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TRANSPORTATION RESEARCH BOARD

TRB Committee on Environmental Analysis and Ecology Virtual Seminar

Webinar 1: NEPA, Do the Times Warrant Change?

July 29, 2020 - 10:00am-11:30am (PDS); 1:00pm – 2:30pm (EDS)

Schedule at-a-glance

(Subject to change)

Registration is free but required. Only registered attendees will be provided with a link to access the webinar closer to the event.

This will be a moderated panel discussion among four practitioners from a variety of backgrounds. The session will start with a critical look from the practitioners' perspective at the effects of recent changes in guidance on NEPA, the resulting implementation, and the expected and actual outcomes of such changes. While the "jury is still out", panelists will speak to representative guidance objectives referencing when and how appropriate projects that are working through the process have fared with the new regulatory environment. Panelists will also discuss and evaluate what potential course(s) this puts federal and state agencies and other organizations on with regard to environmental certainties.

Taking into account a broad review of the voluminous comments received by Council of Environment Quality (CEQ) this past March and recent applicable Executive Orders, the discussion will turn toward a wide-ranging talk about the practical application of NEPA in the foreseeable future. Using expertise and real-world experience, panelists will discuss possible positives and negatives along with what to look for in terms of possible major shifts from past practice. Likely interested participants include state DOT environmental professionals, resource agencies, members of the USDOT, environmental consultants and the impacted public.

Moderator:



Jack Allen, Senior Vice President, ICF

Recognized expert in environmental planning as a student of NEPA, program manager, project manager, practitioner and environmental analyst with over 35 years of experience. Recognized for his innovations in the field.

Expertise in NEPA process management, outreach, facilitating and drafting purpose and need, alternatives development, impact analyses and screening processes. Managed the timely preparation of over 30 EISs and EAs, and completed more than 100 categorical exclusions for major transportation infrastructure projects.

Panelists:



Diane Nulton, Senior Environmental Project Manager with HDR

Diane has over 30 years of experience managing the NEPA process for transportation projects, including several controversial and fast-tracked projects. She has worked with the National Highway Institute and several state DOTs to develop guidance and training courses on a variety of topics including Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL), NEPA, and Section 4(f). Diane is a certified NHI instructor and has been teaching courses since 2004.



David McCray, OF Counsel, Beveridge and Diamond Law

David counsels clients on regulatory matters and litigation involving the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), climate change, water, wetlands, project mitigation, land use, air, and mobile source air toxics and related health impacts on major project and infrastructure development. In 2019, California Governor Newsom reappointed David as a justice on the California Courts-Martial Appellate Panel. David was first appointed to the four-year term position in 2015 by then-Governor Brown. David served as Assistant Chief Counsel at the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) from 2007-2014. Before joining Caltrans, David served with the U.S. Air Force, retiring after 21 years of active service. While with the Air Force, David also served for two years as Special Assistant U.S. Attorney in the Environmental & Natural Resources Division of the U.S. Department of Justice in Washington, DC.



Adin McCann, P.E., AVP, Associate VP with HNTB

Over 20 years of experience in transportation and environmental planning; expertise in the preparation of state and federal environmental documentation for transportation projects. Services as HNTB's Great Lakes Division environmental practice leader. Worked on several major infrastructure projects and programs, including: The Chicago Region Environmental and Transportation Efficiency (CREATE) Program, the Cleveland Opportunity Corridor project, and I-69 Section 6, Adin is a 1998 graduate of the University of Notre Dame with a B.S. degree in civil engineering.



Rich Walter, Vice President, Environmental Planning, ICF

28 years of experience in environmental compliance, primarily for large (and often controversial) infrastructure projects including NEPA compliance for variety of federal agencies including FRA, FTA, FHWA, FAA, NPS, BLM, USACE, USFWS and the U.S. Army Environmental Command as well as state-delegated NEPA compliance. Expertise in environmental compliance strategy including integrated federal and state environmental review and regulatory permitting. Also leads climate action planning practice focusing on CEQA and NEPA compliance relative to climate change as well as climate mitigation planning and adaptation.



Tim Hatton, AICP, Associate Vice President with HNTB

Over 15-years of experience delivering transportation infrastructure with a focus on alternative delivery of Major projects. Proudly serving Georgia Department of Transportation's Office of Innovative Delivery leading the successful development and implementation of GDOT's Major Mobility Investment Program, a program of 17 projects, two of which are utilizing the One Federal Decision process. Tim has a M.S. in Urban Policy Studies from Georgia State University and B.A. from the University of Georgia.