



# Interagency Office of Environmental Quality

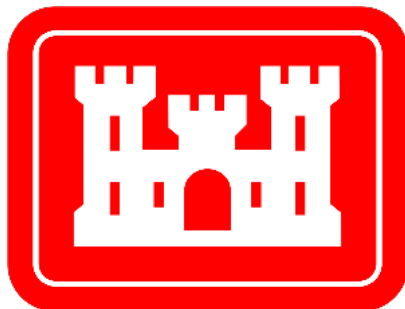
**Southern Association of State Highway & Transportation Officials**

**August 20, 2019**

**Savannah, GA**

**Meg Hedeem, State Environmental Liaison**

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Previous



While increased connectivity is inevitable,

Current



**increased collaboration is not!**

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*State Transportation Liaison Funded Positions Study* (2009) notes that **opportunities to physically locate the liaison funded positions at the State DOT office** have led to “**stronger working relationships**” and allowed the liaison to learn more about the DOT’s projects and “**exchange information with it on a timelier basis.**”

23 CFR Appendix A to Part 450 details opportunities for linking transportation planning and NEPA processes, notes that “**Some States have improved collaboration and efficiency by co-locating environmental, regulatory, and resource and transportation agency staff.**”

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- ❖ December 2017: Concept is introduced to resource agencies
- ❖ Throughout 2018:
  - ✓ Interagency discussions on implementation plan
  - ✓ FHWA creates IOEQ Liaison position
  - ✓ GDOT acquires needed resources; creates State Environmental Liaison position
- ❖ January 2019, **GDOT welcomes agencies to the IOEQ!**

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## ❖ IOEQ Process

- ✓ Agency Personnel at DOT Office
- ✓ In-Person Conversations
- ✓ Project Documents Hand-delivered

## ❖ IOEQ Coordination

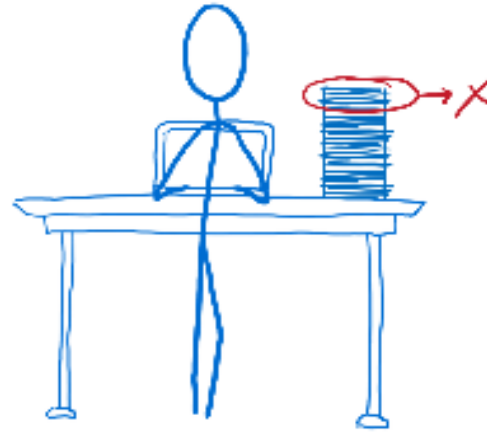
- ✓ Project Status Meetings
- ✓ Programmatic Discussions
- ✓ GDOT Program Info Sessions



## Immediate Benefits ~ *in just the first weeks!*



➤ **Learning about Knowledge Gaps**



➤ **Avoidance of Rework**



➤ **Proposing Solutions**

*“The opportunity to **address the issue immediately** with all of us in the room helped **take care of it quickly and efficiently.**”*

– IOEQ Agency Personnel

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## EARLY RESULTS

- FHWA sees **efficiencies** resulting **from relationships** between agencies
- **All invited agencies** are participating
- **Collaboration** is allowing resource agencies to **fulfill their mission**
- In-person **interagency conversations** are **common, effective**
- Agency liaisons **reporting positive experiences**
- **Agency managers** provided **positive feedback** at 6 month check-in
- **17 projects & 12 programmatic efforts** benefited in the first 3.5 months



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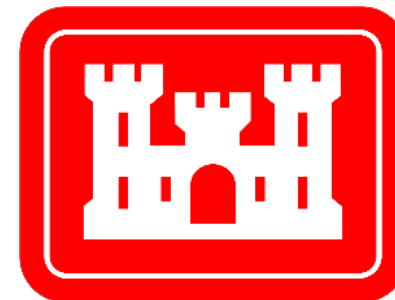


“This new take on an established partnership **brings federal and state agencies together** in one space and allows HPD and GDOT **to efficiently coordinate projects.**”

“The **Inter-Agency Office of Environmental Quality streamlines** this review process and **facilitates effective communication** between HPD, GDOT, and other federal and state agencies.”

[Link: https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/GADNR/bulletins/246d17f](https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/GADNR/bulletins/246d17f)

# Creating a Culture of Collaboration Between...



...for a high quality & efficient environmental process.