

Successes **in** Stewardship

<http://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/strmlng/es4newsltrs.asp>

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NHI Training Solutions: New and Updated NHI Classes for Environmental Transportation Professionals

Innovations in technology and changes in policies and guidance directly impact how transportation professionals work. Keeping technically proficient in these dynamic conditions can be challenging. For the past 37 years, the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) National Highway Institute (NHI) has been addressing the unique training needs of the transportation community, helping it to select, develop, implement, and evaluate solutions that best meet its goals. NHI provides "training solutions for transportation excellence" through a variety of courses and seminars that address the full spectrum of the highway transportation system.

This issue of *Successes in Stewardship* summarizes several new and updated NHI courses of interest to environmental transportation professionals at the Federal, state, local, and metropolitan planning organization (MPO) level.

(UPDATED!) NEPA and Transportation Decisionmaking (FHWA-NHI-142005)

This course encompasses FHWA policies and procedures for applying the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) to transportation project development and decisionmaking. Participants will learn about the evolution of environmental policy and its integration of social, environmental, and economic factors. Participants will also be introduced to the framework of laws, regulations, policies, and guidance related to NEPA, and discover how to achieve results that are in the public interest. Topics include the process and requirements NEPA, Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation (DOT) Act, public involvement, Title VI/Environmental Justice, mitigation and enhancement, and sustainable development. The target audience includes planning and environmental staff.

NHI also offers a free, web-based course, [Introduction to NEPA and Transportation Decisionmaking](#) (FHWA-NHI-142052), which provides an overview of NEPA and the environmental process. This basic course covers NEPA requirements and related FHWA and Council on Environmental Quality regulations.

(NEW!) Advanced Seminar on Transportation Project Development: Navigating the NEPA Maze (FHWA-NHI-142055) (Note: Available beginning August 2007)

This highly interactive three-day advanced seminar focuses on applying NEPA principles to the decisionmaking process for transportation projects. While the introductory NEPA/Transportation Decisionmaking course (FHWA-NHI-142005) devotes considerable time and energy to conveying concepts and describing the components of the NEPA process, this Advanced Seminar will provide the necessary tools and strategies necessary to apply this information to the decisionmaking process. Through instructor-led and facilitated discussions, presentations, case studies, and other exercises, participants will be guided through the decisionmaking process, made aware of potential pitfalls, and given the skills and knowledge to apply critical thinking to reach defensible decisions. The course is geared to experienced environmental practitioners, project development managers, and consultants from FHWA, state DOTs, resource and permitting agencies, and local governments who are involved in the planning, design, legal, and technical aspects of the NEPA and transportation decisionmaking processes. Prerequisites include: *NEPA and Transportation Decisionmaking* (FHWA-NHI-142005) or the web-based *Introduction to NEPA and Transportation Decisionmaking* (FHWA-NHI-142052).



Public Involvement in the Transportation Decisionmaking Process has been updated, with new tools for achieving effective public involvement through willingness and ability to interact openly and sensitively to the public's preferred forms of communication. Photo courtesy www.pedbikeimages.org/ Dan Burden

(UPDATED!) Public Involvement in the Transportation Decisionmaking Process (FHWA-NHI-142036)

To achieve effective public involvement, much more than posting notices and holding public hearings is needed. The public should have a role in every phase of decisionmaking, including the design of the public involvement plan itself. Creative thinking, as well as the willingness and ability to interact openly and sensitively to the public's preferred forms of communication, are necessary to make the process succeed. This experiential course "walks the talk" by using public involvement techniques to convey key learning outcomes. The target audience includes the wide array of transportation professionals responsible for planning, implementing, and participating in any phase of the public involvement process.

(NEW!) Beyond Compliance: Historic Preservation in Transportation Project Development (FHWA-NHI-142049)

Regulations implementing Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (Section 106) has fundamentally changed the way in which Federal agencies address the potential effects of transportation planning and project development on places of historical and cultural importance. NHI developed this new course in conjunction with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation and representatives from state DOTs. The course is designed to help transportation professionals meet the requirements of NEPA, Section 106, and 4(f). Participants will learn the importance of balancing stewardship and project delivery through examples of real-world situations. Upon completion, participants will be able to identify key historic preservation laws and will understand the relationship among NEPA, Section 106, Section 4(f), and project development. The target audience includes those involved in or affected by the Federal-Aid Highway program, including staff of state DOTs, MPOs, and FHWA headquarters and field offices; state tribal governments, consultants, and State and Tribal Historic Preservation Offices (SHPO/THPO); and other state and Federal resource agencies that deal with transportation issues.

Next Steps

NHI training is just one of many FHWA resources for educating transportation professionals about environmental transportation issues related to such project elements as planning, NEPA, public involvement, historic preservation, and environmental justice. An understanding of these areas can lead to improvements in the transportation planning and decisionmaking process and can help to ensure that communities and other potential stakeholders are part of this process. For more information on NHI training solutions, visit the [training](#) page on the NHI website. Courses specifically related to environmental topics are listed on the [environment](#) page of the training catalog.

Training at Your Door

See a course you would like to attend but are unable to due to time or location? Consider hosting a course for yourself and your colleagues! Depending on the topic, courses are either instructor-led or web-based. See the [Host a Course](#) page on the NHI website for information on:

- Courses offered
- Sign-up procedures
- Local coordinator and instructor checklists

There is also a link to a helpful eight-minute web-based orientation for new hosts.

Contact Information

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Look What's New!

- Caltrans has submitted its application to participate in the SAFETEA-LU Surface Transportation Project Delivery Pilot Program. For more information on the Program, visit the SAFETEA-LU website. (link to: <http://environment.fhwa.dot.gov/strmlng/es2safetealu.asp>)
- The FHWA Office of Project Development and Environmental Review has moved! The new address is:
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590