

Tier 1 Checklist

Environmental Process

Overall Process
 Concept and Resource Identification
 Preliminary Design, Technical Studies, and ROW Certification
 Final Design Including Re-Evaluations

OVERALL PROCESS

Can locate GDOT Ecology guidance materials.	Guidance Documents and Organization	<i>Enter Completion Date or List/Tally to Track Progress</i>
	On your web browser, bookmark the Ecology Environmental Procedures Guidebooks website. Browse the site to review site organization and topics.	
	Locate and browse the following resources/folders on the Ecology SharePoint and review their contents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Announcements: Review the most recent announcements for updates and news. • GTPQ Meeting Minutes: Review published minutes and/or watch the most recent GTPQ meeting(s). • GDOT Templates Folder (including companion resources folder) • Agency Agreements Folder • Mapping Resources Folder • Agency Contact Information Folder • Document Submittal Procedures Folder • ECO Cheat Sheet document 	
	Application	
	<i>Optional: Pass the GDOT Ecology Guidebooks Exam on GDOT's Employee Learning Management System (ELMS).</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LMS link (for external users): Certifications & Training - Georgia DOT • ELMS link (for internal users): elms.dot.ga.gov • Course number: 484OES001WBT54913 	

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Understands and can apply various programmatic agreements.	Programmatic Agreement Basics	
	Read: GDOT Programmatic Agreements Guidebook	
	Read: GDOT Section 404 – Local Coordination Procedures – Overview Guidebook	
	Read: Joint Coordination Procedures (JCP) (<i>Standard Operating Procedures [SOPs] 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7.</i>)	
	Review: GDOT Bats Collaborative Programmatic Agreement	
	Read: GDOT Bats Collaborative Programmatic Agreement Users Guide	
	Application	
	With a mentor or manager, review 5 projects and determine whether work activities qualify for a programmatic determination under the JCP SOP #2 (<i>Programmatic Determinations for Listed Species</i>).	
Identify Agency review timelines stated in the JCP for each Endangered Species Act consultation type (No Effect, Informal, Formal) and for Fish & Wildlife Coordination Act.		
Using the Bats Programmatic Agreement (BPA), determine the appropriate avoidance measures and effect determinations for bat species for 5 projects and discuss your determinations with mentor or manager.		
Understands the three main phases of the Plan Development Process (PDP) from an ecology perspective; knows what ecology deliverables are required and when at each stage of PDP.	Schedule Basics	
	Read: GDOT Baseline Schedules Guidebook	
	Read: GDOT Project Milestones Guidebook	
	Read: GDOT Ecology Project Basics Guidebook	
	Review: Low Impact Bridge Program Manual (<i>Appendix E flowcharts</i>)	
	Application	
Describe to a mentor or manager what ecology tasks & deliverables are required during each of the following phases of the PDP: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concept and Resource Identification • Preliminary Design, Technical Studies, and Right-of-Way (ROW) Certification • Final Design including Re-evaluations 		

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Can locate and utilize various GDOT Ecology Project Management tools.	Project Management Tools and Trackers	
	Locate the OES All Projects Spreadsheet on the Office of Environmental Services SharePoint (OES SharePoint).	
	For 5 projects, use the “Look Up” tab on the OES All Projects Spreadsheet to review the NEPA, Ecology, and Permit comments, comparing that information with the dates populated in the table. Based on the information in the comments, for each project, determine: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The current PDP milestone. The next PDP milestone. What ecology documents have been submitted. What is the next ecology-related action on the project. Note any improvements or edits you might make to the comments entered to clarify those items. 	
	<i>Internal Only:</i> Locate the following tracker spreadsheets on the OES, Ecology or IOEQ SharePoint: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 404 Permit Tracking Buffer Variance Tracking GDOT Element Occurrence (EO) Tracking Spreadsheet Document Review Times Tracker 	
	<i>Internal Only (only applicable for ecologists entering TPro comments):</i> Review: TPro Comment Guidance	
	<i>Internal Only:</i> Search 5 projects on TPro and review the NEPA, Ecology, and Permit comments. Based on the information in the comments, for each project, determine: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The current PDP milestone. The next PDP milestone. What ecology documents have been submitted. What is the next ecology-related action on the project. Note any improvements or edits you might make to the comments entered to clarify those items. 	
<i>Internal Only:</i> Provide TPro comments for 5 projects.		

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Understands when to engage GDOT ecologist/consultant ecologist/team leader/manager.	Team Members	
	Read: GDOT Roles and Responsibilities Guidebook	
	Application	
	With a mentor or manager, establish your network of internal and external resources (people and guidance). Discuss roles and responsibilities of your network members and establish guidelines for when it is appropriate to reach out to GDOT contacts.	
Understands the difference between the different report templates and when each is appropriate for a project.	Ecology Templates	
	Read: Ecology Project Assessment Worksheet (PAW) 2.0 Guidance and note what projects are applicable for the PAW template.	
	Review: PAW Template (including the guidance text)	
	Read: Project Types for the Minor Project Report Template	
	Review: Minor Report Template and General Report Template <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note how the Minor and General Reports differ in content, format, and what project types each is appropriate for. • Review the highlighted guidance text within the templates. 	
	Application	
	With a mentor or manager, review project information for 5 projects and discuss which report template (General, Minor, PAW) would be best.	
Discuss with a mentor or manager how the content of an ecology report changes between the Ecology Resource and Survey Report (ERSR), Assessment of Effects Report (AOER), and Addendum (ADDM).		

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Knows what project meetings an ecologist is required to attend; prepares for project meetings.	Project Meetings	
	Review project meeting minutes for 5 projects.	
	Read: GDOT Field Plan Review – Environmental Responsibilities Guidebook	
	Review: Example Field Plan Review Comments	
	Watch: Bluebeam Training on how to submit comments for a Field Plan Review Meeting using Bluebeam Studio.	
	Application	
	With a mentor or manager, attend/shadow: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 Project Status Meetings (typically monthly) • 1 Concept Team Meeting • 1 Avoidance & Minimization Measures Meeting (A3M) • 1 Field Plan Review (FPR) Meeting (Can be Preliminary or Final FPR) • 1 Constructability Review Meeting • <i>Optional (Internal Only)– Part of an OES Let Status Meeting</i> 	
Take meeting minutes for 5 of any of the above-mentioned meeting types and discuss any topics that weren't clear with another attendee.		
Understands GDOT technical writing standards.	Quality Documents	
	Review: GDOT Environmental Quality Management Guidebook	
	Review the guidance text and species narrative examples in the General Report Template .	
Understands GDOT consultant document review process and timelines.	Document Reviews	
	Review: OES Consultant Document Review Process	
	Review: GDOT Ecology Consultant Document Submittal Checklist	
	Review: CMIS Evaluation Guidance to understand general expectations for reports.	
	On the OES SharePoint , find and review the latest Organizational Chart.	
	Review: Expedited Agency Review Requests Guidance	
	Application	
For 5 projects, locate the All Projects Spreadsheet on the OES SharePoint to identify the OES project team members.		

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Understands GDOT consultant document review process and timelines. (cont.)	For 5 projects, identify the assigned GDOT ecologist and locate their contact information.	
	Reach out to the assigned GDOT/consultant ecologist to establish upcoming report deliverable dates for 1 project.	
	With a mentor or manager, discuss when and how to request expedited review from GDOT and/or agencies.	
	Gain access to the GDOT File Transfer Protocol (FTP) site.	
	Create a folder on the FTP for a new project and upload 1 report and associated documents for GDOT review.	
	<i>Optional: Review folder structure and documents uploaded for a previous project on the FTP.</i>	
	Submit 10 documents to the assigned GDOT ecologist/primary reviewer for GDOT review.	
	<p><i>Internal Only:</i> With your team leader, review the following items related to the internal document review process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review timelines and roles (primary review, secondary/intermediate review, and Team Leader review) • Team Leader Review Tracking Spreadsheets • Review Editors in Chief (EIC) Teams channel (OneNote and meeting minutes) and discuss how to avoid preferential comments during GDOT review. 	
	<i>Internal Only:</i> Use a PDF editor to add comments to 5 documents (can be any type). After Team Leader review is complete for each, consolidate comments prior to returning the document to the consultant for revision.	
	<i>Internal Only:</i> Locate the Document Review Times Tracker on the Ecology SharePoint and enter information and dates for 5 projects.	
Understands Ecology document finalization processes and file organization.	Final Documents	
	<i>Internal Only:</i> For 5 projects, browse the project folders to learn where various files are stored and note the file naming conventions.	
	Using a PDF editing software (Bluebeam recommended), create a digital signature to be used to sign final documents.	

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Understands various Ecology document transmittal processes.	Transmitting Documents	
	Locate transmittal letter and transmittal email templates on the Ecology SharePoint and review the guidance text in each.	
	Locate the Transmittal Addresses and Carbon Copy List document used to identify which agencies receive each document type on the Ecology SharePoint.	
	For Ecology Report (PAW, ERSR, AOE, ADDM) transmittal, do the following:	
	Using the U.S Fish and Wildlife Service Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) website, create a project and add the following members: GDOT Ecologist, GDOT Team Leader, and managers per your firm’s guidelines.	
	<i>Internal Only:</i> Add agency representatives to a project in IPaC using the Districts and Agency Contacts Map and Transmittal Addresses and Carbon Copy List on the Ecology SharePoint.	
	<i>Internal Only:</i> Upload a copy of the final, signed report to IPaC, ProjectWise, and the FTP site (if applicable).	
	<i>Internal Only:</i> Download the appropriate transmittal email template from the Ecology SharePoint, fill it out, and save the transmitted email to ProjectWise and Project Files.	
	<i>Internal Only:</i> For USACE documents, do the following:	
	Information on using the Regulatory Request System is forthcoming.	
	<i>Internal Only:</i> For Buffer Variance Applications, do the following:	
	Upload a copy of the final, signed report to ProjectWise, and the FTP site (if applicable).	
	Download the appropriate transmittal email template from the Ecology SharePoint, fill it out, and save the transmitted email to ProjectWise and Project Files.	
	<i>Internal Only:</i> For GDOT Quick Response Projects	
For 1 project, respond to the project review request email. Send project approval to initial requestor (typically the OES Administrative Assistant).		

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Understands various Ecology document transmittal processes (cont.).	<i>Internal Only:</i> For transmittal of received permits and buffer variances, do the following:	
	Download the appropriate transmittal email template from the Ecology SharePoint and review the required information.	
	For 2 projects, using the GDOT District Organizational Charts, locate contact information for the Area Engineer and District Construction.	
	Transmit 1 404 permit to the Project Team and appropriate Construction Offices. Save the transmitted email to ProjectWise and Project Files.	
	Transmit 1 Buffer Variance to the Project Team and appropriate Construction Offices. Save the transmitted email to ProjectWise and Project Files.	
	<i>Optional: Transmit a non-reporting 404 permit to the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Environmental Protection Division (EPD). Save the transmitted email to ProjectWise and Project Files.</i>	
	<i>Internal Only:</i> For Special Provision Transmittal, do the following:	
	Locate and attach Species Detail Sheets to final Special Provisions for 2 projects.	
	Using the internal library on the Ecology SharePoint, locate and fill out the Special Provision transmittal email template.	
	For 2 projects, using the GDOT District Organizational Charts, locate contact information for the Area Engineer, District Construction.	
Transmit 2 Special Provisions to the Project Team and appropriate Construction Offices and save the transmitted email to ProjectWise and Project Files.		
Understands the scope review process. <i>Internal Only (only applicable for ecologists with 6+ months of work experience).</i>	<i>Internal Only:</i> Project Scoping and REMEDY Requests	
	Read: GDOT Scope Preparation and Deliverables Guidebook	
	Review: Automated Scoping Spreadsheet Tool Guidance	
	Complete GDOT Remedy and Scoping Training (recorded video, ask you manager for file location).	
	Attend 1 Scoping Meeting.	
	Complete a Stage 1 Remedy Request for 2 projects. For each project, fill out the Automated Spreadsheet Tool (excel spreadsheet).	
	Complete a Stage 2 Remedy Request for 2 projects.	
	Complete a Stage 3 Remedy Request for 2 projects.	

CONCEPT AND RESOURCE IDENTIFICATION

Can process and organize field data. Prepares and sends field delineations to design for inclusion on plans.	Data Processing	
	Scan field notes and data forms for 5 projects and place in project folder.	
	For 5 projects, label all photographs of resources with the resource name, direction, and if applicable, “upstream”/“downstream” and “inlet”/“outlet”.	
	Create shapefiles for waters delineations on 5 projects, ensuring that all features are labeled in the attribute table.	
	Convert 5 shapefiles into DGN format.	
	Correct stream delineations using topographic survey data on 5 projects.	
Understands when to request technical assistance/schedule field meetings with agencies.	Site Visits	
	Attend/shadow 2 site visits with USACE.	
	Attend/shadow 2 site visits with GADNR-EPD.	
	<i>Optional: Attend/shadow 1 site visit with GADNR-CRD.</i>	
Can prepare an Ecology Resource Survey Report (ERSR) with assistance.	Ecology Resource Survey Report (ERSR)	
	Prepare a set of ERSR map figures for 5 projects.	
	Review 5 previously transmitted ERSRs.	
	<i>Optional: Review GDOT V1 comments & responses on 5 previously transmitted ERSRs.</i>	
	Prepare 5 ERSRs.	
Can prepare a Delineation Concurrence (DC) with assistance.	Delineation Concurrence (DC)	
	Review 5 previously transmitted DCs.	
	<i>Optional: Review GDOT V1 comments & responses on 5 previously transmitted DCs.</i>	
	Prepare 5 DCs.	

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Understands when protected species surveys are required, can prepare a non-aquatic Protected Species Survey Report (PSSR) with assistance.	Protected Species Survey Report (PSSR)	
	Read: GDOT Protected Species Survey, Avoidance and Minimization Guidebook	
	Coordinate and visit 2 reference sites for protected plants.	
	Review previously transmitted PSSRs: 2 plant, 2 terrestrial.	
	<i>Optional: Review GDOT V1 comments & responses on 5 previously transmitted PSSRs.</i>	
	Prepare 5 plant PSSRs and 2 terrestrial animal PSSRs.	
Understands what projects require the LCP process and what general steps are involved.	Local Coordination Procedures (LCP) Checkpoints	
	Review: GDOT Section 404 LCP Overview Guidebook	

PRELIMINARY DESIGN, TECHNICAL STUDIES, & ROW CERTIFICATION

Understands the purpose of and can prepare for A3M.	Avoidance and Minimization Measures Meeting (A3M)	
	Read: GDOT Avoidance & Minimization Measures Meeting Guidebook	
	Review: A3M Process Letter	
	Review: A3M Checklist	
	Review previous A3M meeting minutes for 4 projects.	
	Application	
	Attend/shadow 2 A3Ms.	
	Prior to attending your first A3M as the assigned ecologist, do the following with a mentor or manager: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review A3M plans, ensuring that all resources and Environmentally Sensitive Areas are correctly shown on plans. • Enter each resource into the A3M Tracker. • For each resource, note whether the resource is proposed to be impacted, and list possible avoidance & minimization measures to discuss at the meeting. 	
	Take meeting minutes for 5 A3Ms.	

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Understands when a Scope of Analysis (SOA) is needed and can prepare an SOA.	Scope of Analysis (SOA)	
	Read: GDOT Assessment of Effects Guidebook (Scope of Analysis Section)	
	Read: Scope of Analysis Guidance	
	Review 2 previously transmitted SOAs.	
	<i>Optional: Review GDOT V1 comments & responses on 2 previously transmitted SOAs.</i>	
	Prepare 1 SOA.	
Understands how to review engineering plans for impacts to ecology resources with assistance.	Plan Reading	
	Read: GDOT Toolkit: Impact Example Plan Sheets	
	Read: GDOT Toolkit: Stream Diversion	
	Review: GDOT Water Impact Assessment Guidebook (Impact Calculation section)	
	Review: GDOT Protected Species Survey, Avoidance and Minimization Guidebook (Avoidance and Minimization Measures Section)	
	Review 5 sets of engineering plans and provide comments to design (if needed).	
	Review: Example Field Plan Review Comments	
Can prepare an Assessment of Effects (AOE) report with no or minor impacts to resources with assistance.	Assessment of Effects (AOE) Report	
	Read: GDOT Assessment of Effects Guidebook	
	Review 3 previously transmitted AOE's using the minor report template.	
	<i>Optional: Review GDOT V1 comments & responses on 3 previously transmitted AOE's using the minor report template.</i>	
	Prepare 3 AOE's utilizing either the minor or general report template.	
	<i>Recommended: Prepare 1 PAW report.</i>	
Understands species effect determinations and the high-level difference between various ESA Section 7 consultation types.	Coordination with USFWS	
	For 5 projects determine the appropriate effect determinations for all species listed in early coordination letters and discuss your determinations with manager or mentor.	

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Understands how to complete USACE Qualitative Assessment and Adverse Impacts Worksheets and EDGES Coordination Slip.	Coordination with USACE	
	Using the Regulatory In-lieu Fee and Bank Information Tracking System (RIBITS) website, locate, download, and complete the most recent version of the following worksheets for all resources (as applicable) on 5 projects: For all resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Georgia Stream Qualitative Assessment • Georgia Freshwater Forested Wetland Qualitative Assessment • Georgia Saltwater Tidal Wetland Qualitative Assessment For resources with impacts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualitative Worksheets for Stream Adverse Impacts • Qualitative Worksheets for Wetland Adverse Impacts 	
	Review: Effects Determination Guidance for Endangered & Threatened Species (EDGES) .	
	Application	
	Complete the EDGES Coordination Slip (found on page 4 of USACE’s Guidance Letter) for 5 projects.	
Understands when a Special Provision (SP) is needed.	Special Provisions	
	Read: GDOT Assessment of Effects Guidebook (Special Provisions Section)	
	Review Special Provision templates on the Ecology SharePoint.	
	Review 5 previously written Special Provisions.	
	Prepare 3 Special Provisions for projects.	
Can determine which permit type is appropriate with assistance.	Permitting	
	Read: GDOT Toolkit: Culvert Conditions	
	Read: GDOT Nationwide Permits Guidebook	
	Read: GDOT Regional General Permits Guidebook	
	Read: GDOT Individual Permits Guidebook	

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Understands when a buffer variance would be required, and when exemption areas apply with assistance.	Buffer Variances	
	Review: GDOT Buffer Variance Guidebook	
	Review: EPD Coldwater streams KMZ	
For projects located along the coast, understands when a SERO form or Essential Fish Habitat Report is needed.	Coordination with NOAA Fisheries	
	Review: Section 7: Types of Endangered Species Act Consultations in the Greater Atlantic Region	
	Read: Guide to EFH Consultations (page 4-12)	
	Discuss with a mentor or manager what project activities would require NOAA Section 7 or EFH consultation.	
Understands the purpose of the Green Sheet/ECT and ERIT and can review them for ecological resources.	Tracking Environmental Commitments	
	Review green sheet/ECT and ERIT for 5 projects and provide comments, if needed.	
	Review templates and guidance in the Environmental Commitments Table folder in the NEPA Library Folder on the OES SharePoint.	

FINAL DESIGN INCLUDING RE-EVALUATIONS

Knows what Lockdown is and why it's an important milestone to be aware of and track.	Lockdown Plans	
	Read: GDOT Environmental Lockdown Plan Schedule	
Can prepare an Addendum to the Ecology Assessment of Effects Report (ADDM) for projects with no or only minor impacts to resources with assistance.	Addendum Report	
	Read: GDOT Assessment of Effects Guidebook (ERS AOE Addenda Section) . Note the types of project changes that should be captured in an ADDM.	
	Review 3 previously transmitted ADDMs.	
	<i>Optional: Review GDOT V1 comments & responses on 3 previously transmitted ADDMs.</i>	
	Prepare 3 ADDMs.	

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Can prepare a Pre-construction Notification (PCN) with assistance.	USACE Permitting	
	Review 3 previously transmitted PCNs.	
	<i>Recommended: Review at least 1 Regional Permit (RP) PCN and 1 Nationwide Permit (NWP) PCN.</i>	
	<i>Optional: Review GDOT V1 comments & responses on 3 previously transmitted PCNs.</i>	
	Prepare 2 PCNs (RP or NWP).	
	Coordinate with the GDOT Special Projects Coordinator to identify a compensatory mitigation plan.	
Can prepare a Buffer Variance Application (BVA) with assistance.	EPD Permitting	
	Review 3 previously transmitted BVAs.	
	<i>Optional: Review GDOT V1 comments & responses on 3 previously transmitted BVAs.</i>	
	Prepare 1 BVA.	
	Coordinate with the GDOT Special Projects Coordinator to identify compensatory mitigation plan for 1 BVA.	
	Understands when a Jurisdictional Determination (JD) line verification is required, and when a Revocable License is needed.	DNR – Coastal Resources Division (CRD) Permitting
Read: GDOT Miscellaneous Permits Guidebook (Coastal Marshlands Protection Act and Revocable License Sections)		
Understands when coordination with Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) may be required.	TVA Permitting	
	Read: GDOT Miscellaneous Permits Guidebook (Tennessee Valley Authority Permit Section)	