

Summary

TWG Quarterly Meeting

3 May, 2012

10:00am - 12:30pm

TxDOT, 200 E. Riverside Drive, Bldg. 200, Classroom "A" Austin, Texas
(and by VTC at TxDOT District Offices)

A. Introductions & Announcements

Self introductions were made and attendees signed-in. There were 15 TWG members in attendance along with 19 additional participants via VTC from TxDOT district offices in Beaumont, Dallas/Fort Worth, Houston, El Paso, Tyler, San Antonio, Sherman/Denison/Paris, and Waco.

B. Primary Discussion Item— Roundtable discussion on the impending environmental speed limit changes in the Houston/Dallas region due to the addition of new nonattainment counties. The discussion also included a general overview of SIP commitments.

NOTE: Dennis Perkinson clarified the topic was not to discuss environmental speed limits, but rather the environmental impacts of speed limit changes.

- Chris Klaus with NCTCOG began the discussion with background information on environmental speed limits (ESLs). Klaus noted that in the last legislative session, they authorized TxDOT to raise the speed limits, where appropriate, to a maximum of 75 mph. Klaus noted that TxDOT is currently evaluating areas outside of Houston's nonattainment area to raise speed limits, but that in Fort Worth district they were still waiting for feedback as to which facilities are under consideration for modification. Klaus continued that in the Dallas district there are speed limit changes being proposed, or recommended, that are in the nonattainment area.

Klaus reported that from a SIP standpoint, the ESL facilities are utilized and identified in their SIP. Klaus noted that NCTCOG has been working with TCEQ and that TCEQ has removed ESLs from a standalone control strategy in NCTCOG's SIP, to a transportation control measure (TCM). Klaus responded the reason for this was that in the event they had to change a speed limit, if they had it as a standalone control strategy, it might warrant a revision of the entire SIP.

Klaus explained that if you have a TCM, such as an intersection or signal, if a project is deficient, you can find a substitute project and go through a much

simpler procedure to substitute out the deficient project to one that can be done. Klaus noted that you have the same benefits that are similar in scope.

Klaus reported that NCTCOG is in the process of identifying the possible speed limit changes, because if they are changing in the nonattainment area, then there are SIP complications.

Perkinson noted that the topic was of primary interest to the entire group because of the possible emissions impacts of raised speed limits.

A lengthy roundtable discussion followed on raised speed limits and their impacts on the SIP. As the discussion concluded, Perkinson again noted the general interest of this topic to the group, and requested an update from NCTCOG as to their future progress.

NOTE: As a follow-up from this discussion, Klaus sent a link to a workshop presentation comparing speed based emission factor between MOBILE6 and MOVES. Chris Sasser forwarded this link to TWG on 5/4/2012, and it is also available on the [TWG website](#).

C. EPA (Jeff Riley)

- **2008 Ozone Standard Update** — Jeff Riley reported that on April 30 the nonattainment area designations were finalized for the 2008 ozone standard as well as the classification designation final rule. Riley reported that the designations will be effective 60 days after the publication date, which is expected by the end of May. Riley reported that in addition to the designations and classifications rule, there will also be an implementation rule, which is expected to be proposed in mid June 2012. Riley reported that the classification designation rule contains information such as the actual classification thresholds used to determine the level of nonattainment for the nonattainment areas and information about the rescission of the 1997 8-hour ozone standard.

Riley reported that also included in the classification rule were the attainment dates for designated areas. The two areas in Texas designated nonattainment:

- **Houston/Galveston/Brazoria** area was designated **marginal**, with an attainment date of 12/31/15, and no counties were added so that it retains the same boundaries as the 1997 8-hour standard. Riley noted that Matagorda County was not added.

- **Dallas/Fort Worth** was designate **moderate**, with an attainment date of 12/31/18. Wise County was added.

Riley reported that the supporting materials have been posted to [EPA's ground level ozone designations website](#), along with the publication of the designations action and the classification designation final rule. Riley reported that a technical support document that explains EPA's overall analysis to determine which areas would be classified nonattainment and to what level, was also available on this website.

- **PM 2.5 NAAQS standard** — Jeff Riley reported that EPA is expecting a proposal for the PM standard in June 2012, which would put it on track for a final standard by June 2013.
- **MOVES** — Jeff Riley reported that on April 23 the MOVES 2010B model was released along with supporting documentation such as policy and technical guidance, and a FAQ document.

Riley also reported that since the last TWG quarterly meeting, the grace period for the implementation of MOVES was extended a year from March 2, 2012 (for use of the MOVES model for conformity) to March 2, 2013.

FHWA (Jose Campos, Shundreka Givan)

- **CMAQ reporting progress and needs** — Jose Campos reported the CMAQ reporting was caught up for this year.
- **CMAQ funding estimates for new nonattainment areas** — Campos reported that he expected a change due to the new designations, but did not know to what extent. Campos cited population changes and the fact that there was no new transportation bill as partial reasons for the uncertainty.
- **Reauthorization status** — FHWA had nothing to report at this time.
- **GHG update** — Shundreka Givan reported that in the upcoming year, FHWA was going to be making field visits and working with the coastal MPOs for the purpose of discussing how to incorporate climate change into the transportation planning process.

Results from TWG Meeting Frequency Poll (Dennis Perkinson)

- Dennis Perkinson reported that the majority of respondents from the TWG meeting frequency poll favored a March/September meeting schedule. The consensus of the group was that a biannual meeting schedule would result in less of a travel burden for TWG members and ensure more substantive and timely topics. Perkinson also noted that for this year, the August meeting is still planned, and there is an option for calling a special meeting in the event it is needed.

TxDOT TPP (Laura Norton)

- **Conformity updates and issues** — Laura Norton reported that TxDOT is looking at the H-GAC and El Paso networks.

TxDOT ENV (Jackie Ploch)

- Jackie Ploch reported that they are waiting for conformity determination from El Paso and Houston to advance environmental projects.

TCEQ (Margie McAllister, Heather Evans)

- McAllister provided TCEQ SIP updates (handouts) to TWG.
- Heather Evans reported the MOVES update SIPS for Beaumont/Houston are on track. Beaumont is going in front of the commissioners for proposal in June, and Houston is scheduled for October.

TTI (Dennis Perkinson)

- Dennis Perkinson had nothing to report at this time.

MPO Issues & Requests Needing TWG Discussion

- Abilene —No representatives at this meeting.
- BPA— Beaumont had nothing to report at this time.

- DFW — Chris Klaus reported that they now have an additional county in their nonattainment area. Klaus also had a follow up question about monitors being added to new nonattainment counties, which lead to a discussion about factors that may lead to a county becoming nonattainment. Klaus also reported that Madhu Venugopal was leaving the agency.
- ELP— Isele Perez reported that El Paso is working on pre-consensus form and conformity is underway.
- HGB—Houston had nothing to report at this time.
- Austin — Shana Norton reported that Austin has an 8-hour ozone flex agreement that extends through December 2013, and that they are planning a transition to ozone advance.
- Corpus Christi— No representatives at this meeting.
- San Antonio— Peter Bella reported that they are hanging in with their near nonattainment status.
- Tyler/Longview— Jeremy Atkinson reported that they are still in attainment, but suspects they are trending towards nonattainment and preparing for their next steps.
- Victoria— No representatives at this meeting
- Waco/Temple/Killeen— Waco had nothing to report at this time.
- Texoma (Sherman/Denison/Paris) — Paris had nothing to report at this time.
- Texarkana— No representatives at this meeting.

D. Follow-Up Actions (Perkinson, Sasser)

- Chris Klaus will forward Chris Sasser presentation slides.
- Chris Sasser will prepare a summary of today's meeting.

E. Next TWG Meeting: *Thursday, August 2, 2012, TxDOT, 200 East Riverside Drive, Classroom TBD, Austin, Texas* and by VTC at TxDOT District offices.