

A stylized, colorful illustration of a landscape. A dark grey road with a yellow center line winds through green hills and a blue river. The sky is light blue with white clouds. The text is overlaid on the top part of the illustration.

Federal Lands Highway **Project Development and Design Manual**



U.S. Department
of Transportation

**Federal Highway
Administration**

This page intentionally left blank.

PREFACE

Federal Lands Highway (FLH) has developed the *Project Development and Design Manual (PDDM)* to provide current policies and guidance for the interdisciplinary project development and design related activities performed by FLH Divisions and their consultants. It also serves as a guide for administrators, public officials and others, both within and outside FLH, who are responsible for advancing projects through the project development process.

The purpose of the *PDDM* is to:

- Provide current policies, standards, criteria and guidance for development and design of FLH projects;
- Be easily accessed by internal and external participants in the project development process;
- Be user-friendly with useful navigation and search tools;
- Provide immediate access to approved external references; and
- Be frequently updated to maintain credibility.

A primary goal of the *PDDM* is clarifying what is expected for FLH projects and delivering an end product that meets these expectations. The previous edition of the manual has been converted from a policy/procedures hard copy format manual to a policy/best practices, interactive web-based document with electronic links. Most theory-specific procedures or recommended methods, including computer software, are included in the updated *PDDM* by reference only. This manual is not intended to be a technical “how to” instructional guide.

The *PDDM* is a complete PDF web-based document allowing faster downloading, clearer formatting, word searches through Adobe Acrobat and hypertext links to reference documents and technical information. The manual defines FLH policies, standards and standard practices, criteria, guidance, and discretionary expectations for project development.

The FLH Discipline Champions and their respective teams prepared this edition of the *PDDM*, with assistance from engineering consultants. The FLH Discipline Champions wish to express their appreciation to all contributors who assisted in the development of this manual, specifically the contributions of the following:

- FLH Division Engineers and Directors,
- FLH Branch Chiefs,
- FLH Staff,
- Materials furnished by other State and Federal agencies,
- Research publications and materials furnished by the private sector,
- Consultants who contributed to the preparation, and
- Federal land management agency partners and other reviewers.

REVISIONS

See the [Revision Log](#) for PDDM transmittal notices. The following revisions have been made to the PDDM:

- [August 2025](#) – update to Chapter 2 to reflect changes to Programs
- [January 2025](#) – general update to Chapter 10
- [March 2024](#) – new Chapter for *Project Management* (temporarily assigned to Chapter 2A pending an upcoming chapter reorganization).
- [July 2018](#) – added new Section 5.4.6 describing use of Unmanned Aircraft Systems on FLH projects.
- [March 2018](#) – update to Chapter 12
- [March 2018](#) – update to Sections 1.1.3 (Risk), 1.1.5 (Revisions and Updates), and other corrections throughout Chapter 1.