President's Message

We just concluded our Annual In-Person Meeting in Tacoma Washington. As always, we try to co-arrange one of our in person meetings with the annual NAEP Conference. This helps maximize our time with NAEP because ABCEP has a place on the NAEP Board; the ABCEP representative is Irving Cohen, CEP). This relationship was furthered once again as we just signed an agreement with NAEP that promotes the NAEP organization and the CEP Certification!!

This year we are working on a Scholarship program that will help defray conference registration costs for professionals. We continue to enhance our Mentor Program, maintain a balanced budget, conduct two in-person meetings a year, and move forward with advancing our certification and our four strategic pillars:

- Strategic Pillar 1 (Establish and Externally Promote Recognition of CEPs)
- Strategic Pillar 2 (Expand Partnerships and Alliances)
- Strategic Pillar 3 (Expand Member Services)
- Strategic Pillar 4 (Recruitment)

At our recent meeting, we also approved our 2018 budget.

ABCEP is going paperless! For CEP renewals, this is the last year you will get a hard copy certificate showing that you have renewed and are in good standing. Next year, you will receive an email stating that you have been renewed and that you are in good standing.

As you know, there is a search tool in CEP-Express that allows you to search for CEPs by geographic area. Soon, we will be changing the tool to allow for all CEPs, who are in good standing, to be found using the search tool.

To date, we have 313 CEP Certifications:

- 2017 CEPs
- 63 CEP-ITs
- 14 CEPs by Eminence
- 29 Emeritus CEP Members

Our current Board of Trustees includes the following individuals:

OFFICERS:

President - Elizabeth R. Johnson, CEP, PWS President-Elect - Corry Platt, CEP Secretary - Shari Cannon-Mackey, CEP, ENV SP Treasurer - William A. Eggers, CEP CRB Chairman - Kris W. Thoemke, CEP

TRUSTEES:

Robert J. Brenner, CEP Irving D. Cohen, CEP Anna J. Kohl, CEP Tina McIntyre, M.S., CEP Robert A. Michaels, PhD, CEP Audra V. Upchurch, PMP, CEP Jim Yawn, CEP



Elizabeth R. Johnson **ABCEP President**

Inside:

- Kramer and Emerging **Environmental Professional Award Winners for 2018**
- Step-by-Step How to Add Your CEP Stamp to Your **Email Signature**
- Call for Articles Historic **Preservation & Section 106** Compliance
- Mentor's Corner
- Modernizing the NEPA Process Using a Virtual GIS-Based Platform
- Newsletter Topics for 2018

President's Message (continued from page 1)

Awards

Dr. Richard J Kramer Memorial Award for Environmental Excellence

The Kramer Award was established by ABCEP to recognize the extraordinary achievements of individuals in the environmental profession. The Award is named after Dr. Richard Kramer who devoted his life's work to superior environmental stewardship. This year, I was nominated by my peers and selected as the recipient of the 2018 Award. The nominating language includes this, in part: Elizabeth (Liz) Johnson is a well-respected environmental professional whose leadership and achievements have brought significant benefit to the Floridian environment and community. Her team building and mentoring efforts will continue to have an impact on the next generation and encourage integrity and respect among stakeholders. I am honored to have received this and would not have done it without the support of my peers and management.

Emerging Environmental Professional Award

The ABCEP Emerging Environmental Professional Award recognizes environmental professionals for their leadership, professional involvement, commitment to foster environmental improvement, and actions to help make the world a better place for future generations. The 2018 recipient was Nicholas Piane, CEP-IT, Environmental Analyst with BrightFields Inc. Nicholas was nominated by Joe Campo, CEP, based on his nearly six years of experience performing environmental site investigations and implementation of remedial actions for industrial, commercial, and government clients. His field experience includes environmental site investigations, underground and aboveground storage tank investigations and removals,



multimedia (soil, sediment, groundwater, surface water and air) sampling, health and safety oversight activities, universal waste removal, and operations and maintenance site evaluations within the tristate area. Nicholas has designed, implemented, and lead Brownfield Investigations, Remedial Investigations, Human Health Risk Assessments, Remedial Action Work Plans, Health and Safety Plans, Contaminated Materials Management Plans, and Remedial Action Completion Reports. Nicholas is a Member of the Greater Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce – Young Professionals Network.

CEP Maintenance Hours Process

It's a great idea to keep current on your maintenance hours. Before the end of each calendar year each CEP needs to:

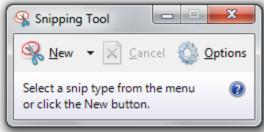
- ♦ Go to abcep.org, click on the CEP Express tab, and log in
- ♦ Click on "Manage Hours" tab, and scroll down to the Hours Details table
- Add hours for your regular daytime work and for all your relevant extracurricular activities
- Check that you have at least 40 hours. If not, engage in one of the listed activities, or contact the ABCEP office for assistance.
- After you have completed entering your maintenance hours, certify that you have supporting documentation by adding your initials under the "Certification" column.

Click on "Save Changes" on the top right side of the Hours Details table.



Step By Step: How to Add Your CEP Stamp to Your Email Signature

- 1. Using an ink pad, test your stamp on a blank sheet of paper and create several versions
- 2. Once you have a few that look clear and good, scan the sheet to your computer
- 3. It will typically scan in as a pdf; open the pdf. Using the Snipping Tool (on a PC) snip the best stamp and save that as a .jpeg image



4. For Microsoft Outlook, click on New Email



5. Then on Signature



6. Then on the image icon



- 7. Navigate to your saved .jpeg image and click insert, then click ok
- 8. Click on Signature again and it should insert your updated signature with the CEP stamp!

Here are some upcoming events where ABCEP will be present!

July 2018: Marco Island – Florida Environmental Network September 2018: FAEP/Orlando

Until Next Time!

Elizabeth R. Johnson, CEP, PWS ABCEP President Liz.johnson@ocfl.net/407-836-1511

The Newsletter of the Academy of Board Certified Environmental Professionals





CALL FOR ARTICLES Historic Preservation & Section 106 Compliance

Our nation is dotted with bridges, schoolhouses, trails, mounds, neighborhoods, powerplants, cemeteries, and cultural sites that represent everything from our moments of discovery and settlement patterns to our architectural and engineering achievements. Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, along with other Federal and state laws dictate the process to evaluate impacts to these resources that result from the actions of communities, developers, and utility companies, as well as state and Federal government agencies.

The May-June 2018 edition of *The Certified Environmental Professional* will showcase examples of and guidance on addressing **Historic Preservation & Section 106 Compliance**. We welcome a variety of perspectives on the topic from the environmental practice community.

Deadline for article submittal May 25, 2018 to scannonmackey@burnsmcd.com

Articles should be submitted in Word, with all graphics/photos provided in either tif or jpg formats. Do not send PDFs. All exhibits/figures/photos must have sources documented and all permissions to use obtained by the author of the article prior to publication.

For questions, please contact Shari Cannon-Mackey, CEP, ENV, SP, Editor at 512-872-7132 or by email to scannonmackey@burnsmcd.com

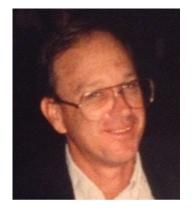
CORNER

Kudos from a Grateful Mentee!

MENTOR'S All of us can think of someone that always had words of encouragement, gave of their time to look over our work, and point us in the right direction. Through the ABCEP Mentorship Program, mentors provide a point of contact for CEP and CEP-IT applicants during their application process coaching, answering questions, and providing advice.

Mentors work behind the scenes and rarely receive any type of formal recognition, just the satisfaction that they provided support to someone who achieves their professional goals.

ABCEP recently received a letter of appreciation from a successful CEP applicant, Stella Acuna, acknowledging the support she received from her mentor, Michael Wilder.



Michael Wilder, CEP **ABCEP Mentor**

Please join with the Board of Trustees and the other ABCEP mentors in thanking Michael for his commitment to the program. His encouragement, guidance, and support led to Stella achieving her CEP.

ABCEP would like to recognize our Members who serve as Mentors for the ABCEP Mentorship Program. These Members are supporting ABCEP, advancing the profession, and gaining Maintenance Hours to support their personal CEP certifications. Contact office@abcep.org if you would like to serve as an ABCEP Mentor.

John Goolsby	Richard Lester
Thomas Hale	Travis Long
Lyn Halliday	Phillip Malicki
Michelle Harper	Vladimir Neoushoff
Peter Havens	Michael Nichols
Scott Hoffeld	Hilary Noskin
Douglas Jackson	Nick Owens
Elizabeth Johnson	Ryan Pingree
Steven Johnson	Richard Reeves
Donna Kaluzniak	Jason Rickards
Wendy Katagi	Rebecca Robertson
Steven Kennedy	Lucinda Swartz
Dylan Larson	Michael Wilder
	Thomas Hale Lyn Halliday Michelle Harper Peter Havens Scott Hoffeld Douglas Jackson Elizabeth Johnson Steven Johnson Donna Kaluzniak Wendy Katagi Steven Kennedy

Modernizing the NEPA Process Using a Virtual GIS-Based Platform

Kelly C. Lyles, CEP

Abstract

The goal of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process is to document the decision-making processes through Environmental Assessments (EA) or Environmental Impacts Statements (EIS). EA and EIS define a project's purpose, capture potential environmental consequences and establish coordination with relevant public and regulatory agencies. Developing efficient and effective tools for navigating the NEPA process is becoming increasingly important as Federal and State agencies have limited resources (staff and funding) and are required to review and process documents in an expedited fashion. To carry a project through the NEPA process, a skilled team with tools to streamline the interagency review process as well as community input process is highly beneficial.

The current NEPA process desperately needs modernization using tools such as a Virtual GIS-Based Platform, Document Management Systems, and Internet-based outreach. In October 2017, the Maryland Department of Transportation -Maryland Transit Administration (MDOT-MTA) utilized a high-profile project to launch the first phase of a 'Virtual GIS-Based Platform' tool. The public and agencies praised the interactive tool stating that they better understood the project, potential impacts, and the NEPA process. MDOT-MTA will soon launch the tool's second phase with features that include: heat maps showing areas of public concern, allow the public to comment on their preferred alignment, and items that are detailed in an EIS, such as methodology and analysis of potential impacts.

This article highlights the effectiveness of the MDOT-MTA 'Virtual GIS-Based Platform' and identifies next steps needed to modernize a nearly fifty-year-old process.

Graphics are published with the permission of the Maryland Department of Transportation - Maryland Transit Administration.

Introduction

From the FAST Act to the August 2017 Executive Order on Establishing Discipline and Accountability in the Environmental Review and Permitting Process for Infrastructure, agencies such as the MTA are developing tools to accelerate the environmental decision-making process and provide a transparent platform for both agencies and the public.

For projects requiring an EA or EIS level analysis, there are concurrence points and milestones that require agency input and public comment. Currently, the agency review of these milestones, such as Purpose and Need publication, is siloed and lacks transparency. A draft Purpose and Need statement is sent to cooperating and participating agencies via email or hard copy, the agency sends their comments directly to the Lead Federal Agency to incorporate their comments in the final Purpose and Need document. This approach does not allow for agencies to review other agency comments. Figure 1 (on the following page) is an example of the draft Purpose and Need agency distribution process for the Superconducting Maglev (SCMAGLEV). The result was three drafts sent between FRA and MTA prior to distributing the final draft Purpose and Need to 32 agencies. All agencies made comments that were sent directly to FTA for revision.

The public review process is also antiquated. The current process involves a notice via flyer, email or newsletter indicating where the public may download a PDF or obtain a hard copy of the document. The public may comment on the document by email or mail to the project team. They also have the option, for certain milestones, to attend a public meeting or hearing. Often the materials are not distributed prior to the meeting so the public is forced to evaluate the project and potential impacts and make comments in a short period of time. Most public meetings average two hours long with numerous project staff near story boards and static maps. Currently, the public wants to review project information and mapping when it is convenient for them and in their own home.

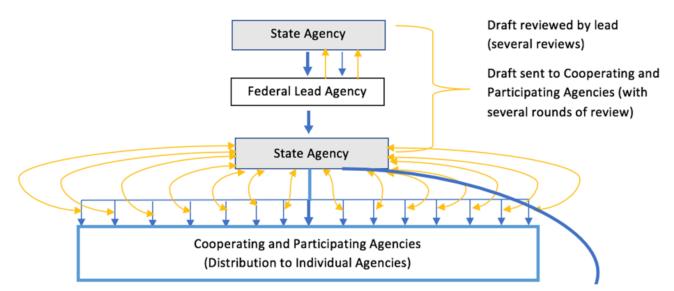


Figure 1: Review and distribution process for the SCMAGLEV Purpose and Need document.

The agency and public review processes are archaic and opaque. In addition, the current process results in EA's and EIS's that are 30 times the number of pages recommended by the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ). For example, the FTA MARC NE Maintenance Facility EA was 506 pages and the FRA BWI Rail Station Improvement and 4th Track EA was 802 pages. They are lengthy because agencies include all resources, despite whether they are negatively impacted, for fear of litigation.

There are existing tools that may be used to modernize the NEPA process. Using an <u>Virtual GIS-Based Platform</u>, <u>Document Management System</u>, <u>and Internet-based outreach</u> will improve the NEPA process and reduce document size, improve transparency, and expedite agency and public review. The MDOT-MTA pilot project has proven two of the three tools using a high profile EIS-level project.

MTA-MDOT Pilot Project: SCMaglev EIS and a Virtual GIS-Based Platform

What is SCMaglev?

The SCMAGLEV is the latest advancement in the world of high-speed ground transportation. This revolutionary system is not your typical train. In development since 1962, the SCMAGLEV is a futuristic magnetic levitation

system that uses powerful magnetic forces for all aspects of operation - acceleration, deceleration, guidance and levitation - resulting in operating speeds of over 300 miles per hour in everyday service, and travel times unlike anything traditional trains can achieve. Rather than riding directly on standard steel railroad tracks, SCMAGLEV trains levitate between the walls of a unique concrete structure known as a guideway. The U-shaped guideway has walls surrounding the trains on both sides, making the system free from derailment.

The keys to the SCMAGLEV system's high speed and acceleration are the magnetic forces acting between powerful superconducting magnets located on board the trains and two sets of coils that are installed in the walls of the guideway. The propulsion coils are used for the train's acceleration and are directly linked to power substations. The levitation and guidance coils are used to maintain the train's position and the superconducting magnets, installed into bogies of each train car, create a powerful magnetic force that is generated between the magnets and guideway coils (see **Figure 2** on next page).

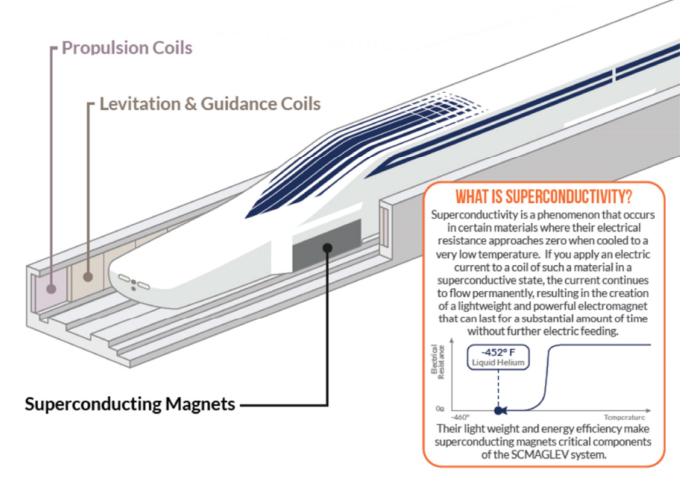


Figure 2: Overview of SCMaAGLEV Technology.

Why is MDOT-MTA preparing an EIS for SCMaglev?

The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) and the MDOT are preparing an EIS to evaluate the potential impacts of constructing and operating a high-speed superconducting magnetic levitation (SCMAGLEV) system between Washington, DC and Baltimore, Maryland with an intermediate stop at BWI Airport. The \$28.8M study, funded through the Safe Accountable Flexible Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users via FRA, includes a 40-mile-long and 10-mile-wide study area in a heavily developed corridor. The EIS is being prepared in compliance with the NEPA, as amended, and other applicable regulations and procedures.

The Notice of Intent (NOI) was published in the Federal Register in November 2016 and the FRA recently published the Preliminary Alternatives Screening Report in January 2018. Issuance of the Record of Decision is cur-

rently scheduled for December 2019.

Implementation of the Virtual GIS-Based Platform

n October 2017, the SCMAGLEV Team hosted five public meetings to review the preliminary alternatives screening process and results. Knowing that the public meetings will be well attended, MDOT-MTA decided to launch the virtual GIS-based platform. It was developed over the course of a few weeks and available via the project website (www.bwmaglev.info) for easy access. The tool allowed the public and agencies to review the preliminary alternatives, project study area, toggle on and off resources of concern, and allow users to zoom in to area of concern (primarily their home address) (see Figures 3, 4,5).

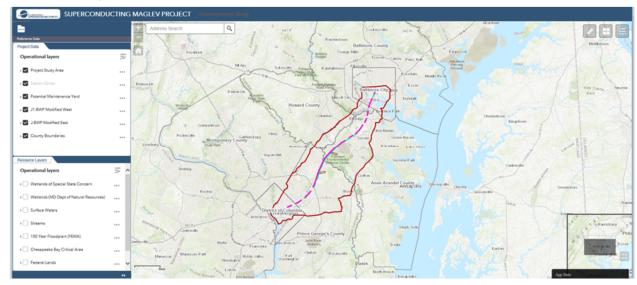


Figure 3: Virtual GIS-Based Platform home screen.

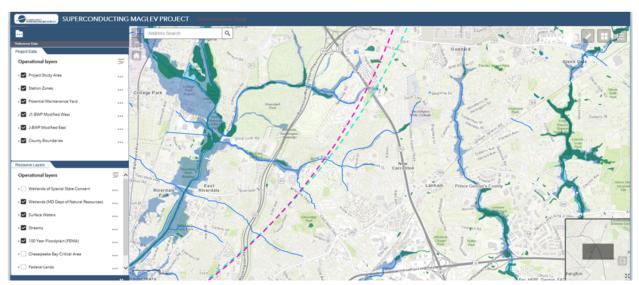


Figure 4: Virtual GIS-Based Platform wetland, stream, floodplain layers with the proposed alignments.

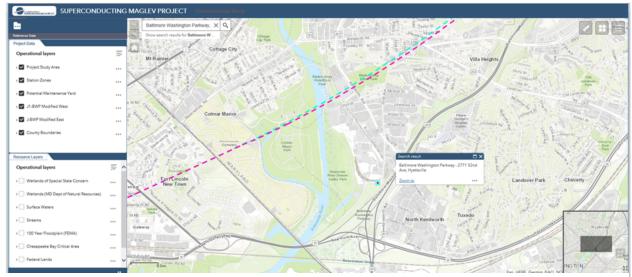


Figure 5: Virtual GIS-Based Platform at the address level

This tool allowed the public to view what is most important to them; how will the project impact their property. It also allowed agencies to view what is most important to them; what resources will be impacted by the project. MDOT-MTA received accolades from both the public and agencies for developing this tool. As of March 2018, there have been a total of 23,435 views and continue to average approximately 200 views per day.

In addition to providing this tool for public meetings, MDOT-MTA tested the possibilities of using an interactive map, one that would allow the public to comment spatially, for improved transparency and process guidance for the NEPA Team. MDOT-MTA manually added the comments into a database. Of the 2,325 comments, approximately 1,800 included spatial data such as address and/or zip code. MDOT-MTA used this information to create heat maps for specific issues.

As expected, the largest number of comments received included those citizens living along the E-1 Amtrak Modified alignment with the greatest number of communities (Figure 6).

The 'Not In My Backyard' (NIMBY) affect is clearly seen with the 23 percent stating opposition (Figure 7).

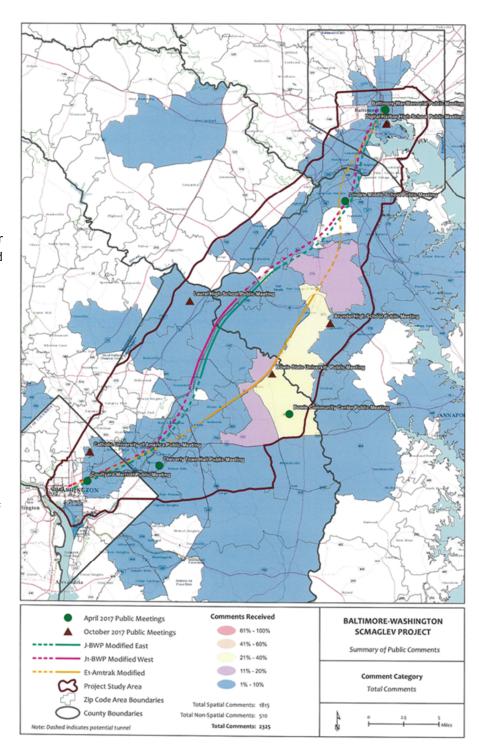


Figure 6: Heat map summarizing the number and location of public comments.

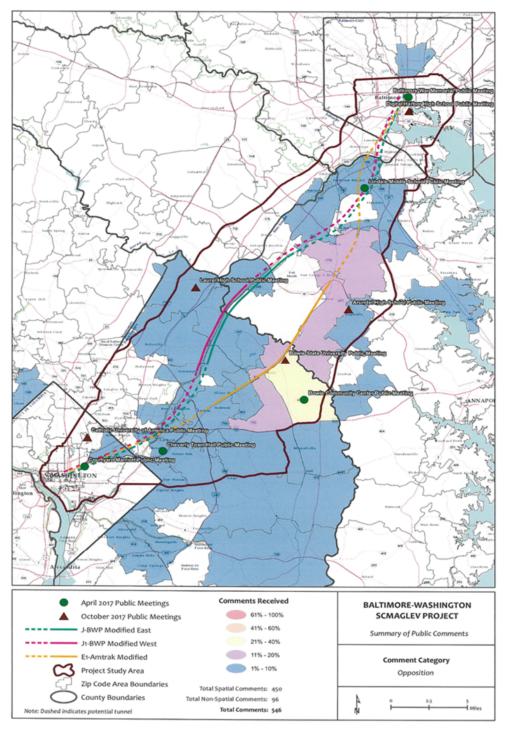


Figure 7: Heat map summarizing the number and location of comments stating opposition.

However, to better understand if the communities are in opposition of the project or a proposed alignment, maps were developed highlighting support and opposition for the remaining alternatives using public comments (Figures 8, 9, 10, 11).

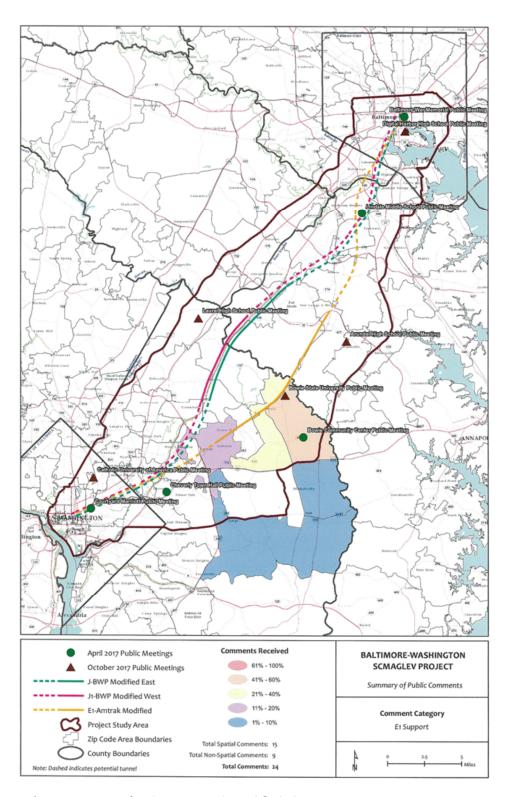


Figure 8: Support for the E-1 Amtrak Modified Alternative.

The heat map showing support of E-1 Amtrak Modified alternative is fairly neutral along the corridor with support in the southern end of the route. As expected, the E-1 Amtrak Modified alternative opposition were more vocal (NIMBY affect) and concerns stretched further north. These maps not only highlight the expected NIMBY effect but with further analysis, they shed light as to the level of opposition or support of the remaining alternatives.

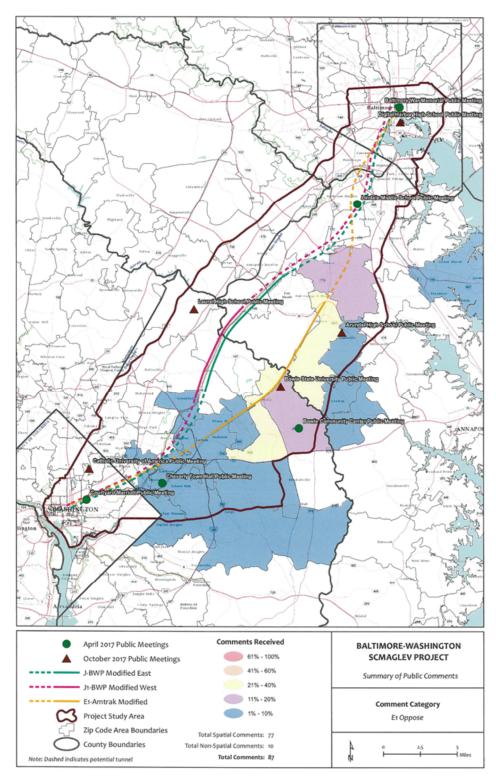


Figure 9: Opposition for the E-1 Amtrak Modified Alternative.

MDOT-MTA created heat maps using the comments noting J and J-1 alternatives (Figures 10 and 11).

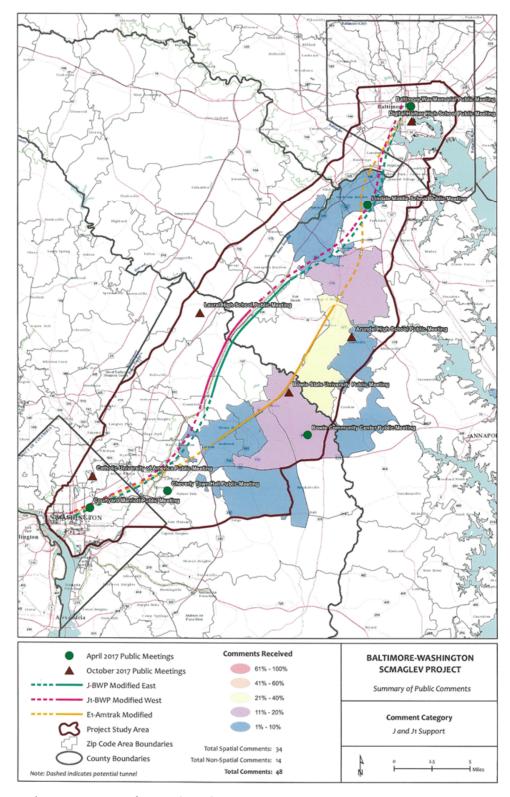


Figure 10: Support for J and J-1 Alternatives.

The heat maps highlighting support or opposition of the J and J-1 alternatives clearly answered the question whether the public would support or oppose the remaining alternatives. There is clearly more support for the J and J-1 alternatives versus opposition (less than one percent) to the alternatives or the project.

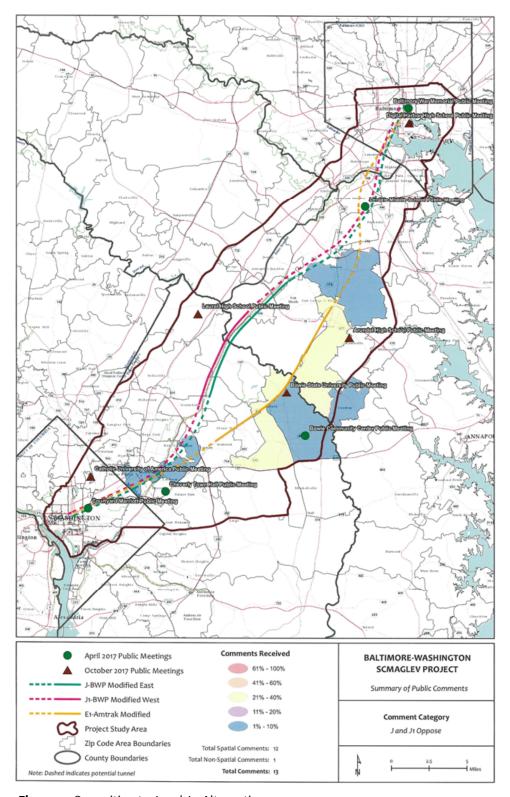


Figure 11: Opposition to J and J-1 Alternatives.

Using the public comments helped MDOT-MTA better understand the public perspective and guide the NEPA team towards publicly preferred alternatives.

The next phase of the pilot project is to allow the public to directly comment on the Virtual GIS-Based Platform by dropping a pin on the map and writing a comment. This will allow the public to view one another's comments, comment on a specific location or topic, and allow the team to obtain user location and concern(s) for heat map development. This next phase will be completed by December 2018, prior to the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) Hearing.

Implementation of a Document Management System for Agency Review

The MDOT-MTA is currently developing a Document Management System (DMS) to allow agencies to access secure documents (versus Dropbox-type systems or email) via a project website, allow agencies to review internally with staff and share with other agencies, if desired. The current system is siloed and does not promote collaboration among Cooperating and Participating agencies.

An online tool, such as a scalable document management system, will allow version control, document workflow, paperless scanning, email management, and a full complement of document control features to allow for efficient review by replacing manual paper driven procedures with electronic filing, routing, reviews, and approvals. Document management will automate the agency review process of NEPA and allow agencies to have ready access to all review comments.

MDOT-MTA will have the DMS available prior to agency review of the DEIS in December 2018.

Implementation of Internet-Based Outreach

The MDOT-MTA utilizes the SCMaglev website to provide the public and agencies with NEPA updates, schedules, and reports. The website currently includes information that is included in the first few chapters of an EA or EIS. Reports such as the Notice of Intent, Purpose and Need, Coordination Plan, Preliminary Alternatives Screening Report and public meeting materials (boards, announcements, comments) are all available on the website. MDOT-MTA will include links to field methodology, technical reports, and the DMS in the next phase of this pilot project.

Summary

The MDOT-MTA pilot project received praise from both agencies and the public because it utilizes tools people use on a daily basis and permits them to review information on their time and in their own home. Implementation of a DMS and Internet-Based outreach will also improve transparency, streamline the review process and reduce document size. If federal lead agencies allow state and local agencies to use these tools for NEPA documentation, EA's and EIS's may get to the CEQ's desired page number. Think, if the actual written document only summarized technical reports, mapping, and methodology or provided a link to the actual reports or mapping tool on the project website, the actual document will just highlight project impacts, mitigation and results. For example, the FRA MARC Northeast Maintenance Facility EA included 59 pages of wetland maps, methodology and wetland delineations. This information is easily viewed on one screen shot using the Virtual GIS-Based Platform. To take it a step further, if the three tools were implemented, the 506-page MARC Northeast Maintenance Facility EA would be 18 pages and the FTA Purple Line FEIS would be 136 pages versus 9,131 pages.

It's time to follow the guidance of the FAST Act and "create a smarter, more transparent, better-managed process for government review and approval of major capital projects." MDOT-MTA's pilot project demonstrated the usefulness of the Virtual GIS-Based Platform and received much praise from both the agencies and the public.

All Federal, State and Local agencies have limited resources (staff and funding) but they have the technology (GIS, Computer Systems, Online Services) to implement a Virtual GIS-Based Platform, Document Management System and Internet-Based Outreach. It's time to actually use existing tools to effectively and efficiently navigate the NEPA process.

REFERENCE

FAST Act § 1116; 23 U.S.C. 167 Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act or "FAST Act. Available at http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/fastact/factsheets/nhfpfs.cfm (accessed March 5, 2018).

Author - Kelly C. Lyles, CEP, is a Principal with KLT Group in Cockeysville, Maryland. Kelly became a CEP in 2012. Kelly can be reached at klyles@kltgroup.com or at 410-903-5043.

The Environmental Professional - Newsletter Topics 2018

For 2018, ABCEP will publish

The Environmental Professional on a bi-monthly basis.

We encourage our membership to provide articles related to the topics noted, but an article on any subject can be submitted at any time.

By focusing each newsletter on a specific topic, we hope to provide a more robust reading experience for our membership.

I look forward to an interesting and informative 2018!

Shari Cannon-Mackey, Editor

MAY-JUNE

Historic Preservation and Section 106 Compliance (due May 25, 2018)

JULY-AUGUST

Water Quality - Regulatory Changes and Future Outlook (due July 27, 2018)

SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER
CEPs in Transportation
(due September 28, 2018)

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER

CEPs in the Construction Sector
(due November 23, 2018)



REMINDER UPCOMING WEBINAR

NEPA Case Law Update

Monday, May 7th | 3:00-4:30pm (EST)

Now offering 1.5 AICP credits and ABCEP CEP Maintenance Hours for this webinar!

Want to up your professional game? Check out this educational opportunity!

THE EARTH INSTITUTE COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

The Earth Institute at Columbia University is offering a **new Master's program in Sustainability Science (M.S.),** starting in 2018. The program teaches students with backgrounds in science and engineering, how to:

- Use scientific methods to observe and monitor sustainability
- Analyze and model data to understand the environment
- Employ scientific tools to respond to pressing sustainability issues
- Integrate science in the decision-making of organizations

Both a part-time option and evening classes are available to accommodate working professionals. The <u>application</u> deadline for fall enrollment is **May 15, 2018**.

For more information visit http://science.ei.columbia.edu/

If you are affiliated with an academic institution or plan to host a training or educational opportunity, please share your information with the CEP Community through this newsletter.

Please send the details of your opportunity to Shari Cannon-Mackey, Newsletter Editor, at scannonmackey@burnsmcd.com.



The Certified Environmental Professional

The ABCEP Newsletter is published bi-monthly and is intended to be a:

- Communication vehicle for the Board of Trustees and ABCEP Committees to inform and engage with CEPs and CEP-ITs on current activities within ABCEP and its future direction.
- Forum to report on current and emerging environmental issues, regulation and policy changes, and professional trends.
- ◆ Forum to provide professional guidance and advice to expand the professional growth and knowledge of members.
- Means for members to communicate with one another on current accomplishments, interesting projects, or lessons learned on the job with new approaches and successful problem solving solutions.
- Platform to acknowledge, highlight, and welcome active CEPs and CEP-ITs.

All members are encouraged to be active in their profession and affiliated professional organization.

If you have an article or a topic of interest that you would like presented in *The Certified Environmental*

Professional newsletter please submit your completed article or topic request to Shari Cannon-Mackey, CEP ENV SP, at scannonmackey@burnsmcd.com; or to Andrea Bower at office@abcep.org.

Thank you,

Shari Cannon-Mackey, CEP, ENV SP; Editor

What are CEPs and CEP-ITs doing in your area?
Let us know - no event is too small nor too big!
Send your photos and descriptions to
Shari Cannon-Mackey at scannonmackey@burnsmcd.com

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