



## Meeting Summary District One ETAT Meeting

BridgeWalk Resort, Bradenton Beach, Florida  
September 11-12, 2006

### ETAT MEETING PARTICIPANTS

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The meeting participants are identified in Attachment "A".

### ETAT MEETING: DAY 1

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The welcome and introduction were provided by Gwen Pipkin, FDOT District One ETDM Coordinator at approximately 1:30 p.m. Each participant introduced themselves to the group.

#### ► **Presentation - CEMO Overview**

Peter McGilvray, Larry Barfield, and George Ballo of the FDOT Central Environmental Management Office (CEMO) and Frank Kalpakis of URS Corporation provided an overview of CEMO topics, including:

- New ETDM Process Flow
- Environmental Screening Tool Updates
- Training Opportunities
- ETDM Manual
- PD&E Manual
- Indirect and Cumulative Effects
- Advanced Notification/ Federal Consistency
- SCE/Public Outreach Announcements

#### New ETDM Process Flow

Peter McGilvray, FDOT CEMO, provided an overview of the New ETDM Process Flow Diagram. The document was distributed at the meeting and is available for downloading from the Environmental Screening Tool (EST) Library.

#### EST Updates

Peter McGilvray provided an overview of updates to the EST currently in progress. These updates include:

- Agency Review Reports
  - All work/ comments by an agency (internal and external) may be viewed over a specified period of time
  - Reports may be exported as pdfs or excel spreadsheets
  - Auto e-mails to management
- On-line Agency Invoicing
  - Agencies may add upcoming meetings/ events and attachments
- ETDM Library
  - Program and process materials, as well as powerpoints, manuals, etc. are located within library
  - Agencies may add their own documents
- Better Mechanism for Time-outs of EST Application
- Public Access Site
  - Public access site is currently being revamped to be ADA compliant and to include subscription/notification functionality

- Indirect and Cumulative Effects Modules
- Spell and Grammar Check for Text Boxes

### Training Opportunities

Peter McGilvray presented upcoming training opportunities, including:

Date	Course	Location
October 5 & 6, 2006	EST Hands-On Training	Fort Lauderdale, FL
October 26 & 27, 2006	EST Hands-On Training	Tallahassee
February 13-14, 2007	Overview of ETDM Process	Orlando, FL
March 2007 (TBA)	Cultural Resource Management	Orlando, FL
April 17-19, 2007	PD&E Manual Process Training	Orlando, FL

Additional training opportunities are posted at <http://www.dot.state.fl.us/emo/sched/train.htm>. Training opportunities, including web-based training, will be e-mailed via the Environmental Screening Tool to ETAT representatives and ETDM Coordinators. For more information and to register for upcoming training events, meeting participants were directed to do so through the EST.

### ETDM Manual

Larry Barfield provided an overview of the ETDM Manual (March 2006) which has been renamed *ETDM Planning and Programming Manual*. The manual is available in the Library on the EST. The manual will be revised over the next few months to incorporate changes as necessary to for consistency with SAFETEA-LU provisions, as well as new federal consistency review terminology and procedures.

### PD&E Manual

Larry Barfield provided an overview of the PD&E Manual. Parts 1 & 2 of the PD&E Manual have been revised to provide connectivity between previous ETDM activities and the PD&E process. Chapter 1 of Part I has been updated as a procedure. These sections have been distributed to the FDOT Districts for their review and input. For existing projects not connected to previous ETDM activities, the old Part 1 will remain available for a period of time on CEMO website until those projects no longer need the posted information.

### Indirect and Cumulative Effects

Frank Kalpakis provided an overview of Indirect and Cumulative Effects (ICE) Task Work Group objectives and activities. The group is developing a framework for conducting ICE Evaluations within the ETDM Process. The current focus of the group is on the Cumulative Effects Evaluation. The task group was formed in March 2006 to comply with NEPA requirements and to influence land use and transportation decision making. Future efforts of the ICE Task Work Group will address the following:

- Finalizing the ICE White Paper that provides recommendations for conducting ICE Evaluations within the ETDM Process
- Implementation of recommended EST enhancements

- Testing the draft process in pilot study (beginning in August 2006)
- Refining the process based on conclusions in the pilot study
- Developing a handbook
- Conducting training

#### Advanced Notification/ Federal Consistency

George Ballo provided an overview of Advanced Notification/ Federal Consistency. CEMO has been coordinating with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection to develop language to be included in the Federal Consistency Determination for the Clearinghouse. Once the language has been worked out, the Advanced Notification requirements document will be sent to the Districts for final review.

#### CEMO / District One Collaborative Efforts

George Ballo informed the group of initial coordination efforts between CEMO, FHWA, and District One regarding the sociocultural and cultural issues in the draft District One Quick Start Handbook. The handbook's primary objective is to facilitate implementation of the ETDM Process by providing the ETDM Team and ETAT with guidance and sample language. George also shared information on a collaborative effort between District One and CEMO for expanding the District One Public Outreach Approach for the ETDM Process for possible statewide application.

#### ► **Presentation – FDOT District One Overview**

Frank Kalpakis, Gwen Pipkin, and Tammy Vrana (URS Corporation) provided an overview of the ETDM activities within District One. The presentation addressed the following topics:

- ETDM Project Identification
- Project Field Reviews
- Public Outreach Approach
- FDOT D1 ETDM Quick Start Handbook

#### ETDM Project Identification

Frank Kalpakis emphasized the importance of coordination with transportation entities in identifying ETDM projects. In addition to coordination between the FDOT and the MPOs, the following sources should be consulted to identify projects for ETDM screening:

- MPO LRTP Cost Feasible Plan – projects using state or federal funds that will likely go through the PD&E process
- Rural County Cost Feasible LRTPs (if available)
- FDOT SIS/FIHS Cost Feasible Plan
- MPO TIP Priority Lists
- Rural County Priority Lists
- FDOT 5-Year Work Program
- FDOT Bridge Replacement Program

Projects eligible for ETDM screening include the following:

- New roads/ road widenings

- New bridges/ bridge widenings/ bridge replacements
- New interchanges/ major interchange modifications
- New fixed-guideway transit/ transit facilities

Specific information, such as project termini and description, must be gathered for each identified project. Once the projects are identified and appropriate project information is obtained, each project is assigned an ETDM phase. The two phases (including the phase description) are as follows:

- Planning Screen
  - Candidate project in LRTP and not previously screened
- Programming Screen
  - Project being considered for advancement to FDOT Work Program or MPO TIP Priority List
  - Listed in FDOT Work Program for PD&E Study
  - Bridge Replacement Program project

A project screening schedule is then developed. The projects are bundled geographically to assist with the screening events to take place, as well as with concurrent ETAT reviews.

### Project Field Reviews

Gwen Pipkin provided an overview of the project field reviews that take place as part of ETDM pre-screening activities. The purpose of the field reviews is to collect data to improve the quality of project purpose and need statements, sociocultural effects evaluations, and summary reports. The field review team normally consists of a biologist, community planner, and planning agency representative (MPO ETDM Coordinator or FDOT D1 Community Liaison Coordinator). The team uses a data collection checklist to identify and record key natural, cultural, and sociocultural features that may potentially be impacted by the proposed project.

### Public Outreach Approach

Tammy Vrana provided an overview of the District One Public Outreach Approach. The approach was developed to guide the efficient gathering of public input for the ETDM Process, especially the Sociocultural Effects Evaluation. Coordination with MPOs or local government in obtaining commentary is the initial step in approach, including discovery of any public commentary from prior project outreach activities.

The FDOT District One public outreach approach was tailored to suit both the Planning and Programming phases. FDOT District One encourages public outreach in advance of screening events in order that commentary is available for development/refinement of the project purpose and need statement, as well as the ETAT review.

In performing public outreach, the following questions should be considered:

- What is the community's demographic character?
- Which population groups would potentially be affected by the project?
- What population groups may have an effect on the project outcome?
- What community organizations hold regular meetings in the study area?

Information that is important to provide to the public at outreach events are the project description, aerial map displaying the project and community focal points, and an overview of ETDM process.

## Draft Quick Start Handbook

Gwen Pipkin provided an overview of the ETDM Quick Start Handbook developed by District One to assist ETDM Team members in fulfilling their roles and responsibilities. The handbook is intended to supplement the guidelines found in the ETDM Manual with sample material to facilitate implementation of the ETDM Process. This handbook provides sample content for ETDM Team members to use as a starting point in developing project descriptions and purpose and need statements, as well as in writing scoping recommendations to address potential project effects. The handbook is currently in draft status and the District is looking forward to substantial input by ETAT members to complete the handbook. For example, the assignment of degrees of effect is a topic where ETAT input will be integral to the development of the Quick Start Handbook.

### ► **Break-Out Sessions: Natural, Cultural & Sociocultural Resources**

The ETAT members were asked to divide themselves into three groups based on their area of interest (i.e. natural, cultural, and sociocultural). The groups were assigned a session facilitator and scribe. Each group was asked to discuss the following topics:

- ETDM Process
  - How the process can be improved
  - Issues/ Ideas/ Best Practices of different ETAT agencies
  - How each ETAT agency is conducting internal reviews
- EST Data Needs
- Agency Comments/ Reporting Issues
  - Discuss content of comments – what is being included
- Degree of Effect
  - How each ETAT agency (or agency individual) is assigning DOE
  - Discuss methodology consistency

### Natural Group Participants and Comments:

Facilitator and Recorder: Tom Pride – URS Corporation

Facilitator and Recorder: Frank Kalpakis – URS Corporation

#### *Participants:*

- Larry Barfield – FDOT CEMO
- Terry Gilbert – FWC
- Cathy Kendall – FHWA
- Jackie Larson – FDEP
- Anthony Miller – SJRWMD
- Lauren Milligan – FDEP
- Larry Ritchie – FDOT CEMO
- Stephanie Russo – FWC
- David Rydene, Ph.D. – NOAA Fisheries Service
- Doug Skurski – SWFWMD

#### *Issues Discussed:*

- Improve project descriptions to assist ETAT members in providing comments and assigning DOEs:
  - Include description of project area/ study area
  - Provide more detail on ROW
  - Provide more detail on pond locations

- Hold on-line presentations where projects (specifically new alignments) are presented to ETAT agencies thereby providing them with an opportunity to understand the project and ask questions regarding the project
- Better coordinate ETAT comments during Programming Screen
- Better integrate ETAT comments into PD&E studies
- Better coordinate with ETAT agencies if recommended summary DOE is substantially different from DOEs assigned by ETAT agencies
- ETAT comments should include mitigation opportunities
- When a dispute resolution process is initiated, open participation to all ETAT members – better coordinate with agencies to schedule meetings to discuss issues
- ETAT members should document basis for assigning DOEs in order to develop a consistent methodology in assigning DOEs
- For controversial projects, invite appropriate ETAT representatives to participate in pre-screening field reviews – schedule in advance

Cultural Group Participants and Comments:

Facilitator: Kate Hoffman, Ph.D. – Janus Research

Recorder: Lauren Brooks – URS Corporation

*Participants:*

- Sherry Anderson – FDOS
- George Ballo – FDOT CEMO
- Jonathan Crum – FHWA
- Peter McGilvray – FDOT CEMO
- Steve Terry – Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida
- Brian Yates – FDOS

*Issues Discussed:*

- Brian Yates, FDOS, will supply Peter McGilvray, FDOT CEMO, with additional data to help Steve Terry, Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida, assign DOE
  - Florida Master Site File de-coding list
  - Copy of field surveys within the Florida Master Site File
- Automatic e-mails, set-up through Peter McGilvray, will be sent to Steve Terry once FDOS submits comments or updates comments enabling Steve Terry to assign DOEs in shorter timeframe
  - Pilot Run in FDOT District One: FDOT CEMO will provide Steve Terry with an additional 5–7 days to assign DOE if FDOS takes full 45 days to submit comments – FDOT CEMO will coordinate with Gwen Pipkin, FDOT District One ETDM Coordinator
- Steve Terry requested that FHWA stop sending letters for projects that have already been through ETDM review and have an assigned DOE less than “Moderate”
  - Peter McGilvray will work with FHWA to develop a dynamic report that can distinguish which projects should result in a letter and which ones should not
- Each ETAT agency/ individual who reviews cultural resources will submit DOE thresholds (including methodology of how DOE thresholds were developed) to FHWA so “overall” (consistent, more specific) DOE thresholds may be developed
  - In developing DOE thresholds, each ETAT agency should review the laws/acts they are bound under
  - Develop DOE thresholds for each cultural resource
- Incorporate SHPO DOE thresholds and methodology into FDOT District One Quick Start Handbook

- Peter McGilvray and Brian Yates emphasized the need for ETAT agencies to provide clear, concise comments so that a “lay-man” may understand how a DOE is assigned
- George Ballo, FDOT CEMO, will ensure all Districts are sending advanced notification on projects to all Native American tribes

Sociocultural Group Participants and Comments:

Facilitator and Recorder: Tammy Vrana – URS Corporation

Facilitator and Recorder: Lori Nail – URS Corporation

*Participants:*

- Lori Carlton – FDOT District One
- Tamara Christian – FHWA
- Gary Donaldson – DCA
- Gary Harrell – Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO
- David Hutchinson – FDOT District One
- Susan King – FDOT District One
- Manon Lavoie – FDOT District One
- Johnny Limbaugh – FDOT District One
- Mike Maholtz – Sarasota-Manatee MPO
- Frank Meares – FDOT District One
- Jonna Leigh Stack – PFA, Inc.

*Issues Discussed:*

- Coordinate with Brian Pessaro, FDOT CEMO, to better understand how the differences between Comprehensive Plan updates and Long Range Transportation Plan updates apply to project reviews - plan consistency
- Coordinate with Brian Pessaro to provide guidance in the Quick Start Handbook regarding MPO roles/ responsibilities in the ETDM process
- Incorporate planning scenarios in review to better assess project indirect and cumulative effects on communities
- Continuous coordination should take place between FDOT and MPOs, in addition to public outreach, to address neighborhood changes between Planning and Programming Screens
  - Macro-level focus vs. project-by-project focus
- SCE evaluations are the responsibility of the MPOs; however, FDOT D1 will continue to provide assistance when needed
- Need to discern the requirements set forth in SAFETEA-LU with respect to public outreach and purpose and need statements
  - Integrating federal requirements with FDOT assistance is key in readdressing project issues before the Programming Screen

## **ETAT MEETING: DAY 2**

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The meeting began at approximately 9:00 AM.

► **Presentation - SAFETEA-LU Compliance**

Cathy Kendall (Federal Highway Administration) provided an overview of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) planning and environmental provisions.

The purpose of SAFETEA-LU is to promote more efficient and effective federal surface transportation programs that address existing and future challenges related to transportation, including:

- Safety
- Traffic Congestion
- Freight Movement
- Intermodal Connectivity
- Environmental Protection

The planning provisions of SAFETEA-LU promote consistency between transportation improvements and planned state and local growth patterns. The provisions specifically address the development of long range transportation plans.

The key planning provisions are as follows:

- MPOs and states are encouraged to consult with state and local agencies responsible for:
  - Land Use Management
  - Economic Development
  - Natural Resources
  - Environmental Protection/ Conservation
  - Historic Preservation
- MPOs must develop a “participation plan” to allow interested parties to provide input
- Long Range Transportation Plans must:
  - Identify potential environmental mitigation strategies
  - Identify strategies to preserve and improve the performance of the existing transportation system
  - Identify strategies to provide for multimodal capacity increases based on regional priorities

The environmental provisions streamline the NEPA environmental review process for highway, transit, and multimodal projects.

The key environmental provisions are as follows:

- Involvement by “participating agencies” and the public is required in defining the purpose and need of a project, as well as project alternatives
- Development of a coordination plan and schedule, that is available to all agencies and the public, is required
- Approved state review processes are allowed to continue
- Projects are allowed to be exempted from Section 4(f) requirements if “de minimis” impact (no adverse effects) is determined

Florida’s ETDM process has been grandfathered in SAFETEA-LU. This allows funding to resource agencies participating in the ETDM process to continue.

► **Presentation – Improving the Quality of Environmental Documents**

Jonathan Crum, FHWA, provided an overview of a joint effort between AASHTO, ACEC and FHWA in developing a method to improve the quality and clarity of environmental documents. In May 2006, a committee was formed between these three agencies to produce a guide to

assist other agencies in writing Environmental Assessments (EAs) and Environmental Impact Statements (EISs).

The guide focuses on four key areas:

- Core Principles to Improve Quality
- Content and Process
- Techniques
- Legal Sufficiency

The three core principles to improve the quality of environmental documents include:

- Tell the story... make it easy to understand
- Keep it brief, clear, and concise
- Ensure legal sufficiency

Jonathan emphasized that the content of environmental documents should provide a clear, logical, and consistent theme - clearly laying out what the document is trying to accomplish – and focus on the information relevant to the decision. In developing environmental documents, the following techniques are recommended:

- Write in plain, “lay-man’s” terms
  - Avoid/ minimize the use of acronyms
  - Include figures and tables
- Make use of summaries and overviews
- Use a “reader-friendly” format
- “Question and answer” headers
- “Reader-friendly” format – New blueprint for the body of environmental documents:
  - Purpose and Need
  - Alternatives Considered (new section)
  - Environmental Resources, Impacts, and Mitigation (new section)
  - Public Comments and Agency Coordination
  - Section 4(f) Chapter (include in the main body if 4(f) issues are significant)
  - Comparison and Selection of Alternatives (new section)

To address legal sufficiency:

- Identify and explain key assumptions
- Describe methods used to develop data
- Use effective visuals to present key results
- Don’t just summarize... analyze
- Document compliance with regulatory requirements
- Provide clear overview of major issues
- Review data for internal consistency

The approach outlined in this guide is consistent with FHWA’s current guidance on environmental documentation.

► **Presentation - SR 29 Dispute Resolution**

Frank Kalpakis, Gwen Pipkin, and Tammy Vrana provided an overview of the dispute resolution process taking place within Collier County over ETDM Project SR 29.

## ETDM Dispute Resolution Process Overview

Frank Kalpakis began the presentation by providing a brief overview of the ETDM Dispute Resolution Process. The process was established in 2001 after 23 agencies signed a memorandum of understanding. The primary goal of the process is to resolve conflicts early and locally at agency staff level.

The Dispute Resolution Process may be triggered if a project is contrary to the goals/policies of the state or a State/federal resource agency's program, plan, or initiative; if a project cannot be permitted; if a project has significant environmental cost; and if a project is inconsistent with the local comprehensive plan

## SR 29 Project Overview

Gwen Pipkin provided information on the issues surrounding the SR 29 dispute and the agencies representing the ETAT Dispute Resolution Sub-team, including USFWS (disputing agency), Collier County MPO (planning agency), and FDOT District One (lead agency). The SR 29 project limits are from Oil Well Road to SR 82 in Collier County. The Purpose and Need for the SR 29 project includes population and employment growth, approved development, regional connectivity, and hurricane evacuation. Three project alternatives were evaluated under a Programming screen. Alternative 3, a new four lane alignment, was the subject of the USFWS dispute. The other two alternatives represented widening of existing roadways. Potential project effects include direct effects (increased vehicle collisions/ mortalities) and indirect effects (induced development within panther habitat) on the Florida panther

## Existing Conditions Analysis and Local Regulatory Framework

Tammy Vrana provided an overview of the information that was collected and reviewed that resulted in preliminary findings/strategies to address the issues surrounding the SR 29 project. The existing conditions analysis that was conducted focused on the following factors:

- Special designations
  - USFWS Florida Panther Core Habitat Area
  - Area of Critical State Concern (ACSC)
- Rural land use pattern
- Large parcel property ownership
- Approved major developments
  - Town of Ave Maria Development of Regional Impact (DRI)
  - Planned developments
- Immokalee Regional Airport
  - Proposed runway extension

In examining the local regulatory framework, the following factors were reviewed:

- Collier County Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map
- Immokalee Area Master Plan
- Land Development Code
- Utility Service Areas
- Rural Lands Stewardship Area Program

Based on the above considerations, preliminary findings/ strategies were developed including:

- Existing/ future land use controls to protect resources
- Rural Lands Stewardship Area Program:
  - Protects Stewardship Sending Area (SSA) lands in perpetuity
  - Landowners are participating in this program
  - Utilities expansion is restricted to Stewardship Receiving Areas (SRAs)
- Large parcel ownership increases probability of agreements
- Under each project alternative scenario, new development will require consultation with USFWS

#### Dispute Resolution Coordination

Gwen Pipkin provided a status to-date of the SR 29 dispute resolution process. Coordination meetings had been and would continue to be held between USFWS, Collier County MPO, Collier County, adjacent landowners, and FDOT District One to find common ground toward protecting the resources and fulfilling mobility objectives. Ultimately, identified strategies will be formalized in an agreement between the participating interests.

#### ▶ **Road Ahead – Future Projects**

Frank Kalpakis provided an update of the District One projects that are scheduled for screening in 2006.

#### ▶ **Closing Remarks**

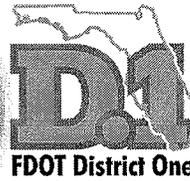
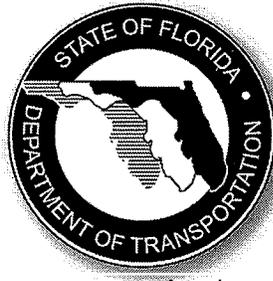
Frank Kalpakis, Kate Hoffman (Janus Research), and Tammy Vrana reported on the comments collected during the break-out group sessions on Day 1. ETAT members were invited to voice any additional concerns or comments at that time.

The comments provided as follows:

- Stagger project releases to one per week
- Be mindful of projects being released in November/December – slightly adjust schedule since these months are busy for the ETAT agencies
- Notify CEMO (Peter McGilvray) if revisions are made to the project schedule so that the revisions may be uploaded into the EST
- Add FDOT District One ETAT meeting material to the EST (note: information is currently in the Library on the EST)
- Invite Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission to future SR 29 Dispute Resolution meetings.

Gwen Pipkin thanked everyone for their attendance and participation. She noted the value of the commentary received during the ETAT meeting toward enhancing the District's ETDM Program.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 12:00 p.m.



Attachment A  
**ETAT Meeting**  
**September 11-12, 2006**

Name	Agency	Day 1	Day 2
Deag Skurski	DRMP / SWFWMD	X	
Brian Yates	DNR / SHPD	X	✓
David Hutchinson	FDOT	X	✓
Johnny Limbawell	FDOT	X	✓
Manon Lavoie	FDOT	X	✓
Mike Muholtz	Sarasota Manatee MPO	✓	✓
Jonnaleigh Stack	PEA, Inc.	✓	✓
George R. Bailo	FDOT CEMO	✓	✓
Larry Barfield	" "	✓	✓
GARY HARRELL	CC-PG MPO	✓	✓
Tommy Vrana	D1 URS	✓	✓
Lauren Milligan	FDEP / OIA	✓	✓
JACKIE LARSON	FDEP / OIP	✓	✓
Terry Gilbert	URS - FWC	✓	✓
TAMARA N. CHRISTION	FHWA	✓	✓
Dave Rydene	NMFS	✓	✓
JONATHAN Czuni	FHWA	✓	✓
Cathy Kendall	FHWA	✓	✓
Tom PRIDE	URS	✓	✓

Name	Agency	Day 1	Day 2
Anthony Miller	SSRWMD	X	X
LARRY RITCHIE	DOT	X	✓
Gary Donndson	URS/DCA	✓	✓
Sherry Anderson	DOS DHR	✓	✓
Frank Kalpalici	URS	✓	✓
Mark Schultz	FDOT	—	✓
MARLON BIZERRA	"	—	✓
Stephanie Russo	FWC	✓	✓
Julie Rogers	Janus Research	—	✓
Kate Hoffman	Janus Research	✓	✓
Louise Frayala	Pratt Frayala & Assoc	—	✓
George M	DRMP	—	✓
LOLI CARLTON	FDOT	✓	✓
Susan King	FDOT	✓	✓
Lori Nail	URS	✓	✓
Laura Brooks	URS	✓	✓
George M <sup>c</sup> Latchey	DRMP		✓
Peter McGilvray	FDOT CEMO	✓	✓
Steve Terry	Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida	✓	
Frank Meares	FDOT D1	✓	✓
Gwen Pipkin	FDOT D1	✓	✓