Indirect and Cumulative Effects Task Group
Sociocultural Effects Sub-Group
May 3-4, 2006

FDOT District Five Urban Office
Orlando, Florida

Attendees:
Larry Barfield, FDOT CEMO
George Hadley, FHWA
Makayah Royal, FHWA
Alexis Thomas, GeoPlan Center
George Ballo, FDOT CEMO
Gwen Pipkin, FDOT D1
Gary Donaldson, DCA
Victor Jordan, WFRPC
Wendy Lasher, FDOT D7 (PBS&J)
Duane Denfeld, SHPO
Steve Love, FDOT D7
Louise Fragala, PFA
Frank Kalpakis, Ruth Roaza, Erin Degutis – URS Corporation

Meeting agenda and handouts provided under separate cover.

The meeting commenced at approximately 1:30 pm.

Welcome and Introductions
Larry Barfield welcomed the Sociocultural Effects Sub-group and thanked members for their continued participation. He stated that the overall objective was to build on our work from the March Full Task Group meeting and April Sub-group meeting with a focus on how we will conduct cumulative effects evaluations from the perspective of community resources.

Sample Project
Frank Kalpakis discussed the "Erin Road" sample project with potential cumulative effects with context to sociocultural resources. He described how a cumulative evaluation could be conducted from the perspective of a community or broad "planning area". The group discussed identifying the study area buffers of two miles for urban areas or five miles for rural areas. They also considered using census block groups or defined community planning areas. The selection of a buffer, either 2-mile, 5-mile or census block, should be defined in the rationale for determining the resource area within the EST.

Community Planning Areas
The group suggested that the MPOs and CLCs should work with local land use planners to identify existing defined planning areas. ETDM Coordinators should work with MPO CLCs to acquire additional information regarding planning areas and associated data sets. For rural communities, MPOs and ETDM Coordinators could work with local government planners to

discuss planning areas and available data. Information that could be considered in the cumulative effects analysis include: long range transportation plans, Strategic Intermodal System (SIS), land use plans (Future Land Use element of the adopted comprehensive plan), zoning maps, special studies, and existing land use (15 defined categories by FGDL).

There needs to be a "baseline" of existing resources in the EST. This would include the defined planning areas and project information. A baseline could be established statewide. The group discussed if the MPOs or the DOT Districts would acquire the information for the baseline. The baseline resource areas would be defined with the assistance of local governments and could be parcel-defined or census-defined. County-defined planning areas could be used as well.

The group discussed updating the identified resource areas (data layer) at a pre-determined level or threshold. Thresholds for updating data should be defined (i.e. a 10% increase in population over a defined number of years).

Cumulative Effects Analysis Process

The process would commence with the planning screen and updated during the programming screen. After the programming screen, a class of action would be determined (EIS, EA, or CatEx). If there are substantial issues in one of the six SCE question areas, a cumulative effects evaluation will be conducted during the screening event. Potentially substantial cumulative effects will be identified. All "potentially substantial" effects would require further study. Sociocultural resources have different standard/measurements than natural and cultural resources. The group discussed if the cumulative effects analysis can be undertaken and completed by one resource agency.

Non-transportation actions that should be taken into consideration of the analysis could include:

1. Land use plans.
2. Land use actions, such as the planning of new schools/colleges.
3. Developments of Regional Impact.

The planning screen event triggers a cumulative effects analysis on a community resource. The analysis results can be linked to counties so that the results can be used to influence land use and transportation decision-making. Other actions such as water lines, sewer lines, public transit, new public schools, revitalization, CRAs, brownfields/grayfields, and the number of building permits pulled can be used in a trend analysis as a part of the cumulative effects analysis. The incremental impacts of these actions can lead to cumulative effects.

Summary Report

The Summary Report for an SCE cumulative effects analysis would include the following:

2. Quantitative data (standard analysis).
3. Definition of resource and rationale.
4. Analysis (commentary on past trend, present, and future actions).
5. Findings, recommendations.

Pilot Project

The sub-group recommended conducting a pilot project to test the proposed cumulative effects evaluation process, including the time needed for the agencies to complete their part of the analysis. It was recognized that the cumulative effects analysis timeline for natural resources could be longer and the sub-group recommended following the natural resource sub-group's recommendation for the length of time required to conduct the analysis. Development of guidance/directions for evaluators in the pilot project should be developed in preparation of the pilot project.

Process Questions

1. What level of detail is needed for cumulative effects evaluation in the planning screen? What are the expected time requirements? What is the expected outcome?
   The level of detail will be developed during the pilot project and will begin with community-based analysis and impacts. The time requirement for review will be established after the pilot project is complete; forty-five and sixty days is the potential window. The predicted outcome is the analysis results and recommendations. Commentary should detail why the degree of effect was assigned.

2. What is the level of detail for cumulative effects evaluation in the programming screen? What are the expected time requirements? What is the expected outcome?
   Scoping recommendations for further study would be defined during the programming screen. Conditions for technical studies should be defined during the programming screen.

3. What triggers an update to a cumulative effects evaluation during the programming screen?
   The thresholds for data updates will be established during the pilot project.

4. Who will be responsible for conducting the analysis?
   FDOT District, CLCs/MPOs. In rural counties, FDOT could take the lead.

5. Should minor projects be considered in a cumulative effects analysis?
   No.

6. How detailed should the Summary Report for cumulative effects analysis be? What information will the Summary Report include? (eg. Nature and scope of actions, justification for determining area of effect, results of analysis for each resource, degree of effect, other?)
   The summary report should be a resource-based summary report. The cumulative effects analysis for sociocultural resources could be attached to existing summary reports and linked to several projects.

7. (Sociocultural Resources) Is the general process for conducting cumulative effects evaluation different for rural areas v. urban areas? Is the potential area of effect based on the issue and whether it is in a rural or urban community?
   The area of analysis could be larger for rural areas and smaller for urban areas, reflecting the level and amount of data needed for the analyses.

ENVIRONMENTAL SCREENING TOOL NOTES

- Resource area is a planning area: large, general "community".
- Need to be able to define/identify areas (digitize, upload or derive).
- Review information from project within planning area and address triggers.
- For each commentary include fields for:
    - Definition of Resource Area and rationale
    - Analysis (commentary on past, present, and future actions), and
    - Findings
- Defining resource areas (communities/neighborhoods/planning areas):
    - If local governments have existing data, secure it
    - If not, define them in coordination with county (possibly from census data) – need to test in pilot
- Identify projects located within the resource areas.
- Identify sources of data for other actions
- Recommendation to do a pilot project in area where information is available and all/most resources are present.
- Resource Area options
    - Use minimum buffer to identify other actions, if boundaries aren't easily available, example to test:
        - Min urban = 2 miles
        - Min rural = 5 miles
    - Use block groups or tracks from census
    - Best to use planning areas from local governments
- Programming screen:
    - Indicated scoping – coordinator will add cumulative effects evaluation as a type of technical study or put in commitments if needed
    - Review and update cumulative analysis if needed
    - If triggers are present, may go into more detail
    - Provide guidance through pilot on what conditions warrant further study
- "Degree of Effect" is a yes/no indicating whether or not more analysis is needed. (i.e. "requires further study – potentially substantial") For SCE evaluations, is there substantial controversy or not?
- Resource-based summary report is linked to multiple projects with project specific clarification.