

## **Talking Points for Jill Hochman**

### **Transportation Border Working Group Meeting Vancouver, BC December 4, 2002**

#### **Streamlining the Environmental Process The September 2002 USDOT Executive Order**

- On September 18, 2002, President Bush signed the Executive Order on Environmental Stewardship and Transportation Infrastructure Project Reviews.
- The Executive Order directs the Secretary of Transportation to designate a list of high-priority transportation infrastructure projects to receive expedited agency reviews. The list is to be amended from time to time as the Secretary deems appropriate.
- The Executive Order established an Interagency Task Force within the Department of Transportation and Chaired by Secretary Mineta to: 1) monitor and assist agencies in their efforts to expedite a review of transportation infrastructure projects; 2) review projects on the priority list of projects; and 3) identify and promote policies that can effectively streamline the environmental approval process for transportation projects.
- In October DOT sent letters to Governors, MPOs and airports inviting them to nominate projects for inclusion on the list.
- On October 31, the Secretary announced an initial set of 7 projects. Those projects are the following:
  - Runway construction at Philadelphia International Airport;
  - Louisville-Southern Indiana Ohio River Bridges project;
  - Interstate 93 in New Hampshire;
  - Chittenden Circumferential Highway in Vermont;
  - Interstate 69 in Texas
  - Community and Environmental Transportation Acceptability Process in Riverside County, CA; and
  - St. Croix River Crossing in Stillwater (MN/WI)
- On November 1 DOT hosted a workshop to obtain input on stewardship and project selection criteria. Nominations were due November 12.

- Perhaps this week the Secretary will announce an additional 5-10 projects. The task force will also meet for the first time.
- FHWA has discussed the merits of including border and border crossing projects for inclusion on the high priority projects list. We invite nominations in this area, and have copies of the nomination form for those who are interested.
- A special FHWA website, <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/stewardshipeo> has been launched to access additional information on the Executive Order and streamlining initiatives.