



Commonwealth Transportation Board Environmental Subcommittee

VDOT Central Office
1221 East Broad Street
Richmond, Virginia

January 16, 2024
Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 8:35 a.m.

Members of the Subcommittee in attendance: Mark Merrill and Linda Green.

Welcome

Chris Swanson, VDOT Environmental Division Director, welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Approval of September 2023 minutes

Minutes approved.

Land Stewardship

Chris Berg, Office of Transportation Sustainability (OTS) Director, provided an update on the Department's successful grant application for the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) Wildlife Corridor Pilot Program (WCPP) authorized by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). The grant award will support the project 'Prioritizing Wildlife Crossing Locations in Virginia', which will address gaps and recommended actions from Virginia's Wildlife Corridor Action Plan by more accurately identifying and prioritizing potential locations for wildlife crossings to improve driver safety.

Mr. Swanson shared that the prioritization of wildlife crossing projects is also intended to meet the intent of Code of Virginia § 29.1-579.

Mr. Berg also provided an update on the Department's successful grant application for the FHWA's Culvert Aquatic Organism Passage (AOP) Program for the project 'Route 648 Culvert Replacement over Mud Creek'. The project will pilot the installation of larger culverts to increase hydraulic capacity to improve fish passage and address ongoing maintenance needs.

Mr. Merrill and Ms. Green asked about the applicability of AOP for other projects and areas of the state. Mr. Berg indicated that although the federal Culvert AOP program is limited to anadromous fish habitat in coastal areas, OTS's focus for AOP is statewide and lessons learned from the grant project will inform potential efforts in other regions.

Decarbonization

Mr. Berg provided an update on the Carbon Reduction Program (CRP) established under the IJJA and the Carbon Reduction Strategy (CRS) required under the CRP, which is currently under review by FHWA. Mr. Merrill asked if the CRS has been made available. Mr. Berg indicated VDOT's intent to share the CRS once it has been approved by FHWA, and that VDOT would explore making a draft available for review by the CTB. Mr. Berg shared that VDOT has applied initial CRP funding to support existing CRP-eligible projects, including bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, carpool, vanpool, and park and ride support, and transit infrastructure.

Mr. Berg also provided an update on the implementation of the National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) Program, and the evaluation of applications to build electric vehicle charging stations under VDOT's NEVI Phase 1-A Request for Applications (RFA).

Mr. Merrill and Ms. Green asked about the types of applicants and location types in response to the RFA. Mr. Berg shared that applicants included national businesses and local franchisees, and that station locations included a mix of fueling stations/travel centers, restaurants, grocery stores, hotels, and other businesses.

Mr. Berg shared that VDOT is finalizing proposed awardees for Phase 1-A of the NEVI program to be announced in February or March 2024, and is finalizing target areas for Phase 1-B to be announced in the spring of 2024.

The meeting adjourned at 9:15 a.m.

Next Meeting

Tentatively April 2024.

Public Comment

No public comments were received.