February 2001

Dear Reader:

NYSDOT is proud to release its Environmental Procedures Manual (EPM) 2001. This manual continues to be the comprehensive source for the Department of Transportation’s policy, procedure and technical guidance on environmental matters relating to the planning, design, construction and maintenance of transportation facilities. As such, it is the basis for most of NYSDOT’s environmental quality assurance, training and continuous improvement processes. Revisions will be issued by Engineering Bulletin and will include an updated Table of Contents.

In addition to technical information, today’s version of the EPM begins to reflect NYSDOT’s Environmental Stewardship Ethic as presented in the Environmental Policy statement signed by Commissioner Boardman on June 20, 2000. Briefly stated, the policy calls for NYSDOT to do more than simply comply with environmental requirements. It calls for NYSDOT, as a public agency, to show leadership on environmental issues and to do what we can, not just what we must to improve the environment. A full statement of this policy may be found http://www.dot.state.ny.us/eab/files/policyen.pdf.

The EPM is also coming of age with respect to its use of the information super highway. As such, the manual is moving from a paper based system towards a fully accessible, real time, multi-linked, on-line information transfer tool residing on The Environmental Analysis Bureau’s web site at http://www.dot.state.ny.us/eab/epm.html. This will enable us to do a much better job of updating the information in this rapidly changing field in a more timely manner while making the material more accessible and comprehensive through the use of indexes and hot links. All this without the need to cut, process, and handle tons of wood fiber.

One thing that remains the same, however, is the philosophy that all NYSDOT environmental guidance be developed in consultation with the cognizant regulatory, resource and review agencies and that this be done on a continuous basis. Our intent here is to promote uniform best practices throughout NYSDOT in full “automatic” compliance with the letter and spirit of all State and Federal environmental laws and regulations.
Questions on project specific applications of the guidance presented in this manual should be directed to the appropriate Regional Environmental Contact/Landscape Manager. Suggestions for improvements are welcomed and should be directed to the appropriate EAB section. An EAB Services Directory is included as Appendix B. General question or concerns about on-line access to guidance documents can be directed to Ms. Debbie Delisle at 518-457-5672.

We hope and trust this document will help you understand the Department’s procedures for protecting, preserving and enhancing our environment.

Sincerely,

Gary R. McVoy, Ph.D.
Director, Environmental Analysis Bureau
NYSDOT