead Agency accepts or rejects the recommendations received from the FDOT.
5. The Lead Agency may also invite other not recommended by FDOT, including non-ETAT members to serve in these roles.
6. ETAT members have 30 days to respond to Lead Agency invitations.

References:

ETDM Manual

Project Development & Environment (PD&E) Manual

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Setting a Lead Agency

ETDM Coordinators use the **Agency Roles in PD&E** tool to select a Lead Agency.

1. Select a project from the **Active Project** list.
2. In the **Tools** menu, click **Project Diary**, and then click **Agency Roles in PD&E**.
3. On the **Lead Agency** tab, under **Lead Agencies**, click the check box beside the agency name you would like to designate as the Lead Agency.
4. Under **Sign and Submit**, type your **Password**, and then click **Submit Form**.

Recommending Participating and Cooperating Agencies

ETDM Coordinators use the **Agency Roles in PD&E** tool to recommend Participating and Cooperating Agencies before and during a project review.

1. Select a project from the **Active Project** list.
2. In the **Tools** menu, click **Project Diary**, and then click **Agency Roles in PD&E**.
3. Click the **Participating and Cooperating Agencies** tab.
4. Under **Recommend an Agency**, click the arrow to expand the list of agency names, and then select the agency.
5. Click **Add**.
6. In the **Recommend an Agency** dialog box, do the following:
 - Choose **Participating Agency** or **Cooperating Agency** and then type your rationale for recommending the agency in the text box.
 - Click **OK**.



Notes:

- The **Participating and Cooperating Agencies** tab is disabled when one of the following occurs:
 - A Lead Agency has not been selected.
 - There is more than one Lead Agency.
 - The project is in the Planning Screen.
 - There is no federal involvement.
- To change or remove an agency's status, click the **Change** button. In the **Edit/Remove Recommendation** dialog box, do the following:

- To change an agency status, click the option button beside **Participating** or **Cooperating**, type your reason for the change in the text box, and then click **OK**.
- To remove an agency from the recommended agency list, click the **Remove recommendation** option button, type your reason for removing the agency in the text box, and then click **OK**.

Responding to an ETAT Member's Request

After an ETAT member sends a request to be a Participating or Cooperating Agency, the ETDM Coordinator responds to the agency's request using the **Agency Roles in PD&E** screen.

1. In the **Active Project** list, select the project that appears in the ETAT member's request email.
2. In the **Tools** menu, click **Project Diary**, and then click **Agency Roles in PD&E**.
3. Click the **Participating and Cooperating Agencies** tab.
4. In the **Action** column, click the **Respond** button for the associated request.
5. In the **Respond to Agency Request** dialog box, do one of the following:
 7. To recommend rejecting an ETAT member's request to the Lead Agency, click the **Do not recommend this agency** option button, type your reason for not recommending the ETAT member, and then click **OK**.
 8. To accept the ETAT member's request and recommend the member to the Lead Agency, click the option button beside **Participating** or **Cooperating**, type your reason for recommending the member in the text box, and then click **OK**.



Notes:

- To change or remove an ETAT member's recommendation, click the **Change** button. In the **Respond to Agency Request** dialog box, do the following:
 - To change a member recommendation, click the option button beside **Participating** or **Cooperating**, type your reason for the change in the text box, and then click **OK**.
 - To remove a member's recommendation, click the **Do not recommend this agency** option button, type your reason for not recommending the ETAT member, and then click **OK**.

Sending Recommendations to a Lead Agency

The ETDM Coordinator uses the **Agency Roles in PD&E** tool to send Participating and Cooperating Agency recommendations to the Lead Agency after the review period is complete.

1. Select a project from the **Active Project** list.
2. In the **Tools** menu, click **Project Diary**, and then click **Agency Roles in PD&E**.
3. Click the **Participating and Cooperating Agencies** tab.

4. After providing a recommendation for each ETAT member, including member requests, click **Recommend Agencies**. An email is sent to the Lead Agency notifying them that they have Participating and Cooperating Agency recommendations to review.



Notes:

- If no ETAT members are being recommended, click the **Recommend Agencies** button, and do the following:
 - In the **Confirm Send** dialog box type a confirmation statement noting that there are no recommended Participating or Cooperating Agencies.
 - Click **Send Recommendations**.
- The **Send Recommendations** button only becomes enabled after each recommendation has a response.

Responding to Invitations

ETAT members can respond to invitations by clicking the link in the invitation email, which opens the **Respond to Participating/Cooperating Agencies** page in the EST.

1. Under **Invitation Response**, click the option button beside your selected response.
2. In the **Comments** text box, type your reason for accepting or declining the invitation.
3. In the **Sign and Submit** section, type your **Password**, and then click the **Submit Response** button.
4. The **Participating/Cooperating Agency Invitation** page refreshes and displays a confirmation of the ETAT member's response to the invitation.



Notes:

- If a Lead Agency has decided not to invite an ETAT member, the member receives the following statement on the **Participating/Cooperating Agency Invitation** page: *Your organization has not been invited to serve as a participating or cooperating agency.*

Defining the Class of Action

After receiving an email notification stating that all invitations have received responses or expired, the ETDM Coordinator defines, signs, and submits the Class of Action (COA) to the Lead Agency for approval.

1. In the invitations notification email, click the **Define Class of Action** link to open the **Class of Action** page in the EST.
2. Under **Define the Class of Action**, click the option button beside the **Class of Action**, and, if required, click the check box(es) beside the option(s) listed under **Other**.

3. After you have made your selections, click **Save Class of Action**. The **Review Class of Action** page opens, displaying the selected COA.
4. In the **Review Class of Action** page, click the **Accepted** or **Not Accepted** option button. If you select **Not Accepted**, you must type your reason for not accepting the COA in the **Comments** text box.
5. Under **Sign and Submit**, type your **Password**, and then click **Submit**.
6. A **Signature Submission** notice appears. Verify your comments and acceptance are correct and then click **OK**.



Notes:

- To access the **Class of Action** page in the EST, click **Tools**, click **Project Diary**, and then click **Class of Action**.
- After submitting the COA determination, the Lead Agency receives an email notification stating the COA is ready for their review.
- The COA can be modified as needed. All modifications after Lead Agency signature require concurrence from the Lead Agency, and the signatures on the previous determination are erased.

Responding to Recommendations from ETDM Coordinators and Sending Invitations

Lead Agencies use the **Manage Participating Cooperating Agency** tool to accept or reject recommendations sent by the ETDM Coordinator, send invitations, and track ETAT agency invitation responses.

1. Select a project from the **Active Project** list.
2. In the **Tools** menu, click **Review Projects**, and then click **Manage Participating/ Cooperating Invitations**.
3. The ETDM Coordinator's recommendations appear under the appropriate participating or cooperating section.
4. In the **Respond to Recommendation** dialog box, do one of the following:
 9. To reject a recommendation, click the **Do not invite this agency** option button, type your reason for not inviting the agency, and then click **OK**.
 10. To accept a recommendation and invite the agency, type your reason for inviting the agency in the text box, and then click **OK**.
5. To add an agency to the invitation list, click the **Invite an Agency** list box arrow, click the agency name, and then click **Add**.
6. Click **Send Invitations**.
7. In the **Confirm Send** dialog box, click **Send Invitations**.



Notes:

11. To change a recommended agency role or reject a recommendation, click the **Change** button. In the **Respond to Recommendation** dialog box, do the following:
 - o To change the recommended agency's role, click the option button beside **Participating** or **Cooperating**, type your reason for the change in the text box, and then click **OK**.
 - o To reject a recommendation, click the **Do not invite this agency** option button, type your reason for turning down the recommendation, and then click **OK**.
12. The **Send Invitations** button only becomes enabled after each recommendation has a response.
13. The **Withdraw** button displays only after an invitation has been sent. A Lead Agency can withdraw an agency from the list of invited agencies. This includes agencies that have accepted the invitation or have not responded to the invitation. The **Withdraw** button does not appear on the screen if an agency has declined an invitation.
14. If the Lead Agency chooses not to invite an agency, the information will be visible on the **Agency Roles** page to the Lead Agency and the FDOT District. If the declined agency had requested to be a participating or cooperating agency, then a courtesy email is sent indicating they were not invited and why. If the agency made no request, but was recommended by the District, no email is sent to that Agency.
15. ETAT agency invitation responses will appear in the **Responses** column. After an ETAT agency accepts an invitation, the Lead Agency cannot change it.

Reviewing the Class of Action Determination

After the ETDM Coordinator submits the Class of Action (COA) determination, the Lead Agency is sent an email stating the COA is ready for their review. The Lead Agency uses the **Review Class of Action Determination** form to accept (or not accept) the ETDM Coordinator's COA determination.

1. Select the appropriate project from the **Active Projects** list.
2. To open the **Review Class of Action Determination** screen, go to the **EST Tools** menu, click **Review Project**, and then click **Class of Action Determination**.
3. Under **Accept the Class of Action Determination**, click the option button beside **Accepted** or **Not Accepted**. If you select **Not Accepted**, you must type your reason for not accepting the COA in the **Comments** text box.
4. Under **Sign and Submit**, type your **Password**, and then click **Submit**.
5. A **Signature Submission** notice appears. Verify your comments and acceptance are correct and then click **OK**.