

Connor McGahan 2023

New Hampshire
DOT
Department of Transportation

Project Environmental Process Manual

ENV 1 Manual 3

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Approved by: Deputy Commissioner

7/28/2023

Date

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A Note to the Reader:

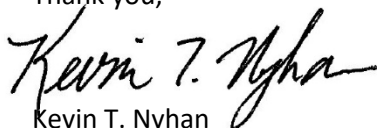
“The NH Department of Transportation’s (NHDOT) activities affect the cultural and natural environment through land use, natural resource consumption, and transportation corridor development/redevelopment and maintenance activities. Operating in compliance with applicable state and federal regulations, NHDOT will seek to avoid, minimize, and/or mitigate environmental impacts when planning, constructing, and maintaining the state’s transportation infrastructure, and when providing for public safety and the economic strength of the state.”

This policy statement from [ENV 1: Environmental Policy](#) guides all NHDOT activities to ensure that reasonable and appropriate consideration is given to protect the natural and cultural resources of the state in the delivery of all phases of project development and implementation, and in fulfillment of **“Transportation Excellence.”** In furtherance of this goal, *“the Bureau of Environment’s principal role is to advance the Department’s mission by evaluating transportation construction projects and maintenance activities and making recommendations on ways to avoid, minimize, and/or mitigate impacts to natural, cultural, and socioeconomic resources. The Bureau also acts as a liaison among the Department and federal, state, local, and private environmental organizations. Coordinated interagency efforts address such issues as water quality, air quality, noise, wetlands, invasive species, plants, wildlife, historic resources, archaeological sites, cemeteries, stonewalls, landscapes, farmlands, solid waste, hazardous waste, environmental permitting, and regulatory compliance.”*

This manual is written primarily for NHDOT staff undertaking environmental reviews, and often references internal policies, procedures, and processes. However, this manual may also be a valuable tool for consultants, and other organizations undertaking these reviews on behalf of NHDOT, as well as for those consultants completing environmental reviews for Local Public Agency (LPA) projects, as a supplement to the LPA Manual and associated Notices. As such, some linked documents in the manual may not be available to entities external to NHDOT. Nevertheless, the information contained herein has proven time and again to result in a transparent, coordinated, and multidisciplinary approach to successfully identify, evaluate, and document environmental impacts.

Environmental reviews are a process, and like all processes they can be improved upon as review systems are developed or improved, and as regulations change. Suggestions for improvement are always welcome, and may be sent to Bureau16@dot.nh.gov.

Thank you,



Kevin T. Nyhan
Bureau of Environment Administrator

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Project Environmental Process Manual
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Project Environmental Process Manual

Purpose and Overview

PURPOSE

This manual is issued by NHDOT to facilitate the documentation of environmental impacts in a manner that complies with the requirements of the [National Environmental Policy Act](#) (NEPA), and [ENV 1: Environmental Policy](#). It provides standardized baseline procedures necessary to satisfy the analysis requirements of NEPA and has been developed to provide NHDOT environmental personnel with a guide for assessing impacts as an integral part of the transportation project development process. Its primary purpose is to ensure complete documentation of project impacts in accordance with the laws, regulations, policies, and procedures applicable to each segment of the natural, cultural, and socio-economic environment.

AUTHORITY

This manual is issued under the authority of NHDOT [EX 1 Standard Operating System](#) policy and approved by the Deputy Commissioner of the NHDOT. The NHDOT Responsible Office is the Bureau of Environment (BOE), and the contact person is the BOE Administrator.

SCOPE

This manual shall apply to all employees in all organizational units of NHDOT responsible for undertaking environmental reviews of NHDOT projects or programs.

REFERENCES

This Manual is supported by [ENV 1: Environmental Policy](#), the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, [23 CFR 771](#), [23 CFR 774](#), and [Technical Advisory 6640.8A](#).

GENERAL

Operating in compliance with applicable state and federal regulations, NHDOT will seek to avoid, minimize, and/or mitigate environmental impacts when planning, constructing, and maintaining the state's transportation infrastructure, and when providing for public safety and the economic strength of the state.

TRAINING

Training to support this manual is provided on an as-needed basis by BOE. Annually, NEPA training needs are evaluated by the Bureau of Environment and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) as part of a regular program assessment. Identified training needs are prioritized and scheduled as necessary and/or as available.

OVERVIEW

Since the passage of NEPA in 1969, assessing the environmental impacts of transportation projects receiving federal aid or requiring federal approval has become an integral part of project development. The BOE is the primary NHDOT office for conducting environmental investigations. This manual is intended to provide evaluators conducting those investigations guidance in accordance with applicable rules and regulations. The evaluation procedures outlined in this manual are applicable to all transportation projects funded, assisted, conducted, regulated, or approved by FHWA. It is also applicable to NHDOT projects which are not funded or approved by FHWA (procedure [ENV 1-2: Environmental Documentation of State-Funded Projects](#)). This manual is a guide for the evaluation of those projects as well, with additional information provided in [Section III.E.3 of this manual](#).

This manual is not intended to be all inclusive. It is designed to make the user aware of the issues that may arise during project development, and outlines the minimum steps required to address those issues. The environmental evaluation and assessment process for each subject area is variable and complex. When detailed analysis of a particular issue is required the user should visit other sources of information that will provide guidance for the thorough investigation of the anticipated impacts.

Identifying the key environmental resources and impacts early in the project development process helps determine the level of documentation and the effort required to successfully complete the analysis process.

The manual provides:

1. A brief discussion of the transportation planning process;
2. An outline of approach on how to assess project-level impacts;
3. A baseline level of information that enables environmental personnel to conduct project assessments in a more effective and efficient manner;
4. A description of the level of analysis required to complete an acceptable environmental document;
5. A key to additional sources of information when more detailed analyses are required;
6. An outline of the requirements for different levels of project documentation; and
7. A brief discussion of subsequent phases in the delivery and operation of a project.

Section I: Transportation Planning

The NHDOT constantly looks ahead to plan for the transportation needs of New Hampshire. Central to the planning process, which is managed by the NHDOT Bureau of Planning and Community Assistance, is public involvement which takes into consideration the needs of numerous stakeholders. Many participants are involved to identify a need and develop a project from concept through construction in the project development phase. The NHDOT is required to develop short- and long-range transportation plans, programs, and projects so the state may accommodate current and future transportation needs.

More comprehensive information may be found by visiting the Planning and Community Assistance website at <https://www.nh.gov/dot/org/projectdevelopment/planning/index.htm>.

A. Statewide Planning Process

New Hampshire is divided into nine Regional Planning Commissions (RPCs). Five of them (Central, Lakes Region, North Country, Southwest, and Upper Valley/Lake Sunapee) are basically rural in nature but may contain small urban areas (5,000-50,000 population). The four remaining planning commissions (Nashua, Rockingham, Southern, and Strafford) cover areas with a central city, or group of cities that have a population greater than 50,000. These areas are designated by the Governor as Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs).

The MPOs are required to develop a twenty-year, project-specific, long range transportation plan and a four-year financially constrained Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The development of these two items must be done cooperatively with NHDOT and the providers of public transit services.

The Rural RPCs also prepare long range transportation plans which may or may not be project specific. Some Rural RPCs also prepare TIPs for their regions.

Other key participants in the transportation planning process include the general public, legislators, federal, state, and local officials, other state and federal agencies, and special interest groups.

B. Statewide Transportation Plans

The NHDOT has developed a statewide transportation planning process in compliance with federal and state laws for all areas of the state. This planning is reflected in the development of a federally required Long Range Statewide Transportation Plan (LRSTP) that is not project-specific, the state-required Ten-Year Transportation Improvement Plan (TYP) that is project-specific, and a statewide program of projects as defined in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP). Statewide transportation needs are identified through the LRSTP, TYP, and the STIP in cooperation with the RPCs and the MPOs.

1. Long Range Statewide Transportation Plan (LRSTP)

The LRSTP is an essential tool for identifying future transportation trends and needs. By looking at the present transportation system, the transportation needs for twenty or more years into the future are identified through a series of long-range transportation goals and objectives. In addition, the LRSTP reviews and addresses transportation demand and usage for various modes of transportation. The LRSTP is developed cooperatively with the RPCs and MPOs to achieve consistency between regional and

state transportation plans. The final LRSTP is adopted by NHDOT as a guide for the future development of the transportation system, and then forwarded to FHWA and FTA for their acceptance.

2. State Ten Year Transportation Plan (TYP)

New Hampshire [RSA 228:99](#) and [RSA 240](#) require that NHDOT propose a plan for improvements to the State's transportation system every two years. The purpose of the TYP is to develop and implement a plan allowing New Hampshire to fully participate in federally supported transportation improvement projects as well as to outline projects and programs funded with State transportation dollars.

Project recommendations are developed and prioritized by the RPCs, MPOs and NHDOT. The NHDOT proposes a Draft TYP to the Governor's Advisory Commission on Intermodal Transportation (GACIT). After a series of public meetings, GACIT modifies and adopts the TYP, forwards it to the Governor for review, and it moves through the traditional legislative process. At the end of the legislative process, the approval of the TYP marks the priority direction for NHDOT to follow in the development of capital projects.

The TYP is updated every two years. Once adopted, it forms the basis for the STIP and TIP documents.

3. Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)

The STIP is developed within the goals of the LRSTP and TYP. The STIP is a federally required four-year plan that provides details about transportation projects that are being implemented in the state. The STIP contains federally funded projects, in addition to regionally significant projects. The STIP is required per [23 CFR 450.218](#) to include a financial plan that shows all currently available funding and is financially constrained. It is also a component of the TYP, which is required by state law.

Each MPO prepares a four-year TIP for their region. Their TIPs are guided by the goals and objectives outlined in their long-range regional transportation plans. The MPO TIP must come from their project-specific regional long range transportation plan, and also reflect the approved TYP.

The STIP must include all projects included in the MPO TIPs. For non-MPO areas, NHDOT will utilize the TIPs prepared by the RPCs during the development of the STIP, although a project-by-project inclusion is not required.

Opportunities to comment on the TIPs/STIP can be made during the public comment periods that are held by all of the MPOs and NHDOT as the documents are developed. The STIP and TIPs are all fully updated once every two years.

Section II: Assessing Environmental Resources and Impacts

The project development process includes the design and construction of safe, efficient, economical, and environmentally compatible intermodal transportation systems. The environmental review and assessment process, within overall project development, can be divided into four (4) general categories:

- Project Initiation and Management
- Data Collection/Resource Identification
- Stakeholder Coordination/Public Involvement
- Assessment of Environmental Effects/Project Classification

Following resource identification and assessment of impacts, the four (4) subsequent steps in the environmental review process include:

- Environmental Documentation
- Environmental Permitting
- Construction
- Post-Construction Monitoring

A. Project Initiation and Management

The environmental evaluation process begins when the BOE Administrator, BOE Project Management Section Chief, or the BOE Operations Management Section Chief receives a:

- [Project Development “Request for Environmental Documentation”](#) form from a project’s originating bureau, within the Division of Project Development, or
- [Operations “Request for Environmental Documentation”](#) form from a project’s originating bureau, within the Division of Operations.

Both forms are referred to as a “Green Sheet.” The Green Sheet contains a list of available information, a brief description of the project, as well as a synopsis of the need for the project and a list of reasonable alternatives to the project. It also contains the names of contact personnel within the Department, a tentative schedule for advertising for Project Development and/or a tentative work start date for Operations, and a location map.

After receipt of the Green Sheet, the BOE Administrator or either section chief reviews the project, and creates a project listing in the BOE [“Projects Database,”](#) and in the computer file management structure. The project is then assigned to the appropriate staff member (“Environmental Manager”) for evaluation and documentation. Project assignments are based on the scope of the project, anticipated issues, and experience and workload of available staff.

After project assignment, the Environmental Manager should discuss the project with the Project Manager and/or appropriate lead person from the originating bureau. The amount of information

available at the time of project assignment varies from project to project. Base plans of the project area which show existing ground detail have oftentimes been developed. Initial design concepts may already be in progress, and certain design alternatives considered. Regardless, general information about design features, the project area, special considerations, and known restrictions, etc. should be known. This discussion will give the Environmental Manager advance knowledge of relevant factors before beginning the environmental investigation process.

B. Data Collection/Resource Identification

A thorough investigation of a project’s environmental impacts may require gathering information from numerous sources (both office and field sources). Information about a specific project, or information about a general project area, is available in many forms, including plans, maps, aerial photographs, databases, etc.

Environmental resources considered during the evaluation process can include any/all the following, with the most typical resources/issues requiring evaluation identified in **bold**.

Natural Resources

Coastal Zone

Endangered Species

Floodplains/Floodways

Conservation Lands

Groundwater

Designated Rivers

Surface Waters

Water Quality

Wetlands

Wildlife and Fisheries

Wild and Scenic Rivers

Cultural Resources

Aesthetics

Archaeology

Cemeteries

Historic Properties

Stonewalls

Socio-Economic Resources

Air Quality

Businesses

Community Svcs.

Construction

Displacements

Energy Needs

Env. Justice

Farmlands

Contamination

Land Acquisition

Neighborhoods

Noise

Public Lands

Recreation

Safety

Transportation Patterns

Utilities

1. Desktop Review

The NHDOT retains information on past projects, as well as projects in construction and in the design phase, which may aid in evaluating a current project. These resources include:

- NHDOT Plan and Proposal Inventory (<https://gis.dot.nh.gov/reports/plan-inventory/>)
- NHDOT Roads and Projects Viewer (<https://granitweb.sr.unh.edu/Geocortex/WebViewer/?app=9ec207d1970d4ddab771dce0d57f82aa>)

Other web-based systems that are useful in evaluating the environmental effects of a project include:

- NH Natural Heritage Bureau (NHB) DataCheck Tool (<https://www4.des.state.nh.us/NHB-DataCheck/>).

- US Fish & Wildlife Service 'Information for Planning and Conservation' (IPaC) tool (<http://ecos.fws.gov/ipac/>).
- NH Fish & Game Department, as necessary, should there be concerns identified through either the IPaC tool or NHB review (<https://wildlife.state.nh.us/wildlife/environmental-review.html>).
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Essential Fish Habitat Mapper (<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/resource/map/essential-fish-habitat-mapper>).
- NH Aquatic Restoration Mapper (<https://nhdes.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=21173c9556be4c52bc20ea706e1c9f5a>).
- NH Office of Strategic Initiatives Floodplain Management Program, for a project that encroaches on a regulatory floodway; creates new obstructions in the 100 year floodplain; or alters any drainage patterns (<https://www.nh.gov/osi/planning/programs/fmp/index.htm>).
- NH Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) Wetlands Permit Planning Tool (<https://nhdeswppt.unh.edu/Html5Viewer/index.html?viewer=WPPT.gvh>)
- NHDES OneStop Data Mapper (<https://www4.des.state.nh.us/onestopdatamapper/onestopmapper.aspx>)
- NHDES Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) Sampling Map (<https://nhdes.maps.arcgis.com/apps/View/index.html?appid=66770bef141c43a98a445c54a17720e2&extent=-73.5743,42.5413,-69.6852,45.4489>).
- Google Earth (<https://earth.google.com>)
- NH GRANIT (NH's Statewide GIS Clearinghouse) (<https://granit.unh.edu/>)
- NH Wildlife Action Plan Maps (<https://www.wildlife.state.nh.us/wildlife/wap-using-maps.html>)
- UNH Historical Maps and Atlases (<https://library.unh.edu/find/maps-geospatial-data/maps-atlases>) (Hurd Town & City Atlases, USGS historical maps, geology maps, Gazetteer)
- NH historical and archaeological records (Enhanced Mapping & Management Information Tool) (EMMIT) (<https://www.nh.gov/nhdhr/emmit/index.htm>)

2. Field Review

After conducting a desktop analysis of the project area using known sources of information, most project evaluations should include a site visit/field review. The purpose of the site visit is to become familiar with the project area to begin a general assessment of the potential impacts associated with the project. The information gathered to this point will indicate the presence of certain resources within the project area and point to other social and/or economic issues which will need to be addressed. The site visit will help to determine the likelihood of impacts to these resources and may identify other issues which will require investigation. The site visit should be scheduled to include other BOE/NHDOT personnel with specialized knowledge or expertise when beneficial (subject matter experts from the BOE Program Management Section). It is important to document the location of such resources and include them on project plans, as necessary. Resources/issues routinely evaluated/collected during the

field review include: stonewalls, cemeteries, buildings, potential sources of contamination, wetlands, protected shorelands, invasive species, and potential threatened/endangered species.

The general features of the project area (roads, intersections, intersection approaches, bridges, bridge abutments, bridge approaches, etc.) should be photographed, and evaluated, including:

- All structures in the project area;
- Bridges, especially abutments and spans;
- Features of the roadway;
- Stonewalls (Policy [ENV 3: Consideration of Stonewalls in Department Projects/Activities](#));
- Cemeteries;
- Cultural resources;
- General streetscape;
- Wetlands and surface waters;
- Invasive species ([ENV 1, Manual 1: Best Management Practices for the Control of Invasive and Noxious Plant Species](#));
- Threatened/endangered species/other natural features; and
- Recognized Environmental Conditions (REC) – The presence or likely presence of any hazardous substances, hazardous materials, pollution, contamination, or petroleum products in, on, or at the property that would indicate any possible source of contamination ([Contamination Site Screening Form](#))

3. Post-Field Review

Following the field review, the Environmental Manager should consult with the BOE Program Management Section as follows:

- **Wetlands Program:** Determine if a formal wetlands delineation is necessary for the project, and the best method for delineating wetlands/surface waters;
- **Cultural Resources Program:** Review photographs and plans to evaluate concerns and determine the appropriate next steps for resource identification;
- **Contamination Program:** If any contamination or hazardous materials (REC) are suspected in the vicinity of the project, provide information for determination if further investigation is required, and if necessary, assign a consultant for assistance;
- **Water Quality Program:** Determine the applicability of various water quality requirements. Refer to the [Alteration of Terrain Process Flowchart](#) to determine the level of necessary compliance reviews.
- **Air Quality and Noise** (Project Management Section Chief): Determine if follow up actions are needed for additional analysis, based on project type and impacts;
- **Plants and Wildlife Program:** Evaluate the need for additional delineation and/or evaluation of the project area for invasive species, as well as threatened/endangered species.

4. Reporting on Initial Reviews

Immediately following completion of the desktop review, the initial site visit/field review, and the work post-field review, the Environmental Manager should document the findings and transmit them to the Project Manager and/or the design team/lead person for their use during preliminary and final design. One resource to document these results is the [“NHDOT Bureau of Environment Summary of Initial Environmental Review.”](#) Any circumstances that might merit early FHWA coordination, such as unique issues of concern or complexity, should be brought to the attention of the Project Management Section Chief.

C. Stakeholder Coordination/Public Involvement

NHDOT coordinates with federal, state, regional, and local government officials and agencies, as well as interested persons or groups, to identify the issues and viable mitigation measures to be analyzed during design. The coordination continues throughout the project development process with written correspondence, meetings, and other communications.

It is the responsibility of BOE to evaluate input received during this process, make sure it is considered during the development of the project and included in the environmental document. The most commonly used methods for stakeholder coordination are listed below.

For more information on public involvement, please review [ENV 1, Manual 2: NEPA Public Involvement Manual](#).

1. Initial Contact Letters/E-mails

NEPA regulations ([23 CFR 771.111](#), and [40 CFR 1506.6](#)) require early and continuing opportunities for the public to be involved in the NEPA process. The initial contact letters are one of the steps taken to comply with these regulations. Initial contact letters are sent early in the design process as soon as a preliminary project scope-of-work is known. The scope-of-work generally dictates the number of letters sent and the amount of detail included in the letters. The standard version of the initial contact letters contains several questions regarding specific resources and issues. The “short” version of the initial contact letters does not provide specific questions and is for projects of minimal scope. A project location map should be included in each communication. Letters may be sent as hard copies or via E-mail. E-mailing letters is acceptable when e-mail addresses for individuals or agencies are readily available on the town or agency website or in the town directory. To ensure that letters reach the intended recipients, it’s important to send letters to individuals rather than sending a letter addressed by title.

Letters/E-mails should be sent to municipal officials, as well as to state and federal agencies with jurisdiction over environmental resources. Letters should be sent to the following local groups, as appropriate:

Chair of the Board of selectmen or mayor	Fire Chief
Chair of the Planning Board	Emergency Management Director
Town Planner	City Engineer
Conservation Commission	City Manager
Historical Society	Road Agent
Police Chief	

See <https://www.nh.gov/dot/org/projectdevelopment/planning/documents.htm> for the “City and Town Officials Directory.”

For projects involving ONLY paving, line striping, or other similar activity within the limits of existing pavement areas, letters do not need to be sent. For projects involving paving and upgrades to structures such as cross pipes and guardrail, the “short” version of the initial contact letter may be used. For all other projects, the standard version of the initial contact letter should be sent.

The letters should include the project name and number, and describe the project limits, needs, and proposed action. There are templates of the [Initial Contact Letter](#), and [Short Initial Contact Letter](#) (for routine projects of limited scope).

Other regional, state, and federal agencies that should be considered when sending letters, based on resources present in the project area, and the scope of work, include the following. In addition, a [Resource Specific Contact Letter Template](#) is available.

- [Regional Planning Commissions \(https://www.nharpc.org\)](https://www.nharpc.org)
Send the standard initial contact letter for all projects except those that qualify for a Programmatic Categorical Exclusion or utilize the Environmental Review Short Form – State Funded Projects.
- [Local Advisory Committee of Designated Rivers \(https://www4.des.state.nh.us/blogs/rivers/wp-content/uploads/lac_contacts.pdf\)](https://www4.des.state.nh.us/blogs/rivers/wp-content/uploads/lac_contacts.pdf).
Send the standard initial contact letter if the project is located within ¼ mile of a designated River and will involve work outside pavement/guardrail limits.
- [Local Lake Association \(https://nhlakes.org/our-local-association-partners/\)](https://nhlakes.org/our-local-association-partners/)
Send the standard initial contact letter if the project is within 250 feet of a lake that has a Lake Association and will involve work outside pavement/guardrail limits.
- [DES Lakes Management and Protection Program \(https://www.des.nh.gov/water/rivers-and-lakes/lakes-management-and-protection\)](https://www.des.nh.gov/water/rivers-and-lakes/lakes-management-and-protection).
Send the standard initial contact letter if the project is located within 250 feet of a lake/public water (RSA 271:20) and involves work outside pavement/guardrail limits.

- DES Rivers Management and Protection Program (<https://www.des.nh.gov/water/rivers-and-lakes/rivers-management-and-protection>)
Send the standard initial contact letter if the project is located within 250 feet of a Designated River and/or when the Designated River has an inactive Local Advisory Committee.
- US Forest Service
Coordinate with the NHDOT's US Forest Service liaison in the Bureau of Highway Design.
- DES Drinking Water and Groundwater Program (<https://www.des.nh.gov/water/groundwater>)
Send a resource-specific E-mail if drinking water resources are identified in the project area and the project will modify existing pavement limits.
- Scenic and Cultural Byways Program (<https://www.nh.gov/dot/programs/scbp/>)
Send a resource-specific E-mail to the NHDOT Scenic and Cultural Byways Program in the Bureau of Planning and Community Assistance if the project is located on a scenic byway and involves a change in alignment or aesthetics.
- Bicycle and Pedestrian Program (<https://www.nh.gov/dot/programs/bikeped/index.htm>)
Send a resource-specific E-mail to the NHDOT Bicycle and Pedestrian Program if the project may result in changes in accessibility or use at a rail trail
(<https://www.nh.gov/dot/programs/bikeped/contactus.htm>).

In addition, contact the following agencies if initial contact letters are required in accordance with procedures [ENV 1-3: Land and Community Heritage Investment Program Coordination \(LCHIP\)](#), [ENV 1-4: Conservation Land Stewardship Program Coordination \(CLS\)](#), and/or [ENV 1-5: Land and Water Conservation Fund Coordination \(LWCF\)](#):

- LCHIP (<https://lchip.org>)
Send a resource-specific E-mail if the project proposes permanent impacts outside of the limits of the existing right-of-way and/or any existing easements.
- CLS (<https://www.clsp.nh.gov>)
Send a resource-specific E-mail if the project proposes permanent impacts outside of the limits of the existing right-of-way and/or any existing easements.
- LWCF (<https://www.nhstateparks.org/about-us/division>)
Send a resource-specific E-mail if the project proposes permanent or temporary impacts outside of the limits of the existing right-of-way and/or any existing easements.

[Appendix 2: Environmental Contact Information](#) of this manual provides additional contact information for project-specific consideration.

2. Resource Agency Meetings

State and federal agencies can, and will at times, need to supplement written correspondence in determining the extent of environmental impacts and identify needed permits and approvals. Regularly scheduled meetings to gain this input include:

a. Cultural Resource Agency Coordination Meetings

These meetings aid in determining historical and/or archeological involvement in/near the project location (Area of Potential Effect [APE]). Participants include the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), US Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE), FHWA, and any identified consulting parties. Meetings are held virtually on the second Thursday of each month. In person participation at NHDOT is also available upon request. A Request for Projects Review (RPR) form is required and needs to be provided to the BOE Cultural Resources Program two (2) weeks prior to the scheduled meeting ([Cultural Resources Meetings | Environment | NH Department of Transportation](#)). To request to present at one of these meetings, send an email to the BOE Cultural Resources Program Manager at: Jillian.L.Edelmann@dot.nh.gov.

b. Natural Resource Agency Coordination Meetings

These meetings provide environmental regulatory agencies an opportunity to review proposed designs, design alternatives, and potential impacts throughout design. Mitigation opportunities are reviewed as needed. Attendance at these meetings is not mandatory for every project but encouraged as needed, with emphasis added for projects requiring a Standard Dredge and Fill Wetlands Permit from NHDES. Presenting the project in advance of applying for any necessary permits/approvals generally streamlines the permitting process by providing a better understanding of potential issues before design is complete and permits are applied for, which can save time and money in redesign efforts. Agencies include FHWA, US Environmental Protection Agency, US Fish and Wildlife Service, ACOE, NH Fish and Game Department, NHB, and NHDES. Meetings are held virtually on the third Wednesday of each month. In person participation at NHDOT is also available upon request ([Natural Resource Agency Coordination Meetings | Environment | NH Department of Transportation](#)). To request to present at one of these meetings, prepare an [Agenda Item Request \(AIR\) Form](#) and submit it to the BOE Wetlands Program Manager at: Andrew.M.Osullivan@dot.nh.gov.

3. Public Involvement

The NHDOT recognizes that incorporating input from community stakeholders (including residents, business owners, and public officials) results in better transportation projects. Public engagement can occur at all phases of project planning, design, construction and maintenance. Public involvement is a fundamental component of NHDOT's project planning process. Opportunities for public input on the environmental impact of a project include, but are not necessarily limited to the following:

Additional information regarding public involvement may be found in [ENV 1, Manual 2: NEPA Public Involvement Manual](#).

a. Public Officials Meeting

At the start of a project, the lead design bureau may schedule a meeting with the governing body(ies) of the municipality(ies) in which the project is located. The purpose of this meeting is to introduce the project and obtain input on local concerns. This input is used to inform the project's purpose and need and, if applicable, the range of alternatives that are studied. Formal testimony is not taken at a Public Officials Meeting. The lead design bureau will generate a conference report or meeting notes for the meeting.

b. Public Informational Meeting

The purpose of a Public Informational Meeting is to provide the public with opportunities to comment on local concerns, resources in the project area, and the project itself. This input is used to inform the project's purpose and need and the range of alternatives that are studied. These meetings provide a forum for an open discussion between the project team and the public and afford stakeholders the opportunity to provide input on the project and potential impacts.

The Environmental Manager typically provides a statement on known resources and potential concerns in the project area. The statement includes information regarding consultation on historic resources, including an invitation to become a consulting party pursuant to [Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act](#).

c. Right-of-Way Public Hearing

The public hearing most commonly held for NHDOT projects follows a formal process dictated by state regulations on the use of "eminent domain" (the right of a government to take private property for public use, with just compensation). State law requires a Finding of Necessity for the layout of a state highway by the Governor with advice of the Executive Council ([RSA 230:13](#)) or by a commission of three persons, appointed by the Governor, with advice of the Executive Council, or in the case of a limited access highway, a special committee, appointed by the Governor. A public hearing is held when it is anticipated that eminent domain may be required for the acquisition of private property for public use. The Environmental Manager will participate in the public hearing by presenting the environmental resource impacts associated with the project.

The majority of NHDOT projects generally do not require a public hearing for NEPA compliance. However, some projects still require a public hearing for the purposes of right-of-way needs. A draft of the environmental documentation prepared for the project (See [Section III: Environmental Documentation](#)) is generally available for public review and comment in advance of, and during, any public hearing. Any comments received at the public hearing related to NEPA must be considered and addressed as part of the NEPA process and documented in the environmental document.

d. Other Opportunities

Other meetings may be held with individual property owners or with neighborhood groups to discuss their concerns. The extent of such meetings will depend on the severity of the anticipated impacts and the interest of the abutting property owners. In general, concerned citizens or groups will reach out to NHDOT to request these meetings.

D. Assessment of Environmental Effects/Project Classification

Pursuant to NEPA, all transportation projects receiving federal funding must be classified in accordance with [23 CFR Part 771](#). Classification occurs only after sufficient environmental studies have been undertaken to determine if a project will have significant environmental impacts (Class I), or no significant environmental impacts (Class II). If the environmental impact of a project is uncertain, the project will be classified as Class III as further described below:

- Class I:** Actions that significantly affect the environment require the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). A “Record of Decision” (ROD) would be issued by FHWA.
- Class II:** Actions that do not individually or cumulatively have a significant environmental effect require the preparation of a Categorical Exclusion (CE), or Programmatic CE.
- Class III:** Actions for which the significance of the environmental impacts is not clearly established require the preparation of an Environmental Assessment (EA) to determine the appropriate environmental document required. If the project is found to have no significant impact, this would result in a “Finding of No Significant Impact” (FONSI) by FHWA. If it is likely to have a significant impact, an EIS would be prepared.

After completion of preliminary environmental studies, an environmental document is prepared as described in following sections of this manual, and a determination is made as to the classification of the project according to the criteria for Class I, II, and III projects. This determination is either made by FHWA or BOE, depending on the project type and level of environmental impact. EIS projects, EA projects, and non-Programmatic CE projects are classified by FHWA, at the recommendation of the BOE Administrator. Once submitted to FHWA, each project is reviewed for concurrence and BOE is notified by written correspondence that FHWA either agrees with the recommended classification, or a different classification is required. If FHWA concurs, the classification stands. Should NHDOT contest the FHWA classification, a meeting is held between FHWA and NHDOT to resolve the dispute. When agreement on the classification is reached, the appropriate environmental documentation is finalized.

For projects which require a public hearing, or which require the preparation of an EA or EIS, FHWA will provide a preliminary determination on classification based on the documentation submitted by BOE. Following the public hearing, confirmation of the original classification is required by FHWA. After consideration of comments received at the public hearing the BOE Administrator, in consultation with

the Environmental Manager, determines if the classification may be sustained. If yes, a letter is sent to FHWA recommending reaffirmation of the classification. If no, and re-classification of the project is necessary, the appropriate new level of environmental documentation will be required.

In general, projects may not advance from the preliminary design phase to the final design phase until project classification has been finalized and approved.

The FHWA has authorized NHDOT to process NEPA classification determinations on its behalf when a proposed action qualifies for a CE (Class II), as specifically listed in [23 CFR 771.117](#), provided there are no unusual circumstances that would require the preparation of an EA or EIS. This determination process is documented in the [Programmatic Agreement Between the Federal Highway Administration, New Hampshire Division and the New Hampshire Department of Transportation Regarding the Processing of Actions Classified as Categorical Exclusions for Federal-Aid Highway Projects](#).

1. Defining the Purpose and Need

The purpose and need for a project is one of the most important aspects of a NEPA document. It establishes why a project is being proposed, and the transportation deficiencies that must be addressed. It also justifies why environmental impacts are acceptable. A project's "Need" is a defined transportation deficiency or problem, and the "Purpose" are the objectives that will be met to address the deficiencies. The evaluation of alternatives is developed and evaluated based on these objectives.

The purpose and need should be as concise and specific as possible. This will assist in identifying and refining the alternatives which should be evaluated. If the purpose and need are specific and clear, the number of alternatives that satisfy the objectives can be more easily identified and narrowly limited.

An example purpose statement would be:

"The purpose of the subject project is to reduce congestion on US Route 4 in the towns of Epsom and Northwood."

An example needs statement would be:

"This project is needed because the capacity of US Route 4 in the towns of Epsom and Northwood is inadequate to meet current and future traffic volumes, resulting in congestion and long backups during peak traffic hours."

The purpose and need statement is **NOT** the selected alternative/action. Instead, the selected alternative is the engineering solution that addresses the purpose and need for the project.

The [FHWA Environmental Review Toolkit](#) provides additional information regarding purpose and need statements.

2. Identification of the Preferred Alternative

In the case of Class I (EIS) and Class III (EA) projects, a reasonable number of build alternatives are typically evaluated along with a no-build alternative. Using the information gathered from conceptual design studies, public comment, and the environmental review, the NHDOT carefully assesses the engineering and environmental factors associated with each alternative design in comparison to the documented purpose and need of the project. Considered factors include, but are not limited to:

- Economic, natural, cultural, and socio-economic impacts;
- Engineering standards;
- Geometric controls;
- Availability of funds;
- Safety concerns;
- User benefits; and
- Lifecycle maintenance costs.

The result of this assessment is the identification of a preferred design alternative. The alternative identified at this stage *may not* be the final project design. The final design will depend on subsequent public and agency input, along with the ability to procure the necessary funds and permits.

In the case of Class II (CE) projects, the process of developing a preferred alternative is typically not as elaborate. The number and variety of alternatives examined is usually limited. The opportunity for input from the general public and other interested stakeholders may also be limited as a public hearing is typically not required. However, the same factors considered for Class I and Class III projects guide the design process.

For every project NHDOT seeks to develop a design that meets the purpose and need of the project, while avoiding and minimizing impacts to natural, cultural, and socioeconomic resources.

3. Alternative Selection

Following the public hearing (if held), the officials conducting the hearing decide the necessity of the highway layout. The BOE oversees the evaluation of the input received at the hearing concerning environmental issues and comments received on the pertinent environmental documents to determine if the project requires reclassification. In any case, after consideration of all public input, final documentation is forwarded to FHWA for acceptance. When FHWA concurs with the classification recommendation, NHDOT updates the environmental document, as appropriate, to reflect new information and submits it to FHWA for approval.

FHWA approval of environmental documents for Class I or III projects is confirmed by the issuance of a ROD or FONSI, respectively (and a [Section 4\(f\)](#) determination, [Wetland Finding](#), and [Floodplain Finding](#), if

appropriate). This allows the initiation of final design development. For Class II projects, NHDOT proceeds with the design development upon either BOE or FHWA confirmation of appropriate documentation (and a Section 4(f) determination, if appropriate).

If FHWA does not concur with the classification, a meeting may be held between FHWA and NHDOT to determine appropriate action. Should reclassification be necessary, the appropriate environmental document will be prepared, evaluated, and processed before proceeding with further project design.

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Section III: Environmental Documentation

NEPA requires all agencies of the federal government to prepare an EIS for all major actions that have a significant effect on the human environment. [Section 102\(2\)\(C\) of NEPA \(42 USC. 4332\)](#) requires all agencies of the federal government to:

- (A) *“utilize a systematic, interdisciplinary approach which will insure the integrated use of the natural and social sciences and the environmental design arts in planning and in decision making which may have an impact on man’s environment;*
- (B) *identify and develop methods and procedures, in consultation with the Council on Environmental Quality established by subchapter II of this chapter, which will insure that presently unquantified environmental amenities and values may be given appropriate consideration in decision making along with economic and technical considerations;*
- (C) *include in every recommendation or report on proposals for legislation and other major Federal actions significantly affecting the quality of the human environment, a detailed statement by the responsible official on-*
 - (i) *the environmental impact of the proposed action,*
 - (ii) *any adverse environmental effects which cannot be avoided should the proposal be implemented,*
 - (iii) *alternatives to the proposed action,*
 - (iv) *the relationship between local short-term uses of man’s environment and the maintenance and enhancement of long-term productivity, and*
 - (v) *any irreversible and irretrievable commitments of resources which would be involved in the proposed action should it be implemented.”*

The FHWA has adopted regulations ([23 CFR Part 771](#)) implementing NEPA. FHWA provides an “Environmental Review Toolkit” for more information on NEPA and project development here: https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/nepa/nepa_projDev.aspx.

Each project is classified into one of the three (3) environmental levels (Class I, Class II, or Class III) in response to NEPA. In general, large-scale projects involving major new location construction through environmentally sensitive areas are developed as Class I projects and require the preparation of an EIS. Minor construction projects are normally developed as Class II projects, and require the preparation of a CE, and more frequently a Programmatic CE, as they result in no significant environmental impacts and don’t require an EIS or an EA. Major reconstruction and/or relocation projects, whose environmental significance is not clearly established, are normally considered Class III, and require the preparation of an EA to determine if an EIS is warranted.

A. Class I: Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

Actions that **significantly** affect the environment require an EIS ([40 CFR 1508.27](#)). Examples of such actions include, but are not limited to:

- A new controlled access highway,
- A highway project of four or more lanes on a new location,
- New construction or extension of fixed rail transit facilities,
- New construction or extension of a separate roadway for buses or high occupancy vehicles not located within an existing highway facility.

1. Draft Environmental Impact Statement

a. Notice of Intent

A draft EIS (DEIS) shall be prepared when the FHWA, or other federal agency, determines that the action is likely to cause significant impacts on the environment (FHWA is usually the lead federal agency for our transportation projects. However, other agencies, such as the ACOE or FEMA, may fill that role. *For simplicity, this manual refers to FHWA as the lead federal agency*). When the decision has been made by the lead agency to prepare an EIS, that agency will issue a Notice of Intent (NOI) for publication in the Federal Register. The NHDOT will also announce the intent to prepare an EIS by appropriate means at the local level. Note that the Draft NOI must be reviewed by FHWA in advance of issuance. Guidance for what must be included in the NOI may be found by reviewing [FHWA TA 6640.8A](#).

b. Scoping

After publication of the NOI, FHWA, in cooperation with the NHDOT will begin a scoping process. The scoping process will be used to identify the range of alternatives and impact and the significant issues to be addressed in the EIS and to achieve the other objectives of [40 CFR 1501.7](#). For FHWA, scoping is normally achieved through public and agency involvement procedures required by [23 CFR 771.111](#). If a scoping meeting is to be held, it should be announced in FHWA's NOI and by appropriate means at the local level.

c. General Contents

The DEIS shall evaluate to the same degree all reasonable alternatives to the action and discuss the reasons why other alternatives, which may have been considered, were eliminated from detailed study. Typically, NHDOT's preferred alternative(s) is identified. The DEIS shall also summarize the studies, reviews, consultations, and coordination required by environmental laws or Executive Orders to the extent appropriate at this stage in the environmental process.

d. Approval

The FHWA, when satisfied that the DEIS complies with NEPA requirements, will approve the DEIS for circulation by signing and dating the cover sheet.

e. Circulation

The DEIS shall be circulated by NHDOT for comment on behalf of FHWA. The DEIS shall be made available to the public and transmitted to agencies for comment no later than the time the document is filed with the EPA in accordance with [40 CFR 1506.9](#). The DEIS shall be transmitted to:

- Public officials, interest groups, and members of the public known to have an interest in the proposed action of the DEIS.
- Federal, state, and local government agencies expected to have jurisdiction or responsibility over, or interest or expertise in, the action.
- States and federal land management entities that may be significantly affected by the proposed action or any of the alternatives.

f. Public Hearing Requirements

FHWA public hearing requirements are described in [23 CFR 771.111\(h\)](#) and Section 2.4 of [ENV 1, Manual 2: NEPA Public Involvement Manual](#). Whenever a public hearing is held, the DEIS shall be available at the public hearing and a minimum of 15 days in advance of the public hearing.

2. Final Environmental Impact Statement

a. General Contents

After the DEIS has been circulated and a public hearing has been held, a final EIS (FEIS) shall be prepared. The FEIS shall identify the preferred alternative and evaluate all reasonable alternatives considered. It shall also discuss substantive comments received on the DEIS and responses thereto, summarize public involvement, and describe the mitigation measures that are to be incorporated into the proposed action. Mitigation measures presented as commitments in the FEIS will be incorporated into the project. The FEIS should also document compliance, to the extent possible, with applicable environmental laws and Executive Orders, or provide reasonable assurance that their requirements can be met.

b. Review

The FEIS will be reviewed for legal sufficiency prior to approval. The FHWA will indicate approval of the EIS for an action by signing and dating the cover page.

c. Circulation

The FEIS shall be transmitted to any persons, organizations, or agencies that made substantive comments on the DEIS or requested a copy, no later than the time the document is filed with EPA. The NHDOT shall also publish a notice of availability in local newspapers. When filed with EPA, the FEIS shall be available for public review at the NHDOT office and at the appropriate offices of FHWA. A copy

should also be made available for public review at institutions such as local government offices, libraries, and schools, as appropriate.

d. Record of Decision

The FHWA will complete and sign a ROD no sooner than 30 days after publication of the FEIS notice in the Federal Register or 90 days after the publication of a notice for the DEIS, whichever is later. The ROD will present the basis for the decision, summarize any mitigation measures that will be incorporated in the project, and document any required Section 4(f) approval. Until any required ROD has been signed, no future approvals, such as approval to proceed to the final design, or right-of-way acquisition phases, may be given except for administrative activities taken to secure further project funding and other activities consistent with [40 CFR 1506.1](#).

If FHWA subsequently wishes to approve an alternative which was not identified as the preferred alternative, but which was fully evaluated in the FEIS, or proposes to make substantial changes to the mitigation measures or findings discussed in the ROW, a revised ROD shall be subject to review by those agency offices which review the FEIS. To the extent practicable, the approved revised ROD shall be provided to all persons, organizations, and agencies that received a copy of the FEIS.

3. Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement

A DEIS, FEIS, or supplemental EIS (SEIS) may be supplemented at any time. An EIS shall be supplemented whenever FHWA determines that:

- Changes to the proposed action would result in significant environmental impacts that were not evaluated in the EIS, or
- New information or circumstances relevant to environmental concerns and bearing on proposed action to its impacts would result in significant environmental impacts not evaluated in the EIS.

A SEIS will not be necessary where:

- The changes to the proposed action, new information, or new circumstances result in a lessening of the adverse environmental impacts evaluated in the EIS without causing other environmental impacts that are significant and were not evaluated in the EIS, or
- The FHWA decides to approve an alternative fully evaluated in an approved FEIS but not identified as the preferred alternative. In such a case, a revised ROD shall be prepared and circulated.

Where FHWA is uncertain of the significance of the new impacts, NHDOT will develop appropriate environmental studies or, if NHDOT deems appropriate, an EA to assess the impacts of the changes, new information, or new circumstances. If, based upon the studies, FHWA determines that a SEIS is not necessary, NHDOT shall so indicate in the project file.

A SEIS is to be developed using the same process and format as an original EIS, except that scoping is not required.

In some cases, a SEIS may be required to address issues of limited scope, such as the extent of proposed mitigation or the evaluation of location or design variations for a limited portion of the overall project. Where this is the case, the preparation of a SEIS shall not necessarily:

- prevent the granting of new approvals,
- require the withdrawal of previous approvals, or
- require the suspension of project activities, for any activity not directly affected by the supplement. If the changes in question are of such magnitude to require a reassessment of the entire action, or more than a limited portion of the overall action, FHWA shall suspend any activities which would have an adverse environmental impact or limit the choice of reasonable alternatives, until the SEIS is completed.

4. Contents of Environmental Impact Statement

The EIS should be clear, concise and to the point, and should be supported by evidence that the necessary analyses have been made. It should focus on the important impacts and issues with the less important areas only briefly discussed.

a. Cover Sheet

Each EIS should have a cover sheet containing the following information, which is outlined at: https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/legislation/nepa/guidance_preparing_env_documents.aspx#cs:

- The name of the lead agency and any cooperating agency;
- Agency contact information;
- Title of the proposed action and its location;
- Paragraph abstract of the EIS
- Date when comments must be received; and
- Individual and total costs for preparing the Draft EIS, and the Final EIS (or Combined FEIS/ROD).

b. Purpose and Need for the Action

The [purpose and need](#) section is in many ways the most important part of an environmental study. A clear, well-justified purpose and need section explains to the public and decision-makers that the expenditure of funds is necessary and worthwhile and that the priority the project is being given relative to other needed highway project is warranted. In addition, although significant environmental impacts may be caused by the project, the purpose and need section should justify why impacts are acceptable based on the project's importance.

The project purpose and need drive the process for alternatives consideration, in-depth analysis, and ultimate design selection. It should be as comprehensive and specific as possible. It may, and probably

should, evolve as information is developed and more is learned about the project and the corridor. As the purpose and need is refined, a number of alternatives will drop out. If an alternative does not meet the project's purpose or satisfy the needs, then the alternative is not prudent. If a project's purpose and need are not adequately addressed, specifically delineated, and properly justified, one or possibly several alternatives that avoid or limit the impact and "appear" practicable may be generated, making it difficult to determine which alternatives are reasonable, prudent, and practicable, and it may be impossible to dismiss the no-build alternative.

The purpose and need section in the document lays out why the proposed action, with its inherent costs and environmental impacts, is being pursued. If properly described it also limits the range of alternatives that may be considered reasonable, prudent, and practicable in compliance with Section 4(f), the Executive Orders on Wetlands and Floodplains, and the Section [404\(b\)\(1\) guidelines](#). Further, it demonstrates the problems that will result if the project is not implemented.

The following is a list of items that may assist in the explanation of the need for the proposed action. It is by no means all-inclusive or applicable in every situation and is intended only as a guide.

- Project Status - Briefly describe the project history including actions taken to date, other agencies and governmental units involved, actions pending, schedules, etc.
- System Linkage - Is the proposed project a "connecting link?" How does it fit in the transportation system?
- Capacity - Is the capacity of the present facility inadequate for the present traffic? Projected traffic? What capacity is needed? What is the level(s) of service for existing and proposed facilities?
- Transportation Demand - Including relationship to any statewide plan or adopted urban transportation plan together with an explanation of the project's traffic forecasts.
- Legislation - Is there a federal, state, or local governmental mandate for the action?
- Social Demands or Economic Development - New employment, schools, land use plans, recreation, etc. What projected economic development/land use changes indicate the need to improve or add to the highway capacity?
- Modal Interrelationships - How will the proposed facility interface with and serve to complement airports, rail and port facilities, mass transit services, etc.
- Safety - Is the proposed project necessary to correct an existing or potential safety hazard? Is the existing accident rate excessively high? Why? How will the proposed project improve it?
- Roadway Deficiencies - Is the proposed project necessary to correct existing roadway deficiencies (e.g., substandard geometrics, load limits on structures, inadequate cross-section, or high maintenance costs)? How will the proposed project improve it?

c. Alternatives

This section of the EIS must discuss a range of alternatives, including all "reasonable alternatives" under consideration and those "other alternatives" that were eliminated from detailed study ([23 CFR 771.123\(c\)](#)). The section should begin with a concise discussion of how and why the "reasonable alternatives" were selected for detailed study and explain why "other alternatives" were eliminated. An agency is permitted to exclude from evaluation any particular alternative so long as it applies a reasonable analysis. An agency is also not required to consider speculative alternatives.

The following range of alternatives should be considered when determining reasonable alternatives:

- **"No-action" alternative:** The "no-action" alternative normally includes short-term minor restoration types of activities (safety and maintenance improvements, etc.) that maintain continuing operation of the existing roadway.
- **Transportation System Management alternative:** The TSM alternative includes those activities which maximize the efficiency of the present system. Possible subject areas to include in this alternative are options such as fringe parking, ride-sharing, high-occupancy vehicle lanes on existing roadways, and traffic signal timing optimization. This limited construction alternative is usually relevant only for major projects proposed in urbanized areas over 200,000 population.
- **Mass Transit:** This alternative includes those reasonable and feasible transit options (bus systems, rail, etc.) even though they may not be within the existing FHWA funding authority. It should be considered on all proposed major highway projects in urbanized areas over 200,000 population. Consideration of this alternative may be accomplished by reference to the regional or area transportation plan where that plan considers mass transit, or by an independent analysis during early project development.
- **Build alternatives:** Both improvement of existing highway(s) and alternatives on new location should be evaluated. A representative number of reasonable alternatives must be presented and evaluated in detail in the draft EIS ([40 CFR 1502.14\(a\)](#)). For most major projects, there is a potential for many reasonable alternatives. Where there are many alternatives, only a representative number of the most reasonable examples, covering the full range of alternatives, must be presented. The determination of the number of reasonable alternatives in the draft EIS, therefore, depends on the particular project and the facts and circumstances in each case.

NEPA does not require that all environmental concerns be discussed in exhaustive detail. The only requirement is that the alternatives be discussed in a reasonable manner to permit a reasonable choice. Each alternative should be briefly described using maps or other visual aids. The material should provide a clear understanding of each alternative's termini, location, costs, and the project concept (number of lanes, right-of-way requirements, median width, access control etc.). Development of more detailed design for some aspects (e.g. Section 4(f), permits, noise, wetlands, etc.) of one or more alternatives may be necessary during preparation of the draft and final EIS in order to evaluate impacts or mitigation measures or to address issues raised by other agencies or the public.

All reasonable alternatives under consideration (including the no-build) need to be developed to a comparable level of detail in the DEIS so that their comparative merits may be evaluated ([40 CFR 1502.14\(b\) and \(d\)](#)). In those situations where NHDOT has officially identified a "preferred" alternative or alternatives, based on its early coordination and environmental studies, NHDOT should so indicate in the DEIS. In these instances, the DEIS should include a statement indicating that the final selection of an alternative will not be made until the alternatives' impacts and comments on the DEIS and from the public hearing (if held) have been fully evaluated. Where a preferred alternative has not been identified, the DEIS should state that all reasonable alternatives are under consideration and that a decision will be made after the alternatives impacts and comments on the DEIS and from the public hearing (if held) have been fully evaluated.

The FEIS must identify the preferred alternative and should discuss the basis for its eventual selection ([23 CFR 771.25\(a\)\(1\)](#)). The discussion should provide the information and rationale which will need to be identified in the ROD. If the preferred alternative is modified after the DEIS, the FEIS should clearly identify the changes and discuss the reasons why any new impacts are not significant.

The existence of an unexamined alternative could make an environmental impact statement inadequate or lead to the overturning of an agency's decision.

d. Affected Environment

The EIS shall succinctly describe the environment of the area(s) to be affected or created by the alternatives under consideration. The description shall be no longer than is necessary to understand the effects of the alternatives.

This section provides a concise description of the existing social, economic, and environmental setting for the area affected by all alternatives presented in the EIS. Where possible, the description should be a single description for the general project area rather than a separate one for each alternative. The general population served and/or affected by the proposed action should be identified by race, color, national origin, and age. Demographic data should be obtained from available secondary sources unless more detailed information is necessary to address specific concerns. All socially, economically, and environmentally sensitive locations or features in the proposed project impact area should be identified on exhibits and briefly described in the text. ***It may be necessary to exclude from environmental documents the specific location of endangered species, archeological sites or other resources which may be sensitive to vandalism or other human activities.***

To reduce paperwork and eliminate extraneous background material, the discussion should be limited to data, information, issues, and values which will have a bearing on possible impacts, mitigation measures, and on the selection of an alternative. Data and analyses should be commensurate with the

importance of the impact, with the less important material summarized or referenced rather than reproduced. Other federal activities which contribute to the significance of the proposed action's impacts should be described.

This section should also briefly describe the scope and status of the planning processes for the local jurisdictions and the project area. Maps of any adopted land use and transportation plans for these jurisdictions and the project area would be helpful in relating the proposed project to the planning processes.

e. Environmental Consequences

This section forms the scientific and analytic basis for the comparison of alternatives. The discussion will include the environmental impacts of the alternatives including the proposed action, any adverse environmental effects which cannot be avoided should the proposal be implemented, the relationship between short-term uses of the human environment and the maintenance and enhancement of long-term productivity, and any irreversible or irretrievable commitments of resources which would be involved in the proposal should it be implemented. This section should not duplicate discussions in the Alternatives Section.

It shall include discussions of the following ([40 CFR 1502.16](#)):

- Direct effects and their significance.
- Indirect effects and their significance.
- Possible conflicts between the proposed action and the objectives of Federal, regional, State, and local land use plans, policies, and controls for the area concerned.
- The environmental effects of alternatives including the proposed action. The comparisons in the Alternatives section will be based on this discussion.
- Energy requirements and conservation potential of various alternatives and mitigation measures.
- Natural or depletable resource requirements and conservation potential of various alternatives and mitigation measures.
- Urban quality, historic and cultural resources, and the design of the built environment, including the reuse and conservation potential of various alternatives and mitigation measures
- Means to mitigate adverse environmental impacts.

f. List of Preparers

The EIS shall list the names, together with their qualifications of the persons who were primarily responsible for preparing the EIS or significant background papers, including basic components of the statement. Persons who are responsible for a particular analysis, including analyses in background papers, shall be identified.

g. Agencies, Organizations, and Persons to whom Copies of the EIS are Sent

DEIS: List all entities from which comments are being requested.

FEIS: Identify those entities that submitted comments on the draft EIS and those receiving a copy of the final EIS.

h. Comments and Coordination

The DEIS should contain copies of pertinent correspondence with each cooperating agency, other agencies, and the public. It should summarize: 1) the early coordination process, including scoping; 2) the meetings with community groups and individuals, and 3) the key issues and pertinent information received from the public and government agencies through these efforts.

The FEIS should include a copy of all substantive comments received on the DEIS. An appropriate response should be provided to each substantive comment. The FEIS should summarize the substantive comments on social, economic, environmental, and engineering issues made at the public hearing, if one is held, or the public involvement activities, and discuss the consideration given to any substantive issue raised and provide sufficient information to support that position. The FEIS should document compliance with requirements of all applicable environmental laws, Executive Orders, and other related requirements. To the extent possible, all environmental issues should be resolved prior to the submission of the final EIS.

i. Abbreviated Version of Final EIS

Where the only changes needed in the document are minor and consist of factual corrections and/or an explanation of why the comments received on the Draft EIS do not warrant further response, the preparation of the Final EIS may be expedited. The Final EIS should consist of the Draft EIS and an attachment containing the following:

- Errata sheets making any necessary corrections to the Draft EIS;
- A section identifying the preferred alternative and a discussion of the reasons it was selected. As applicable the following should also be included:
 - Final Section 4(f) evaluations;
 - Wetland finding;
 - Flood Plain finding;
 - A list of commitments; and
 - Copies of comments received from circulation of the Draft EIS and public hearing responses to those comments.

5. e-NEPA

Concurrent agency reviews and quality documentation improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the NEPA decision making process. e-NEPA is an online workspace and collaboration tool that helps in

facilitating more effective interagency coordination in real time. Management of the development and review process for EIS should utilize this tool ([e-NEPA Filing Guidance](#)).

For more information on the e-NEPA process, visit: <https://www.epa.gov/nepa/environmental-impact-statement-filing-guidance>.

B. Class II: Categorical Exclusion (CE)

1. Introduction

Categorical Exclusions (CE) are actions or activities which meet the definition at [40 CFR 1508.4](#) and, based on past experience, do not result in significant environmental impacts. According to Federal Highway Administration (FHWA's) regulations at [23 CFR 771.115](#), they are actions that do not individually or cumulatively have a significant environmental effect.

Any action which normally would be classified as a CE but could involve unusual circumstances will require FHWA, in cooperation with the NH Department of Transportation (NHDOT), to conduct appropriate environmental studies to determine if the CE classification is proper. Such unusual circumstances include:

- Significant environmental impacts,
- Substantial controversy on environmental grounds,
- Significant impact on properties protected by Section 4(f) of the US DOT Act, or Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act,
- Inconsistencies with any federal, state, or local law, requirement, or administrative determination relating to the environmental aspects of the action, or
- Projects involving more than a limited number of residential or non-residential displacements.

Categorical Exclusions are divided into two (2) groups based on the action's potential for impacts. Consistent with [23 CFR 771.117\(c\)](#), the first group is a list of actions which experience has shown never or almost never cause significant environmental impacts. They include:

1. Activities which do not involve or lead directly to construction.
2. Approval of utility installations along or across a transportation facility.
3. Construction of bicycle and pedestrian lanes, paths, and facilities.
4. Activities included in the State's *highway safety plan* under [23 U.S.C. 402](#).
5. Transfer of Federal lands pursuant to [23 U.S.C. 107\(d\)](#) and/or [23 U.S.C. 317](#) when the land transfer is in support of an action that is not otherwise subject to FHWA review under NEPA.
6. The installation of noise barriers or alterations to existing publicly owned buildings to provide for noise reduction.
7. Landscaping.

8. Installation of fencing, signs, pavement markings, small passenger shelters, traffic signals, and railroad warning devices where no substantial land acquisition or traffic disruption will occur.
9. The following actions for transportation facilities damaged by an incident resulting in an emergency declared by the Governor of the State and concurred in by the Secretary, or a disaster or emergency declared by the President pursuant to the Robert T. Stafford Act ([42 U.S.C. 5121](#)):
 - i. Emergency repairs under [23 U.S.C. 125](#); and
 - ii. The repair, reconstruction, restoration, retrofitting, or replacement of any road, highway, bridge, tunnel, or transit facility (such as a ferry dock or bus transfer station), including ancillary transportation facilities (such as pedestrian/bicycle paths and bike lanes), that is in operation or under construction when damaged and the action:
 - A. Occurs within the existing right-of-way and in a manner that substantially conforms to the preexisting design, function, and location as the original (which may include upgrades to meet existing codes and standards as well as upgrades warranted to address conditions that have changed since the original construction); and
 - B. Is commenced within a 2-year period beginning on the date of the declaration.
10. Acquisition of scenic easements.
11. Determination of payback under [23 U.S.C. 156](#) for property previously acquired with Federal-aid participation.
12. Improvements to existing rest areas and truck weigh stations.
13. Ridesharing activities.
14. Bus and rail car rehabilitation.
15. Alterations to facilities or vehicles in order to make them accessible for elderly and handicapped persons.
16. Program administration, technical assistance activities, and operating assistance to transit authorities to continue existing service or increase service to meet routine changes in demand.
17. The purchase of vehicles by the applicant where the use of these vehicles can be accommodated by existing facilities or by new facilities which themselves are within a CE.
18. Track and railbed maintenance and improvements when carried out within the existing right-of-way.
19. Purchase and installation of operating or maintenance equipment to be located within the transit facility and with no significant impacts off the site.
20. Promulgation of rules, regulations, and directives.
21. Deployment of electronics, photonics, communications, or information processing used singly or in combination, or as components of a fully integrated system, to improve the efficiency or safety of a surface transportation system or to enhance security or passenger convenience.
22. Projects, as defined in [23 U.S.C. 101](#), that would take place entirely within the existing operational right-of-way.

23. Federally-funded projects:
 - i. That receive less than \$5,000,000 (*as adjusted annually by the Secretary of Transportation to reflect any increases in the Consumer Price Index prepared by the Department of Labor*) of Federal funds; or
 - ii. With a total estimated cost of not more than \$30,000,000 (*as adjusted annually by the Secretary of Transportation to reflect any increases in the Consumer Price Index prepared by the Department of Labor*) and Federal funds comprising less than 15 percent of the total estimated project cost.
24. Localized geotechnical and other investigation to provide information for preliminary design and for environmental analyses and permitting purposes.
25. Environmental restoration and pollution abatement actions to minimize or mitigate the impacts of any existing transportation facility (including retrofitting and construction of stormwater treatment systems to meet Federal and State requirements under sections 401 and 402 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act ([33 U.S.C. 1341; 1342](#))) carried out to address water pollution or environmental degradation.
26. Modernization of a highway by resurfacing, restoration, rehabilitation, reconstruction, adding shoulders, or adding auxiliary lanes (including parking, weaving, turning, and climbing lanes.
27. Highway safety or traffic operations improvement projects, including the installation of ramp metering control devices and lighting.
28. Bridge rehabilitation, reconstruction, or replacement or the construction of grade separation to replace existing at grade railroad crossings.
29. Purchase, construction, replacement, or rehabilitation of ferry vessels (including improvements to ferry vessel safety, navigation, and security systems) that would not require a change in the function of the ferry terminals and can be accommodated by existing facilities or by new facilities which themselves are within a CE.
30. Rehabilitation or reconstruction of existing ferry facilities that occupy substantially the same geographic footprint, do not result in a change in their functional use, and do not result in a substantial increase in the existing facility's capacity.

Consistent with [23 CFR 771.117\(d\)](#), the second group includes actions that meet the criteria for a CE in the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations (<https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-40/chapter-V/subchapter-A>) as they are authorized under an executed agreement between NHDOT and FHWA.

They include:

31. Transportation corridor fringe parking facilities.
32. Construction of new truck weigh stations or rest areas.
33. Approvals for disposal of excess right-of-way or for joint or limited use of right-of-way, where the proposed use does not have significant adverse impacts.
34. Approvals for changes in access control.

35. Construction of new bus storage and maintenance facilities in areas used predominantly for industrial or transportation purposes where such construction is not inconsistent with existing zoning and located on or near a street with adequate capacity to handle anticipated bus and support vehicle traffic.
36. Rehabilitation or reconstruction of existing rail and bus buildings and ancillary facilities where only minor amounts of additional land are required and there is not a substantial increase in the number of users.
37. Construction of bus transfer facilities (an open area consisting of passenger shelters, boarding areas, kiosks and related street improvements) when located in a commercial area or other high activity center in which there is adequate street capacity for projected bus traffic.
38. Construction of rail storage and maintenance facilities in areas used predominantly for industrial or transportation purposes where such construction is not inconsistent with existing zoning and where there is no significant noise impact on the surrounding community.

2. Programmatic Categorical Exclusion (Programmatic CE)

The FHWA has authorized NHDOT to make NEPA determinations on its behalf when a proposed action qualifies for a Categorical Exclusion as specifically listed in [23 CFR 771.117](#), provided there are no unusual circumstances that would require the preparation of either an EA (Class III) or an EIS (Class I). To document the environmental impact of these projects, BOE developed a streamlined evaluation form: [Categorical Exclusion Programmatic Determination Checklist](#) (*Checklist*). The *Checklist* is divided into eleven (11) general sections as follows:

- General Project Information
- Programmatic CE Criteria
- Detailed Discussion of Programmatic CE Criteria
- Summary of Public Involvement
- List of Exhibits
- NEPA Re-Evaluation
- Environmental Commitments
- Classification Determination
- Activities that Qualify for Programmatic Categorical Exclusion
- Follow-Up Actions for Programmatic Categorical Exclusions for Projects Requiring a Public Hearing
- Post-Hearing Classification Determination

For more information on Programmatic CEs for NHDOT projects, please review the [Programmatic Agreement Between the Federal Highway Administration, New Hampshire Division and the New Hampshire Department of Transportation Regarding the Processing of Actions Classified as Categorical Exclusions for Federal-Aid Highway Projects](#).

a. General Project Information

Action/Project Name: The municipality where the project is located.

State Project Number: The unique 5-digit number assigned by NHDOT.

Federal Project Number: The unique number assigned by NHDOT used for FHWA tracking. It usually starts with "X-A00."

CE Action Number: This number (from page 6 of the *Checklist*) identifies which regulation allows the project to be classified as a Programmatic CE (<https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-23/chapter-l/subchapter-H/part-771/section-771.117>).

Description of Project: This section describes the proposed action. The description should include the location, beginning and end points, and design aspects. It also summarizes the scope of the action at the time the determination is made. Attach a project location map to the *Checklist*.

b. Programmatic Categorical Exclusion (CE) Criteria

Gather supporting documentation, as appropriate, to address the questions in this section. Respond to each question by checking either the **YES** or **NO** boxes. Although checking a single **YES** box will disqualify the action for processing programmatically as a CE, all questions must be responded to. This will provide a full record for future reference; in case the project scope is subsequently revised, or the environmental parameters change.

Documentation (letters, memos, forms, etc.), as appropriate, should be attached to the *Checklist* and detailed in the List of Exhibits section.

c. Detailed Discussion of Programmatic CE Criteria

This section provides a brief narrative response as to how your project qualifies for a Programmatic Categorical Exclusion and corresponds to the questions in the previous section.

- 1. Right-of-Way** – Does the proposed action result in any residential or non-residential displacements, or acquisition of property rights to an extent that impairs the functions of the affected property? Does the proposed action include acquisition of land for hardship or protective purposes?

To qualify for use of the *Checklist*, projects involving right-of-way must meet a two-part test. First, the action must not require the acquisition of residences or businesses. Second, if the action requires fee simple acquisition or permanent easements that will impair the function of the property, the Programmatic CE will not apply. These right-of-way "tests" are independent of any cultural resource,

Section 4(f) resource, or Section 6(f) resource impact determination required for Programmatic CE approval.

NOTE: As appropriate, an analysis of the effects of property acquisition should be completed and attached to the *Checklist*. In addition, a copy of the Right-of-Way Certificate should also be attached, if available at the time of completing the *Checklist*.

- 2. Traffic** – Does the proposed action result in capacity expansion of a roadway by addition of through lanes?

If the proposed action includes capacity expansion, specifically through the construction of through lanes, the project is disqualified from using the *Checklist*.

- 3. Roadway Access** – Does the proposed action involve the construction of temporary access, or the closure of existing road, bridge, or ramps that would result in major traffic disruptions? Does the proposed action involve changes in access that pertain to interstate highways, or that have wide-reaching ramifications?

If the proposed action includes major traffic disrupting components, the project is disqualified from using the *Checklist*. The terms “major traffic disruptions,” and “wide-reaching ramifications,” are undefined, and are subject to interpretation. Temporary lane closures, and detours do not typically meet the traffic “test” for disqualification. Questions should be directed to the Project Manager.

- 4. Cultural Resources** – Does the proposed action use CE Action Number 26, 27, or 28 AND have an Adverse Effect on historic properties pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act?

Section 106 of the 1966 National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) and the implementing regulations ([36 CFR 800](#)) of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) require federal agencies to take into account the effects of federally funded or authorized undertakings on properties eligible for or listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). This process is initiated by filling out a Request for Project Review (RPR) form and submitting it to the Cultural Resources Program Manager. The RPR form is available at: <https://www.nh.gov/nhdhr/review/rpr.htm>. The FHWA, in consultation with the SHPO, must make a “Determination of Effect” on all transportation projects that use federal funds or require federal licenses, permits, or approvals. A determination of “No Historic Properties Affected,” or “No Adverse Effect,” qualifies the action for Programmatic CE approval. In addition, a determination of “Adverse Effect,” is allowable under the *Checklist*, provided the proposed action is documented without using CE Action Numbers 26, 27, or 28.

When a project qualifies for processing under the [Programmatic Agreement Among the Federal Highway Administration, the New Hampshire State Historic Preservation Office, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, and the New Hampshire Department of Transportation Regarding the Federal Aid Highway Program in New Hampshire](#), the effect findings are made using either the [Appendix A Certification Form](#), or the [Appendix B Certification Form](#).

Contact the Cultural Resources Program to determine the proper response to the cultural resources question. In addition, the monthly Cultural Resource Agency Coordination Meetings can be utilized for help in assessing impacts to cultural resources.

5. **Section 4(f)** – Does the proposed action require the use of any property protected by Section 4(f) of the 1966 USDOT Act, that cannot be documented with a *de minimis* impact determination, or a programmatic Section 4(f) evaluation, other than the programmatic evaluation for the use of historic bridges?
(<https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/legislation/section4f/4fpolicy.aspx>)

This section of the law does not allow, *“the use of land from a significant publicly owned public park, recreation area, or wildlife and waterfowl refuge, or any significant historic site unless a determination is made that there is no feasible and prudent alternative to the use of land from the property and the action includes all possible planning to minimize harm to the property resulting from such use.”*

“Use” is defined as a permanent easement, fee acquisition, or “constructive use” of a property. “Constructive use” occurs when the proximity impacts of the action on the property, without acquisition of land, are so great that the purposes for which the Section 4(f) property exists are substantially diminished.

Any use of Section 4(f) property will disqualify the action from using the *Checklist*, unless a *de minimis* impact finding has been made by FHWA, or a programmatic Section 4(f) evaluation is applicable (except the programmatic evaluation for use of an historic bridge). A finding of *de minimis* impact on a Section 4(f) property is applicable if:

- A. For historic properties, the transportation program or project will have no adverse effect on the historic site; or
- B. For parks, recreation areas, and wildlife or waterfowl refuges, after public notice and opportunity for public review and comment, that the transportation program or project will not adversely affect the activities, features, and attributes of the park, recreation area, or wildlife or waterfowl refuge eligible for protection under this section; and the finding has received concurrence from the officials with jurisdiction over the park, recreation area, or wildlife or waterfowl refuge.

FHWA determines whether Section 4(f) applies to an action, or if a *de minimis* impact finding would be applicable to the project. For more information on Section 4(f) and whether it applies to a proposed action, contact the Project Management Section Chief, or FHWA.

6. **Section 6(f)/Conservation Properties** – Does the proposed action require the acquisition or conversion of any land under the protection of Section 6(f) of the Land and Water Conservation Act of 1965?

Land and Water Conservation Fund Act

The Land and Water Conservation Fund Act (LWCFA) of 1965 provides for the preservation and development of quality outdoor recreation resources. Section 6(f) states that no property acquired under the act shall be converted to non-recreational uses without the approval of the Secretary of Interior. Such conversion precludes Programmatic CE approval, and use of the *Checklist*. New Hampshire administers the state's Section 6(f) lands through the NH Department of Natural and Cultural Resources (DNCR), Division of Parks and Recreation.

If the proposed action does not include permanent or temporary project-related property impacts outside the limits of the existing right-of-way and/or existing easements, no coordination nor communication with DNCR relative to LWCF shall be required for the project. In such instances, the environmental document shall include an environmental commitment stating that the project does not include any temporary or permanent impacts outside the limits of the existing right-of-way and/or easements, and that if the contractor's method of construction would require such impacts, including construction staging, he/she shall coordinate with DNCR to determine if there would be impacts to LWCF properties and if so, comply with any requirements stipulated thereby (see the [Environmental Commitments](#) section of this manual).

If, at any time during design, it is determined that proposed work would involve permanent or temporary impacts outside of limits of the existing right-of-way and/or any existing easements, coordinate with DNCR relative to LWCF to determine if there would be any permanent or temporary impacts to LWCF properties. If impacts are anticipated, the requirements outlined in [36 CFR Part 59](#) shall be followed, and the *Checklist* cannot be used. In addition, the commitments in the environmental document shall be developed or modified accordingly.

As applicable, contract documents shall stipulate that the method of construction, including construction staging, shall not occur on any public properties, or disrupt access to any public properties, without first coordinating with DNCR to ensure compliance with LWCF.

For more information on Section 6(f) procedures, please see procedure [ENV 1-5: Land and Water Conservation Fund Coordination](#).

Conservation Land Stewardship Program and Land and Community Heritage Investment Program

In addition to the consideration given to LWCF properties under this section, protection of other conservation properties in NH are governed, in part, by the NH Conservation Land Stewardship Program (CLS) (<https://www.clsp.nh.gov>), and the Land and Community Heritage Investment Program (LCHIP) (<https://lchip.org/>).

If the proposed action includes work outside the limits of existing right-of-way, or proposes to limit access to abutting properties, the Environmental Manager will need to determine if additional special conservation lands exist in the project area and if they would be impacted by the proposed action. In these cases, the Environmental Manager should contact the Stewardship Specialist at the NH CLS Program and LCHIP.

However, if the proposed action does not include permanent project-related property impacts outside the limits of the existing right-of-way and/or existing easements, no coordination nor communication with the CLS Program, nor LCHIP shall be required for the project. In such instances, the environmental document shall include an environmental commitment stating that the project does not include any permanent impacts outside the limits of the existing right-of-way and/or easements, and that if the contractor's method of construction would require such impacts, he/she shall coordinate with the CLS Program and LCHIP to determine if there would be impacts to CLS Program properties, or LCHIP properties, and if so, comply with any requirements stipulated thereby.

If impacts are anticipated to CLS Program properties, the requirements outlined in [RSA 162-C](#) shall be followed. In addition, the commitments in the environmental document shall be developed or modified accordingly.

If impacts are anticipated to LCHIP properties, the requirements outlined in [RSA 227-M:13](#) shall be followed. In addition, the commitments in the environmental document shall be developed or modified accordingly.

Impacts to CLS Program properties, or LCHIP properties may disqualify the project from using the *Checklist*. Coordinate with the NHDOT Bureau of Environment for a determination.

For more information on CLS coordination, please see procedure [ENV 1-4: Conservation Land Stewardship Coordination](#).

For more information on LCHIP coordination, please see procedure [ENV 1-3: Land and Community Heritage Investment Program Coordination](#).

- 7. Wetlands/Surface Waters** – Does the proposed action require an Army Corps of Engineers Individual Permit pursuant to the Clean Water Act, and/or a Section 10 permit pursuant to the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899?

Impacts to wetlands (i.e. dredge, fill, drain, etc.) require a permit from the NH Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) Wetlands Bureau (NHWB), and the Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE), in accordance with RSA 482-A and Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. To qualify for use of the *Checklist*, the action must not require an Individual permit from the ACOE. If the action meets the criteria for the ACOE’s General Permits for New Hampshire (GPs), or is not in the ACOE’s jurisdiction, it may qualify for Programmatic CE approval and use of the *Checklist*

(<https://www.nae.usace.army.mil/Missions/Regulatory/State-General-Permits/New-Hampshire-General-Permit/>).

Permitting under Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act is also administered by the ACOE and is applicable when a proposed action includes the construction of any structure in or over any navigable water of the United States, the excavation/dredging or deposition of material in these waters, or any obstruction or alteration in a “navigable water.” Structures or work outside the limits defined for navigable waters of the U.S. require a Section 10 permit if the structure or work affects the course, location, condition, or capacity of the water body. Authorization under Section 10 is typically included in the permit issued by ACOE for dredge and fill, when applicable.

Contact the Wetlands Program Manager to determine the potential for impacts to jurisdictional areas. In addition, the monthly Natural Resource Agency Coordination Meetings can be utilized for help in determining permit thresholds and mitigation requirements.

- 8. US Coast Guard** – Does the proposed action require a US Coast Guard bridge permit?

A US Coast Guard bridge permit is required for a project when constructing or modifying a bridge or causeway across a navigable waterway of the United States.

(https://www.dco.uscg.mil/Portals/9/COAST%20GUARD%20BRIDGE%20PERMITTING_Sep2019.pdf).

Bridge Owners are not required to consult the Coast Guard regarding repairs to a bridge that do not alter the clearances, type of structure, or any integral part of the substructure or superstructures or navigation conditions, but which consist only in the replacement of worn or obsolete parts.

If there is doubt as to whether this provision applies, the bridge owner should consult with the Coast Guard ([33 CFR 115.40](#)). Repairs which permanently alter the horizontal or vertical clearance of the bridge do not qualify for this provision. Note: the Coast Guard should be notified 90 days in advance if the work will inhibit the navigation of vessels through the bridge.

Bridges to be constructed across reaches of waterways not actually navigated other than by logs, log rafts, rowboats, canoes, and small motorboats in accordance with [33 CFR 115.70\(a\)](#).

Bridge owners with doubt as to whether this provision applies should contact the First Coast Guard District Bridge Program. The term “small motorboats” means rowboats, canoes and other similar craft with outboard motors. It does not include sailing or cabin cruiser craft ([33 CFR 115.70](#)). Note: the Coast Guard should be notified 90 days in advance if the work will inhibit the navigation of vessels through the bridge.

The need for a US Coast Guard bridge permit for a proposed action disqualifies the project from using the *Checklist*. See procedure [ENV 1-12: Coordination with the US Coast Guard Related to Bridge Work](#) for additional information.

- 9. Floodways/Floodplains** – Does the proposed action encroach on the regulatory floodway of water courses or water bodies, resulting in more than a nominal increase in base flood elevation? Does the proposed action have a significant or adverse impact on floodplain values, or create a significant risk to human life or property?

Determine if an action is located in a regulatory floodway or floodplain by reviewing the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) maps issued by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) (Flood Insurance Rate Maps [FIRM], Flood Boundary & Floodway Map, or Flood Hazard Boundary Map, as available, and [New Hampshire Flood Hazards Viewer \(arcgis.com\)](#), and [GRANIT](#)). If so, hydraulic analyses may be necessary to determine if flood levels will rise or fall as a result of the proposed action. The required level of analysis should be determined through consultation with the engineering staff and confirmed by the [NH Office of Strategic Initiatives Floodplain Management Program](#). If the analysis concludes that there will be no more than a nominal rise in the flood elevation (so as to be ignored) the *Checklist* may be used. Similarly, if the lead designer/Project Manager, in consultation with FHWA, as necessary, can assert that floodplain values will not be significantly diminished, and that there will be no significant risk to human life or property by the proposed action, the *Checklist* may be used.

If, however, it is determined that a proposed action would increase the base flood elevation (BFE) at all (more than 0.0 ft.) in a Zone AE area with a floodway, or more than 1.0 foot in any other area, a Conditional Letter of Map Revision (CLOMR) is required. A CLOMR is also required if a project results in a more than nominal increase in the regulatory floodplain elevation. A CLOMR must be followed by a Letter of Map Revision (LOMR) within six months of project completion. A LOMR is not required but may be done to revise the FIRM if there is an error in the mapping.

A CLOMR is a letter from FEMA commenting on whether a proposed project, if built as proposed, or proposed hydrology changes would meet minimum NFIP standards. A LOMR is a letter from FEMA officially revising the current NFIP map to show changes to floodplains, regulatory floodways, or flood elevations.

10. Water Quality – Does the proposed action have more than a negligible impact on water quality?

Projects can affect both surface and groundwater quality. Impacts can be temporary (construction phase) and/or longer-term and can vary in magnitude. Typically, temporary effects of small projects of short duration can be minimized with proper erosion and sedimentation controls and stormwater management measures. These impacts should not result in substantial impairment to water quality. Such actions will normally qualify for use of the *Checklist*.

All projects must be designed to ensure that water quality will not be diminished as a result of the proposed action. There are several programs and permits that must be evaluated in making this determination. If/when the proposed action is determined to be in compliance with all applicable water quality permit/permit actions, the *Checklist* may be used.

NHDES Shoreland Water Quality Protection Act (RSA 483-B) (<https://www.des.nh.gov/land/waterfront-development>)

NHDES Alteration of Terrain – Water Pollution and Waste Disposal (RSA 485-A:17) (<https://www.des.nh.gov/land/land-development>). Consult with the Water Quality Program, and review procedure [ENV 1-9: Alteration of Terrain Program Compliance](#), which outlines the requirements to comply with the Alteration of Terrain program. Additional information may be found in the [Memorandum of Agreement Between the Department of Environmental Services and the Department of Transportation Regarding Alteration of Terrain Permits \(RSA 485-A\)](#).

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Construction General Permit (CGP) (<https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2022-01/2022-cgp-final-permit.pdf>)

EPA Small Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Permit (Applicable to certain projects with one (1) acre or more of land disturbance within designated [MS4 Communities](#)).

Consult with the Wetlands Program or the NH Department of Environmental Services (NHDES), as necessary, to determine if sensitive water resources are present, and to determine the magnitude of potential impacts.

- 11. Wild and Scenic Rivers** – Does the proposed action use CE Action Number 26, 27, or 28 AND require any work below the ordinary high water mark of a river designated as a component of, or proposed for inclusion in, the National System of Wild and Scenic Rivers, or below the ordinary high water mark of a tributary to such river?

The National Wild and Scenic Rivers System was created by Congress in 1968 ([Public Law 90-542; 16 U.S.C. 1271 et seq.](#)) to preserve certain rivers with outstanding natural, cultural, and recreational values in a free-flowing condition for the enjoyment of present and future generations. In NH, there are three (3) river segments designated as a component of the National System of Wild and Scenic Rivers: Lamprey River, Nashua, Squannacook, and Nissitissit Rivers, and Wildcat River.

If you determine that the proposed action **does not** use CE Action Number 26, 27, or 28, and there will be no work below the ordinary high water of the named rivers above, or an immediate tributary to them, the *Checklist* may be used.

- 12. Noise** – Is the proposed action a Type I highway project?

Federal regulations ([23 CFR 772](#)) and the NHDOT Noise Policy require the consideration of abatement measures where a Type I project increases traffic noise. This includes construction in a new location or changes to an existing highway that substantially alter either the horizontal or vertical alignment or increases the number of lanes. Review the definition of a Type I project in the Federal regulations and the NHDOT Noise Policy. Questions should be directed to the Project Management Section Chief. Any project meeting the definition of a Type I project does not qualify for use of the *Checklist*.

For more information regarding the Department’s Noise Policy, please see policy [ENV 4: Policy for the Assessment and Abatement of Highway Traffic Noise for Type II & Type II Highway Projects](#).

- 13. Endangered Species** – Does the proposed action result in a finding of “*may affect, likely to adversely affect*” threatened or endangered species or critical habitat under the Endangered Species Act, and is not included in an approved Biological Opinion for a FHWA Programmatic Agreement, or result in impacts subject to the conditions of the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act?

Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) requires consultation to ensure that actions funded, permitted or carried out by federal agencies will not jeopardize the continued existence of any listed species or adversely modify designated critical habitats. Determine if an action may affect a federally listed species or designated critical habitat.

First determine the action area of the proposed project, ‘all areas to be affected directly or indirectly by the Federal action and not merely the immediate area involved in the action’ ([50 CFR 402.02](#)). Determine if the project qualifies for a streamlined project review for routine highway maintenance activities, and thus no further coordination with the USFWS is required. Use the US Fish and Wildlife Service's (USFWS) digital project planning tool, Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) [IPaC: Home \(fws.gov\)](#), and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Fisheries Section 7 : Species/Critical Habitat Information & Maps in the Greater Atlantic Region [Section 7: Species/Critical Habitat Information & Maps in the Greater Atlantic Region | NOAA Fisheries](#) to generate lists of federally listed species and critical habitats that may be present in the action area (see Section 17). If the IPaC Official Species List includes the Northern Long-eared Bat (NLEB) and the project is eligible for the FHWA/FRA/FTA Section 7 Range-wide Consultation for Indiana Bat and NLEB (FHWA Consultation for NLEB), complete the FHWA NLEB Consultation and Determination Key through IPaC. If your species lists include threatened or endangered species other than the NLEB or does not qualify for the FHWA Consultation for NLEB, determine if your project area includes suitable habitat for the species and, if there is suitable habitat, consider if the project may affect the suitable habitat. If the project may affect a listed species, Section 7 consultation is required. Coordinate with the Plants and Wildlife Program Manager to complete consultation.

The NH Natural Heritage Bureau (NHB) keeps records of known locations of both federal and state rare species and exemplary natural communities. Utilize the NHB DataCheck Tool (<https://www4.des.state.nh.us/NHB-DataCheck/>) to determine if there is a known record of rare wildlife, plants or exemplary natural communities near the project area. For projects that qualify for use, the NHB Data Screening Layer may be used, consistent with the [NHB/NHDOT Data Sharing Agreement](#). The NH Native Plant Protection Act ([RSA 217-A](#)) prohibits state agencies, to the extent possible, from taking actions that jeopardize the continued existence of any protected plant species or exemplary natural community. The NH Natural Heritage Bureau rules ([Part Ncr 300](#)) apply to measures and requirements necessary for the survival of all species of native plants in the state. If the DataCheck Tool indicates the presence of NH listed rare plant species or natural communities, coordinate with NHB, at (603) 271-2834, or send an e-mail to nhbreview@dncr.nh.gov. The NH Endangered Species Conservation Act ([RSA 212-A](#)) prohibits the taking of NH listed threatened and endangered wildlife species. NH Fish and Game Department rules ([Fis 1002-1005](#)) apply to consultation requests for NH Fish and Game review of NH protected threatened and endangered wildlife species. All requests for consultation and submittals should be sent via email to NHFGreview@wildlife.nh.gov or can be sent by mail and must include the NHB Datacheck results letter number in the subject line. For projects requiring formal consultation include “formal consultation requested” in the subject line. If the DataCheck Tool indicates the presence of protected wildlife species and a formal consultation is not required, email: NHFGreview@wildlife.nh.gov. Include the NHB Datacheck results letter number and “informal review request” in the email subject line. When the NHB Datacheck results include protected wildlife species, follow the steps outlined in the Memorandum of Agreement Between the Fish and

Game Department and the Department of Transportation Regarding Environmental Review of NHDOT Projects. The MOA applies to projects that require formal consultation and projects that will be reviewed through informal consultation.

The Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act ([16 U.S.C. 668-668d](#)) prohibits anyone, without a permit issued by the Secretary of the Interior, from "taking" bald or golden eagles, including their parts (including feathers), nests, or eggs. If the NHB Datacheck, field review, or other sources of information indicate the potential presence of Bald or Golden Eagles or their nests near the project area, complete the Northeast Bald Eagle Project Screening Form [Northeast Bald Eagle Project Screening Form | FWS.gov](#), adopt indicated avoidance measures and coordinate with the NH Fish and Game Department (NHFGreview@wildlife.nh.gov).

Procedure [ENV 1-10: NH Fish & Game Project-level Coordination](#) outlines project-specific interaction requirements with the NH Fish and Game Department.

The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act requires consultation with NOAA Fisheries when work will adversely affect Essential Fish Habitat (EFH). The Environmental Manager should determine if an action may affect EFH. Review the NOAA EFH Mapper [Essential Fish Habitat Mapper | NOAA Fisheries](#). If the project may affect EFH, coordinate with NHDOT to complete consultation.

If any of these reviews result in a finding of "may affect, likely to adversely affect" of a Federally listed, threatened or endangered species or critical habitat under the Endangered Species Act and is not included in an approved Biological Opinion for a FHWA Programmatic Agreement or result in impacts subject to the conditions of the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act the *Checklist* may not be used. If the Northeast Bald Eagle Project Screening Form is completed and the project commits to implementing all applicable avoidance measures resulting in, "the Service has determined that your proposed activities are unlikely to disturb nesting bald eagles," the *Checklist* may still be used.

*Note: if a project does not affect a Federally listed, threatened or endangered species, but does affect a **state** listed threatened or endangered species, the Checklist may still be used.*

- 14. Air Quality** – Is the proposed action inconsistent with the State Implementation Plan in air quality non-attainment areas, or the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program, or in applicable urbanized areas the Transportation Improvement Program? Does the proposed action cause or contribute to violations of the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS)?

The [Clean Air Act of 1970](#) (CAA), the [Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990](#) (CAAA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) require that each federal action be evaluated for potential impacts to

air quality. As such, review all projects for air quality impacts. The air quality review should follow the steps below:

1. CAAA Conformity: Review the most recent major Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) amendment which is available on the Department's website <https://www.nh.gov/dot/org/projectdevelopment/planning/stip/>.
 - a. Review the project scope to ensure it is accurately represented in the STIP. If not, a STIP amendment may be required. Contact the Bureau of Planning and Community Assistance for additional guidance.
 - b. Is the project listed as "regionally significant"? If yes, an air quality analysis may be required. Coordination with the Department's Bureau of Planning and Community Assistance, Bureau of Environment, and/or the Regional Planning Commission should be initiated to ensure CAAA conformity.
 - c. Is the CAA Code listed as "not exempt" (N/E)? If yes, an air quality analysis may be required. Coordination with the Department's Bureau of Planning and Community Assistance, Bureau of Environment, and/or the Regional Planning Commission should be initiated to ensure CAAA conformity.
 - d. Is the project inconsistent with those types of projects listed in Table 2 of [40 CFR § 93.126](#) which are exempt from the requirement to determine conformity? If yes, an air quality analysis may be required. Coordination with the Department's Bureau of Planning and Community Assistance, Bureau of Environment, and/or the Regional Planning Commission should be initiated to ensure CAAA conformity.
2. NEPA: Review the project for potential adverse air quality impacts.
 - a. Will the project require the preparation of an Environmental Assessment (EA) or an EIS? If yes, a quantitative air quality assessment of the 3 worst intersections will be necessary for both NEPA purposes as well as to demonstrate CAAA conformity.
 - b. Will the project result in decreases in the level of service (LOS) below a LOS C on any public roadway within or adjacent to the project area? If yes, an air quality analysis may be required. Coordination with the Project Management Section Chief should be initiated to identify if additional qualitative or quantitative air quality impact assessment will be necessary to determine if the project will result in adverse air quality impacts.

If, after completion of the above steps, air quality impacts are identified, an assessment of potential mitigation measures must be evaluated. Any mitigation measure(s) that are found to be both feasible and reasonable must be incorporated into the design of the project and included as an environmental commitment. In addition, if the proposed action is found to cause or contribute to violations of the NAAQS the *Checklist* may not be used.

15. CZMA – Is the proposed action inconsistent with the State’s Coastal Zone Management Plan?

The Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) is the congressional plan for managing America's coasts. It was enacted to encourage the participation and cooperation of state, local, regional, and federal agencies and governments having programs affecting the coastal zone.

On February 25, 2019 NOAA Office for Coastal Management (NOAA-OCM) approved a change to the federally-approved New Hampshire Coastal Program (NHCP) and concurred that the change constitutes a routine program change. As described in the NHCP’s public notice dated November 30, 2018, the routine program change involves modification of the NHCP’s list of federal assistance programs subject to CZMA federal consistency review, pursuant to [15 CFR Part 930, Subpart F](#) (Consistency for Federal Assistance to State and Local Governments). Specifically, the routine program change pertains to the Federal Department of Transportation’s Highway Planning and Construction (HPC) Program (Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance #20.205) ([Publications | NH Department of Environmental Services](#)).

The NHCP’s list of federal assistance programs subject to CZMA federal consistency review now specifies that activities funded, wholly or in part, by the HPC Program are excluded from CZMA federal consistency review by the NHCP except for the following (applicable CE action Numbers in parentheses):

- Highway construction or reconstruction (#26 for reconstruction),
- Bridge construction, reconstruction, replacement, or rehabilitation (#28),
- Construction of truck weigh stations or rest areas (#33),
- Construction of bus storage or maintenance facilities (#35),
- Work that alters the hydrology of freshwater perennial streams, tidal waters or tidal wetlands,
- Work in tidal waters or tidal wetlands to mitigate the impacts of an existing transportation facility (#25).

For all but the six (6) project types identified above, consistency has been programmatically determined, meaning you can check **NO** on the *Checklist*. For the six (6) project types above, an individual consistency determination must be made through the NH Intergovernmental Review Process. Procedure [ENV 1-13: Coastal Zone Consistency Findings](#) outlines the necessary steps for determining consistency. If the results of the Intergovernmental Review Process indicates that the proposed action is inconsistent with the CZMA, the *Checklist* may not be used.

16. Other – Are there any unusual circumstances that would require additional environmental studies to determine if the action would qualify for processing programmatically (e.g. substantial environmental controversy, inconsistency with other environmental requirements, or significant sources of contamination)?

Other issues can disqualify projects from Programmatic CE approval (and use of the *Checklist*). Such issues may include substantial public opposition or controversy, excessive hazardous or contaminated materials involvement, incompatibility with scenic roads, etc.

Determine if these or other issues exist, and whether use of the *Checklist* is applicable. Supporting documentation should be attached to the *Checklist*, as appropriate.

This section may also be used to describe other issues having an impact on a project, such as invasive species, which are typically identified during the field review portion of the environmental review process. More information may be found in ([ENV 1, Manual 1: Best Management Practices for the Control of Invasive and Noxious Plant Species](#)), as well as on the BOE website at: <https://www.nh.gov/dot/org/projectdevelopment/environment/units/program-management/invasivespecies.htm>.

d. Summary of Public Involvement

Public involvement is required as a component of the NEPA process, the level of which depends on the complexity of the project. For general information on public involvement, review and use the [ENV 1, Manual 2: NEPA Public Involvement Manual](#).

In this section, indicate if initial contact letters were sent, and what, if any, meetings were held for the proposed action. Discuss the opportunities for public input in the project, as well as any relevant changes that were made to the project resulting from public input.

e. List of Exhibits

During the environmental resource review process, as well as when preparing the *Checklist*, collect documentation supporting the Programmatic CE determination (maps, letters, figures, tables, etc.). These documents should be attached to the *Checklist* and listed in this section.

f. NEPA Re-Evaluation

Occasionally, after an environmental review is complete and an Environmental Commitments Memo has been issued, the Project Manager and/or design staff will notify BOE of changes to the design of the project, which could occur as a result of final design, etc. In these instances, re-evaluate the original determination by updating the *Checklist* and resubmitting it for approval. Oftentimes, these revisions are so minor as not to require a written re-evaluation as they do not affect the prior decisions regarding environmental impacts. However, if they do, update the *Checklist* and mark the box indicating that the *Checklist* is a re-evaluation, and that the original classification (Programmatic CE) remains valid. More information may be found in [Section III.D. of this manual](#) below.

If the post-NEPA revisions are of such a magnitude to call into question as to whether the original Programmatic CE classification remains valid, discuss it with the Project Management Section Chief for guidance, and coordinate with the FHWA Division office, as necessary.

g. Environmental Commitments

During the NEPA process, commitments are often made to avoid, minimize, or mitigate project impacts. Commitments result from public input, or through the requirements of, or agreements with, resource agencies during the environmental review process. It is important that these commitments be carried forward through project design, construction, and maintenance and operation. Environmental commitments for actions processed as Programmatic CEs must be recorded in this section of the *Checklist*, for future reference. The NEPA approval is contingent upon successful implementation of each environmental commitment. [Section IV of this manual](#) provides more information regarding environmental commitments. Procedure [ENV 1-11: Environmental Commitments](#) provides more information regarding the process for documentation and ensuring they are adhered to.

h. Classification Determination

Upon completion of the environmental review and documentation process, indicate on the *Checklist* a recommendation of whether the action qualifies for a Programmatic CE (and use of the *Checklist*), by marking the appropriate checkbox and signing on the provided signature line. The *Checklist* should then be forwarded to the Project Management Section Chief for review. If it is determined that the project does **NOT** qualify as a Programmatic CE, the Environmental Manager will notify the project manager and the project will then need to be addressed as an Individual CE, or other appropriate environmental classification.

i. Activities That Qualify for Programmatic Categorical Exclusion

This section lists the available CE Action Numbers to choose from when determining whether the project type qualifies for a Programmatic CE (and use of the *Checklist*).

If your project qualifies for a Programmatic CE (and use of the *Checklist*) and DOES NOT require a Public Hearing, this concludes the environmental documentation process for the project. If a Public Hearing is required, you will need to complete the next two (2) sections of the *Checklist*.

j. Follow-Up Actions for Programmatic CE for Projects Requiring a Public Hearing

If the project requires a public hearing, any decisions made because of the hearing should be reviewed to determine if the project would change in such a way as to disqualify it from a Programmatic CE (and use of the *Checklist*). Post-hearing reviews are documented in this section.

k. Post-Hearing Classification Determination

Following the public hearing, indicate on the *Checklist* a recommendation of whether the action continues to qualify for a Programmatic CE (and use of the *Checklist*), by marking the appropriate checkbox and signing on the provided signature line. The *Checklist* should then be forwarded to the Project Management Section Chief for review.

It is worth noting that over the last decade greater than 85% (456) of NHDOT federally funded projects have been classified as Programmatic CEs. Thirteen percent (13%) (67) were classified as Individual CEs, and just over 1% combined (6) were either EAs or EISs.

3. Individual Categorical Exclusion (Individual CE)

For those actions with a higher potential for impacts (i.e. more resources present, greater magnitude of impacts, exceed the threshold for processing programmatically, etc.), and therefore do not qualify for use of the *Checklist*, but still qualify for a CE, additional information and possibly technical environmental analysis may be required. For this type of project, an individual CE will be required.

The level of analysis should be sufficient to define the extent of impacts and identify appropriate mitigation measures. The information will include a detailed description of the proposed action and, as appropriate, its immediate surrounding area. A section describing the need for the project should be as comprehensive and specific as possible, and commensurate with the scope of the project. A list of alternatives should include the “no build” option, the upgrade option(s), and alternate build options which, for one reason or another, were found not to be reasonable or prudent. The discussion of any specific areas of environmental concern should be as thorough as necessary to address known and foreseeable public and agency concerns.

The documentation to be submitted to FHWA must demonstrate that the CE criteria are satisfied and that the proposed project will not result in significant environmental impacts. When an action may involve unusual circumstances, sufficient early coordination, public involvement, and environmental studies should be undertaken to determine the likelihood of significant impacts. If no significant impacts are likely to occur, the results of environmental studies and any agency and public involvement should adequately support such a conclusion and be included in the request to FHWA, for CE approval. If significant impacts are likely to occur, an EIS must be prepared. If the likelihood of significant impacts is uncertain even after studies have been undertaken, an EA should be prepared.

C. Class III: Environmental Assessment (EA)

An EA is prepared in consultation with FHWA for each action that is not a CE and does not clearly require the preparation of an EIS. The primary purpose of an EA is to help decide whether or not an EIS is needed.

1. Scoping

For actions that require an EA, NHDOT shall initiate consultation with FHWA at the earliest appropriate time, begin consultation with interested agencies and others to advise them of the scope of the project and to achieve the following objectives:

- determine which aspects of the proposed action have potential for socioeconomic, cultural, or environmental impacts,
- identify alternatives and measures which might mitigate adverse environmental impacts, and
- identify other environmental review and consultation requirements which should be performed concurrently with the EA.

2. Content

The FHWA requirements for an EA are detailed in [Technical Advisory T6640.8A](#), [23 CFR 771.119](#), and at https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/legislation/nepa/guidance_preparing_env_documents.aspx#cs. The EA should address only those resources or features which FHWA and NHDOT decide will have a likelihood of being significantly impacted. The EA should be a concise document, focusing on the resources or issues of concern.

a. Purpose and Need

Describe the locations, length, termini, proposed improvements, etc. Identify and describe the transportation or other needs which the proposed action is intended to satisfy. On projects where a law, Executive Order, or regulation mandates an evaluation of avoidance alternatives, the explanation of the project need should be more specific so that avoidance alternatives that do not meet the stated project need can be readily dismissed.

b. Alternatives

Discuss alternatives to the proposed action, including the no-action alternative, which are being considered. The EA may either discuss the preferred alternative and identify any other alternatives considered or, if the applicant has not identified a preferred alternative, the alternatives under consideration. The EA does not need to evaluate in detail all reasonable alternatives for the project, and may be prepared for one or more build alternatives.

c. Impacts

For each alternative being considered, discuss any cultural, socioeconomic, and environmental impacts whose significance is uncertain. The level of analysis should be sufficient to adequately identify the impacts and appropriate mitigation measures, and address known and foreseeable public and agency concerns. **Describe why these impacts are considered not significant.** Identified impact areas which do not have a reasonable possibility for individual or cumulative significant environmental impacts need not be discussed.

d. Comments and Coordination

Describe the early and continuing coordination efforts, summarize the key issues and pertinent information received from the public and government agencies through these efforts, and list the agencies and, as appropriate, members of the public consulted.

e. Appendices (if any)

The appendices should include only analytical information that substantiates an analysis which is important to the document. Other information should be referenced only.

3. Circulation

The EA is subject to FHWA approval before it is made available to the public as an FHWA document. The EA need not be circulated for comment, but the document must be made available for public inspection at the applicant's office and at the appropriate FHWA field offices. Notice of availability of the EA, briefly describing the action and its impacts, shall be sent by the NHDOT to the affected units of federal, state, and local government. Notice shall also be sent to the state intergovernmental review contacts established under [Executive Order 12372](#). For New Hampshire, that means the [Office of Strategic Initiatives](#).

4. Public Involvement/Comment

When a public hearing is held as part of the application for Federal funds, the EA shall be available at the public hearing and for a minimum of 15 days in advance of the public hearing. The notice of the public hearing in local newspapers shall announce the availability of the EA and where it may be obtained or reviewed. Comments shall be submitted in writing to the NHDOT within 30 days of the availability of the EA unless the FHWA determines, for good cause, that a different period is warranted.

When a public hearing is not held, the NHDOT shall place a notice in a newspaper(s) similar to a public hearing notice and at a similar stage of development of the action, advising the public of the availability of the EA and where information concerning the action may be obtained. The notice shall invite comments from all interested parties. Comments shall be submitted in writing to the NHDOT within 30 days of the publication of the notice unless the FHWA determines, for good cause, that a different period is warranted.

5. EA Revisions

Following the public availability period, the EA should be revised or an attachment provided, as appropriate, to:

- reflect changes in the proposed action or mitigation measures resulting from comments received on the EA or at the public hearing (if one is held) and any impacts of the changes;
- include any necessary findings, agreements, or determination (e.g. wetlands, Section 106, Section 4(f)) required for the proposal; and

- include a copy of pertinent comments received on the EA and appropriate responses to the comments.

6. FHWA Approval

If no significant impacts are identified, the NHDOT shall furnish the FHWA:

- a copy of the revised EA, as appropriate;
- the public hearing transcript, where applicable;
- copies of any comments received and responses thereto; and
- a recommend Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI). The EA should also document compliance, to the extent possible, with all applicable environmental laws and Executive Orders, or provide reasonable assurance that their requirements can be met.

When the FHWA expects to issue a FONSI for an action described in [23 CFR 771.115\(a\)](#), copies of the EA shall be made available for public review for a minimum of 30 days before the FHWA makes its final decision. This public availability shall be announced by a notice similar to a public hearing notice.

If, at any point in the EA process, the FHWA determines that the action is likely to have a significant impact on the environment, the preparation of an EIS will be required.

7. Findings of No Significant Impacts (FONSI)

The EA, revised or with attachment(s), is submitted by the NHDOT to FHWA along with:

- a copy of the public hearing transcript, when one is held;
- a recommendation of the preferred alternative; and
- a request that a FONSI be made. The basis for the FONSI request should be adequately documented in the EA and any attachment(s).

The FHWA will review the EA and any public hearing comments and other comments received regarding the EA. If the FHWA agrees with the NHDOT's recommendations, it will make a separate written FONSI incorporating by reference the EA and any other appropriate environmental documents.

After a FONSI has been made by the FHWA, a notice of availability of the FONSI shall be sent by the NHDOT to the affected units of Federal, State, and local government and the document shall be available from the NHDOT and the FHWA upon request by the public. Notice shall also be sent to the State intergovernmental review contacts established under [Executive Order 12372 \(NH Office of Strategic Initiatives\)](#).

After approval of the Record of Decision (ROD), FONSI, or CE designation, NHDOT shall consult with the FHWA prior to requesting any major approvals or grants, to establish whether or not the approved environmental document or CE designation remains valid for the requested FHWA action.

D. Environmental Re-Evaluation

Sometimes there are changes to the proposed action, new information or circumstances, or there is a lapse of time between preparation of the environmental document and implementation of the action. This may trigger the need to revisit the NEPA analysis if there is a remaining federal action. The FHWA regulations contain a process for re-evaluating environmental documents or decisions to determine whether the original document or decision remains valid, or a supplemental or new analysis is needed ([23 CFR 771.129](#)). More information is available at [Environmental Review Toolkit \(dot.gov\)](#).

1. Purpose

A re-evaluation is a review conducted of any proposed change in action, affected environment, anticipated impacts, applicable requirements, or mitigation measures as they relate to the environmental document or decision. The purpose of a re-evaluation is to determine whether an environmental document or decision remains valid. A re-evaluation is a continuation of the project development process, though it does not necessarily re-open the NEPA decision.

The re-evaluation can occur at any point after completion of the project's environmental document or decision, but only to the extent that there are remaining federal approvals for the project. The re-evaluation should be concise and tailored to the change in circumstances. Approval of the re-evaluation should be commensurate with the original approval.

2. Format and Contents

There is no required format for a written re-evaluation. Documentation may be simple, such as a checklist, an email exchange, or a memorandum. Usually for the simplest and least environmentally impacting projects, a re-evaluation may be done verbally, followed by documentation to the project file.

The re-evaluation should focus on, and be commensurate with, the situation triggering the need for the re-evaluation. If the re-evaluation is triggered because of a change in conditions, the analysis and documentation should:

- Clearly document the change that triggers the re-evaluation (e.g. changes in scope, design, impacts, mitigation) and the reason for the proposed change.
- Document the changes in environmental impacts or mitigation, and describe how the impacts will be different from what was previously approved.
- Determine whether the original decision remains valid after considering the change.

E. Additional Environmental Documentation

It is sometimes necessary to complete separate evaluations for specific types of impacts. These evaluations are completed in addition to the NEPA environment document.

1. Section 4(f) Evaluation

Section 4(f) evaluations are completed to demonstrate compliance with [49 U.S.C. 303](#), originally Section 4(f) of the DOT Act of 1966. In enacting Section 4(f), Congress declared as national policy that, "*special effort should be made to preserve the natural beauty of the countryside and public park and recreation lands, wildlife and waterfowl refuges, and historic sites.*" The FHWA regulations state:

"The Administration may not approve the use of land from a significant publicly owned public park, recreation area, or wildlife and waterfowl refuge, or any significant historic site unless a determination is made that:

- *There is no feasible and prudent alternative to the use of land from the property; and*
- *The action includes all possible planning to minimize harm to the property resulting from such use.*

Supporting information must demonstrate that there are unique problems or unusual factors involved in the use of alternatives that avoid these properties or that the cost, social, economic, and environmental impacts or community disruption resulting from such alternatives reach extraordinary magnitudes."

It should be noted that Section 4(f) applies to **all significant** historic sites, but only to **publicly owned** public parks, recreational areas, and wildlife and waterfowl refuges. Significant historic sites are those listed, or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

A Section 4(f) evaluation must be prepared for each location within a proposed project before the use of Section 4(f) land is approved. Early coordination with the Cultural Resources Program, FHWA, and NH State Historic Preservation Officer will determine the need for completing a Section 4(f) evaluation, the type of evaluation to complete, and the range of alternatives which must be covered within the document.

If a project requires preparation of a Section 4(f) evaluation, approval of the final 4(f) evaluation by FHWA is necessary before design approval can be granted by FHWA or obtained in-house.

The process for development and securing FHWA approval of a Section 4(f) evaluation includes the following:

1. Resource and impact evaluation, including:
 - a. Identification of Section 4(f) resources in the project area;
 - b. Identification of project uses of those resources,
 - c. Evaluation of avoidance alternatives;
 - d. Coordination with the officials with jurisdiction over the Section 4(f) resource;
 - e. Drafting a "full" Section 4(f) evaluation.

2. Submittal of the draft Section 4(f) evaluation to FHWA for a preliminary review, including a preliminary legal review.
3. The FHWA will undertake a **30-day** preliminary review, including a preliminary legal review. The FHWA will circulate the draft Section 4(f) evaluation to the US Department of the Interior (DOI), Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and Agriculture (USDA). The review period may be extended by **15 days**, if needed. If timely comments are not received, it is assumed that the agencies have no objection to the proposed action. The FHWA will return consolidated comments to NHDOT.
4. After addressing the comments received on the draft Section 4(f) evaluation, NHDOT will submit the final Section 4(f) evaluation for FHWA review, including a legal sufficiency review.
5. The FHWA undertakes a **30-day** legal sufficiency review. At the same time, FHWA transmits it to DOI, HUD, USDA, and as appropriate to the National Parks Service for a **45 day** review period. If comments are not received within **15 days** after the comment deadline, FHWA can assume a lack of objection and proceed with the action. These agencies may take an additional **30 days** if the NEPA classification is a Class III: EA.
6. The NHDOT makes revisions based on the FHWA comments to resolve legal issues, finalizes the Section 4(f) evaluation, and
7. After the review, FHWA will return the Section 4(f) evaluation to NHDOT for completion of the Section 4(f) review.

2. Programmatic Section 4(f) Evaluation

As an alternative to preparing an individual Section 4(f) evaluation, FHWA may, in certain circumstances, have the option of applying a programmatic evaluation. Under a Programmatic Section 4(f) evaluation, certain conditions are laid out such that, if a project meets the conditions, it will satisfy the requirements of Section 4(f) that there are no feasible and prudent alternatives and that there has been all possible planning to minimize harm. These conditions generally relate to the type of project, the severity of impacts to Section 4(f) property, the evaluation of alternatives, the establishment of a procedure for minimizing harm to the Section 4(f) property, and adequate coordination with appropriate entities.

There are five (5) nationwide programmatic Section 4(f) evaluations, for projects which:

- necessitate the [use of historic bridges](#);
- [use minor amounts of land from public parks, recreation areas, and wildlife and waterfowl refuges](#);
- [use minor amounts of land from historic sites](#);
- [construct independent bikeway or walkway projects](#); and
- [result in an overall net benefit](#) to Section 4(f) properties.

A determination of the appropriateness of completing a [Section 4\(f\) evaluation](#) will be made by FHWA.

Similar to a “full” Section 4(f) evaluation (above), the process for development and securing FHWA approval of a Programmatic Section 4(f) evaluation includes the following:

1. Resource and impact evaluation, including:
 - a. Identification of Section 4(f) resources in the project area;
 - b. Identification of project uses of those resources,
 - c. Evaluation of avoidance alternatives;
 - d. Drafting a Section 4(f) evaluation.
2. Submittal of the preliminary Section 4(f) evaluation to FHWA for review.
3. After the review, FHWA will return the Section 4(f) evaluation to NHDOT for completion of the Section 4(f) review.

Unlike a “full” Section 4(f) evaluation, the review is conducted at the NH FHWA office only. The NH Division office requires a minimum of **14 days** for review and comment. A review by other federal agencies is not required.

For additional information, visit:

https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_topics/4f_tutorial/default.aspx or [Section 4\(f\) Outline.docx](#).

3. Environmental Review Short Form – State Funded Projects

The approach to the data collection and environmental review process for projects funded with state funds, and which do not include FHWA funding, is no different than that for projects subject to the requirements of NEPA. Information about environmental resources and constraints is still necessary to ensure that project designs and construction meet Comment #2 of [ENV 1: Environmental Policy](#), which states: *“NHDOT will strive to avoid, minimize, and/or mitigate impacts to natural and cultural resources when planning, constructing, and maintaining the state’s transportation infrastructure.”*

The environmental process and impacts of State-funded projects is documented with an [Environmental Review Short Form – State Funded Projects](#) (“Non-Federal Short Form”). The procedure for documentation and the Non-Federal Short Form is outlined in procedure [ENV 1-2: Environmental Documentation of State-Funded Projects](#). Similar to the Programmatic CE, the Non-Federal Short Form is a checklist-type document with the following sections:

- [Environmental Review Checklist](#)
- [Discussion of Environmental Impacts](#)
- [Summary of Public Involvement](#)
- [List of Exhibits](#)
- [Environmental Re-Evaluation](#)
- [Environmental Commitments](#)

- [Approval Determination](#), and
- [Alternatives Analysis](#)

* *The sections above are linked to the relevant sections of this manual which provide additional details on how to complete that section. Note that, unlike the Programmatic CE, if a project requires more detailed discussion due to the nature and extent of environmental impacts, an Individual CE would not be required for a State-funded project. Instead, Section VIII: Alternatives Analysis of the Non-Federal Short Form would be completed. In addition, the Environmental Review Short Form – State Funded Projects does not include a review of (2) Traffic, (3) Roadway Access, (5) Section 4(f), or (15) CZMA.*

Section IV: Environmental Commitments

As the environmental document is being developed, a list of potential environmental commitments will be identified by the Environmental Manager. These commitments (including mitigation) are developed in response to the anticipated impacts of the transportation project on the natural, cultural and socioeconomic environment. Communication and coordination among NHDOT's bureaus and between NHDOT and outside agencies is essential to ensure that the environmental commitments are reasonable and implemented. The list of commitments will be developed and/or revised throughout the life of the project to reflect changes, deletions, and additions.

The environmental document will include a "Summary of Environmental Commitments" for easy reference. All commitments and mitigation measures will be included in this section. Commitments made subsequent to completion of the documents will be appended. All appropriate personnel should be kept abreast of modifications to the list of commitments.

At the conclusion of the environmental documentation process, the Administrator of the Bureau of Environment will distribute a memorandum to the project manager and other project personnel, transmitting the environmental document with specific reference to the environmental commitments. This memorandum will include conditions from permits, Memoranda of Agreement (MOAs), etc., if available. Where additional conditions are imposed or commitments are made following the NEPA process, a follow-up memo will be issued by the Bureau of Environment transmitting a supplement to be appended to the summary of environmental commitments. Copies of these commitments memos will be distributed by the Bureau of Environment to FHWA, the lead design bureau, Construction, Right-of-Way, Transportation Planning, Maintenance, Bridge Maintenance, and other bureaus as appropriate.

For more information on environmental commitments, See procedure [ENV 1-11: Environmental Commitments](#).

See here: [Standard Environmental Commitments](#) for a menu of environmental commitments shown to be typically used in various scenarios for consideration for all projects.

See here: [Environmental Documentation](#) for template Environmental Commitments Memos, which identify the conclusion of the environmental documentation process.

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Section V: Environmental Permitting

Many projects require permits and approvals before construction activities can begin. Working with the Water Quality Program and Wetlands Program, the Environmental Manager will advise design personnel of the type(s) of permit(s) required for a proposed action. All required permits must be obtained to advertise or authorize funding for construction.

Adequate time should be provided in the schedule to obtain the permits and approvals. Typically, it can be a few months from the time a permit application is submitted to receipt of the permit.

It is strongly recommended that Environmental Managers use the monthly resource agency meetings as projects proceed through design to avoid any unacceptable impacts and substantial re-design late in the project development process. Enough detail needs to be presented at the meeting to promote the discussion of potential impacts.

A. Project Specific Permits and Approvals

Generally, project-specific permits and approvals that can be required include, but are not limited to:

- Wetlands Permit from NHDES (<https://www.des.nh.gov/water/wetlands/permit-assistance>).

Information on permitting timelines can be found at the following links:

- [Project Central - Wetlands Permitting Timeframes MOA with DES.pdf](#), and
- [Project Central - Wetlands Timeline Clarification Memo 12172021.pdf](#).

Additional information/considerations relating to water quality and wetlands, on a project-by-project basis, may be found in the following procedures:

- [ENV 1-14: Turbidity Mixing Zones](#)
- [ENV 1-15: Stream Diversions](#)
- [ENV 1-16: Erosion Control Plans](#)
- Individual Section 404 Permit from the US Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) if proposed impacts exceed those allowed under the NH General Permit (<https://www.usace.army.mil/Missions/Civil-Works/Regulatory-Program-and-Permits/Obtain-a-Permit/>). It is also important to note, however, that most projects will qualify for a NH General Permit (<https://www.nae.usace.army.mil/Missions/Regulatory/State-General-Permits/New-Hampshire-General-Permit/>).
- Section 401 Water Quality Certificate when an Individual Section 404 Permit is needed from the ACOE (<https://www.des.nh.gov/water/rivers-and-lakes/water-quality-certification>).
- NHDES Shoreland Water Quality Protection Act Permit (<https://www.des.nh.gov/land/waterfront-development>).
- Coastal Zone Consistency finding.

- NOAA Essential Fish Habitat Assessment (<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/new-england-mid-atlantic/habitat-conservation/essential-fish-habitat-assessment-consultations>).

It will be the project contractor's responsibility to obtain permits, variances, or modifications to the permits which have already been secured by NHDOT for additional work not shown on the plans or work necessary for the contractor's method of construction.

B. Alteration of Terrain Permit Exemption

New Hampshire [RSA 485-A:17](#), Terrain Alteration, requires that any person proposing to undertake construction in or on the border of the surface waters of the state, or proposing to significantly alter the characteristics of the terrain in such a manner as to impede the natural runoff or create an unnatural runoff, shall apply for a permit, and pay a fee to NHDES to authorize such activities. New Hampshire RSA 485-A:17, III authorizes NHDES to exempt other state agencies from the permit and fee provisions of the statute, provided that the agency has incorporated appropriate protective practices in its projects which are substantially equivalent to the requirements established by NHDES under RSA 485-A:17. On March 1, 2022 NHDES reaffirmed that NHDOT has done so, and signed a MOA with NHDOT, exempting it from the fee and permitting requirements (<https://www.des.nh.gov/land/land-development>). As such, NHDOT does not need to obtain an Alteration of Terrain (AOT) permit, but maintain documentation demonstrating substantial equivalence, and reporting annually to NHDES.

The Environmental Manager should work with the BOE Water Quality Program to determine the applicability of the AOT permit exemption to the project ([Alteration of Terrain Process Flowchart](#)), and review/follow procedure [ENV 1-9: Alteration of Terrain Program Compliance](#).

C. EPA National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System General Permits

The Clean Water Act prohibits anybody from discharging "pollutants" through a "point source" into a "water of the United States" unless they have an EPA National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit. The permit will contain limits on what you can discharge, monitoring and reporting requirements, and other provisions to ensure that the discharge does not hurt water quality or human health. For most projects, there are two (2) NPDES general permits that typically apply.

1. Construction General Permit (CGP)

Operators of construction sites where one or more acres of land are disturbed must prepare and submit a Notice of Intent (NOI) to obtain coverage under the EPA's NPDES CGP (<https://www.epa.gov/npdes/2022-construction-general-permit-cgp>). The CGP is designed to ensure that construction site operators have the proper stormwater controls in place so that construction can proceed in a way that protects clean water and the surrounding environment.

2. Small Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Permit

Because NHDOT is responsible for self-certifying, and self-monitoring/enforcing the provisions of the EPA MS4 permit within the ROW, and our related [Stormwater Management Plan \(EPA NPDES #NHR043000\)](#), projects within the urbanized area of the state will **not** need to obtain a separate permit or file a Notice of Intent (NOI) (<https://www.epa.gov/npdes-permits/new-hampshire-small-ms4-general-permit>). Instead, NHDOT requires that, prior advertising or construction funding authorization, the design lead prepares a technical memorandum for acceptance by the BOE Water Quality Program, that addresses the requirements of the EPA MS4 permit. This technical memorandum shall, at a minimum, include the following pursuant to Part 2.3.6 of the MS4 permit:

- Project area,
- Existing pavement surface area,
- Proposed pavement area,
- Pavement analysis, and descriptions of proposed structural treatments,
- A plan of the proposed structural stormwater treatments, including necessary ROW or easements,
- A statement on responsible parties for operation and maintenance of the proposed structural treatments as described in Part 2.3. of the MS4 permit,
- A copy of the [US Fish and Wildlife Service](#) and/or [National Marine Fisheries Service](#) correspondence, including a current [IPaC](#) search and concurrence to listed species,
- A copy of any [National Historic Preservation Act](#) correspondence, including an effects memo and Memorandum of Agreement, as necessary, and
- A signed statement of compliance that the third-party project complies with the MS4 permit requirements in accordance with Appendix B of the MS4 permit.

The Environmental Manager should work with the BOE Water Quality Program to determine the applicability of the EPA general permits to the project and required documentation for compliance.

NHDES provides additional permitting resources at <https://www.des.nh.gov/node/3446>.

The Commissioner of NHDOT has delegated certain permit approval authority to individuals as outlined in procedure [ENV 1-8: Environmental Permits/Approvals Delegation of Authority](#).

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Section VI: Construction and Post-Construction

The environmental review process can occur through all phases of project development, to include the construction phase, as well as on-going commitments during operation of the facility after completion of construction. Generally speaking, these requirements result from commitments made during design, and/or conditions imposed by regulatory agencies in permits issued for the project.

A. Construction

Monitoring during construction is occasionally required. Monitoring could include wetland impact avoidance, proximity of the project to known areas of contamination, etc. and will help evaluate the effectiveness of recommendations made during the design of the project. It will also ensure that all environmental commitments made during project development are adhered to during construction. Of particular importance is the NHDOT commitment to protecting wetlands and surface waters through the use of appropriate erosion and sediment control measures. To this end, the Bureau of Environment employs several Environmental Coordinator positions whose primary responsibility is to work with contractors and Contract Administrators to ensure that all appropriate permits and commitments are adhered to.

Occasionally during construction due to latent conditions or other unforeseen construction additions (such as additional paving or clearing), modifications to the design of the project may warrant a re-evaluation of environmental impacts. In such cases, the provisions for re-evaluation in [Section III.D.](#) of this manual should be followed.

Additional information/considerations relating to water quality and wetlands during construction, on a project-by-project basis, may be found in the following procedures:

- [ENV 1-14: Turbidity Mixing Zones](#)
- [ENV 1-15: Stream Diversions](#)
- [ENV 1-16: Erosion Control Plans](#)

B. Post-Construction Monitoring

Certain aspects of a project, or project area, may need to be monitored following completion of construction. Such activities are usually associated with wetland and/or wetland mitigation sites but may include stormwater features as well. Post-construction monitoring may involve reporting on the survival of wetland plantings, eliminating invasive species, or annual reports on the status of wetland creation sites. Post-construction monitoring requirements are typically included in the environmental commitments for the project, and/or conditions in NHDES Wetlands Bureau or ACOE permits.

Other areas which may involve post-construction monitoring are noise studies where sound walls have been constructed, groundwater sampling in areas of contamination, maintenance of landscaping, and maintenance of permanent stormwater control measures.

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Appendix 1

Commonly Used Environmental-Related Acronyms

AASHTO	American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials
ACEC	American Council of Engineering Companies
ACHP	Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
ACM	Asbestos Containing Materials
ACOE/USACE	Army Corps of Engineers, United States
AOT	Alteration of Terrain
APE	Area of Potential Effect
ASA	Archaeologically Sensitive Area
ASP	Architectural Survey Plan
AST	Aboveground Storage Tank
ATP	Authorization to Proceed (task order assignments)
AUR	Activity and Use Restriction
BFE	Base Flood Elevation
BFW/WBF	Bank Full Width/Width at Bank Full
BMP	Best Management Practice
BO	Biological Opinion
BOE	Bureau of Environment, NHDOT
CA	Contract Administrator
CAA	Clean Air Act
CAAA	Clean Air Act Amendments
CALM	Consolidated Assessment and Listing Methodology
CCDS	Culvert and Closed Drainage System
CE	Categorical Exclusion
CEQ	Council on Environmental Quality
CESWI	Certified Erosion, Sediment, & Storm Water Inspector
CFDA	Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CGP	Construction General Permit, EPA
CIH	Certified Industrial Hygienist
CLG	Certified Local Government
CLOMR	Conditional Letter of Map Revision
CLSP	Conservation Land Stewardship Program
CMAQ	Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality
CORD	Council on Resources and Development
CPESC	Certified Professional in Erosion and Sediment Control
CR	Cultural Resources

CRA	Cultural Resources Agency
CWA	Clean Water Act
CWS	Certified Wetland Scientist
CZMA	Coastal Zone Management Act
CZMP	Coastal Zone Management Program
DAMF	Department of Agriculture, Markets, and Food, New Hampshire
D&F	Dredge and Fill
dBA	Decibels
DEIS	Draft Environmental Impact Statement
DNCR	Department of Natural and Cultural Resources
DOA	Department of the Army, United States
DOI	Department of the Interior, United States
DOS	Department of Safety, New Hampshire
USDOT	Department of Transportation, United States
DSA	Data Sharing Agreement
EA	Environmental Assessment
EC	Environmental Coordinator
ECP	Erosion Control Plan
EFH	Essential Fish Habitat
EJ	Environmental Justice
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
EM	Environmental Manager
EMMIT	Enhanced Mapping & Management Information Tool
EO	Executive Order
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency, United States
ESA	Endangered Species Act
FEIS	Final Environmental Impact Statement
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency, United States
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration, United States
FIRM	Flood Insurance Rate Map
FONSI	Finding of No Significant Impact
FPF	Flood Plain Finding
FPPA	Farmland Protection Policy Act
FRA	Federal Railroad Administration, United States
FTA	Federal Transit Administration, United States
GACIT	Governor's Advisory Commission on Intermodal Transportation
GASB-49	Government Accounting Standards Board Statement No. 49
GP	General Permit
G&C	Governor and Executive Council
GRANIT	NH Geographically Reference Analysis and Information Transfer System

GPR	Ground Penetrating Radar
GSA	General Services Administration, United States
HAZMAT	Hazardous Materials
HAZWOPER	Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response
HBI	Historic Bridge Inventory
HD	Historic District
HOTL	Highest Observable Tide Line (tidal)
IGE	Independent Government Estimate
IMP	Inventory of Managed Properties database
IP	Individual Permit, ACOE
IPaC	Information for Planning and Consulting
ISMV	Invasive Species Management plan
ISA	Initial Site Assessment
LCHIP	Land and Community Heritage Investment Program
LCIP	Land Conservation Investment Program
LiDAR	Light Detection and Ranging
LMAC	Lakes Management Advisory Committee
LOMR	Letter of Map Revision
LOS	Level of Service
LPA	Local Public Agency
LRS	Limited Reuse Soil
LRSTP	Long Range Statewide Transportation Plan
LWCF	Land and Water Conservation Fund
MOA	Memorandum of Agreement
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organization
MtBE	Methyl Tertiary Butyl Ether
MSGP	Multi Sector General Permit, EPA
MS4	Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System, EPA
NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards
NAC	Noise Abatement Criteria
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NFIP	National Flood Insurance Program
NHB/NHNHB	Natural Heritage Bureau, New Hampshire
NHCP	Coastal Program, New Hampshire
NHDES/DES	Department of Environmental Services, New Hampshire
NHDHR/DHR	Division of Historical Resources, New Hampshire
NHDOT	Department of Transportation, New Hampshire
NHFG/F&G	Fish and Game Department, New Hampshire

NHOEM/OEM	Office of Emergency Management, New Hampshire
NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act
NHW	Normal High Water (lakes and ponds)
NHWB	Wetlands Bureau, New Hampshire
NLEB	Northern Long-eared Bat
NMFS	National Marine Fisheries Service
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NOI	Notice of Intent
NOT	Notice of Termination
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
NPS	National Park Service, United States
NRA	Natural Resource Agencies
NRCS	Natural Resources Conservation Service, United States
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
NTP	Notice to Proceed (contract initiation)
NTU	Nephelometric Turbidity Unit
NWI	National Wetlands Inventory
O&M	Operation and Maintenance
ODDCF	Oil Discharge and Disposal Cleanup Fund (ODD Fund)
OHW	Ordinary High Water (streams and rivers)
ORW	Outstanding Resource Waters
OSHA	Occupational Safety and Health Administration, United States
OSI	Office of Strategic Initiatives, New Hampshire
PA	Programmatic Agreement
PAF	Project Area Form
PAH	Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbon
PAM	Polyacrylamide
PBO	Programmatic Biological Opinion
PCB	Polychlorinated Biphenyls
PCE	Programmatic Categorical Exclusion
PDA	Pease Development Authority
PFAS	Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances
PG	Professional Geologist
POP	Project Operations Plan
POW	Prosecution of Work
PSI	Preliminary Site Investigation
P3	Public Private Partnership
RCRA	Resource Conservation and Recovery Act
REC	Recognized Environmental Condition
RFMI	Request for More Information

RFP	Request for Proposals
RGP	Remediation General Permit, EPA
RIMS	Reporting and Information Management Section, NHDES
RMAC	Rivers Management Advisory Committee
ROD	Record of Decision
RPC	Regional Planning Commission
RPR	Request for Project Review
RSA	Revised Statutes Annotated, New Hampshire
RTK	Right to Know
SADES	Statewide Asset Data Exchange System
SCM	Stormwater Control Measure
SEIS	Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement
SHPO	State Historic Preservation Officer
SGMP	Soils and Groundwater Management Plan
SMP	Soils Management Plan or Salt Management Plan
SP	Surplus Property
SPCC	Spill Prevention, Control, and Countermeasures
STIP	Statewide Transportation Improvement Program
STP	Shovel Test Pit
SWPPP	Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan
SWQPA	Shoreland Water Quality Protection Act
T&E	Threatened and Endangered Species
TCP	Traffic Control Plan
THPO	Tribal Historic Preservation Officer
TIP	Transportation Improvement Program
TMDL	Total Maximum Daily Load Study
TOB	Top-of-Bank
TSCA	Toxic Substances Control Act
TSM	Transportation System Management
TSS	Total Suspended Solids
TYP	Ten Year Transportation Plan
USCG	Coast Guard, United States
USDA	Department of Agriculture, United States
USFWS/FWS	Fish and Wildlife Service, United States
USGS	United States Geological Survey
UST	Underground Storage Tank
WAP	Wildlife Action Plan, NHFG
WMNF	White Mountain National Forest
WQ	Water Quality
WQC	Water Quality Certification

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Appendix 2

Environmental Contact Information

(Applicable Programmatic Categorical Exclusion Criteria are noted in parentheses)

Right-of-Way/Traffic/Roadway Access^(1, 2, 3)

NHDOT Project Manager
Bureau of Planning & Community Assistance

Cultural Resources⁽⁴⁾

Bureau of Environment Cultural Resources Program

(<https://www.nh.gov/dot/org/projectdevelopment/environment/units/program-management/cultural.htm>)

Protection of Historic Properties – [36 CFR 800](#)

Project Review & Compliance – RPR Forms (<https://www.nh.gov/nhdhr/review/rpr.htm>)

Enhanced Mapping & Management Information Tool (EMMIT) – <https://www.nh.gov/nhdhr/emmit/index.htm>

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NHDOT Bureau of Environment
PO Box 483, 7 Hazen Drive
Concord, NH 03302-0483
(603) 271-3226
Jillian.L.Edelmann@dot.nh.gov

Sheila Charles
Cultural Resources Program Specialist
NHDOT Bureau of Environment
(603) 271-4049
Sheila.J.Charles@dot.nh.gov

Laura Black
Spec. Projects & Compliance Spec.
NH Division of Historical Resources
19 Pillsbury Street
Concord, NH 03301-3570
(603) 271-6438
Laura.S.Black@dncr.nh.gov

Section 4(f)⁽⁵⁾

FHWA should only be contacted if publicly-owned parks, recreation areas, and wildlife and waterfowl refuges have been identified in the project area. Section 4(f) concerns with historic resources should be addressed through the Cultural Resource Agency Coordination Meetings.

FHWA Section 4(f) Policy Paper (<https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/legislation/section4f/4fpolicy.aspx>)

Jamison S. Sikora
Environmental Program Manager
Federal Highway Administration, NH Division Office
James C. Cleveland Federal Building
53 Pleasant Street, Suite 2200
Concord, NH 03301
(603) 410-4870
Jamie.Sikora@dot.gov

Section 6(f)/NH Conservation Lands^(6, 16)

NH GRANIT maintains a GIS layer of conservation lands in the state. Coordination, as necessary based on project scope, should be carried out with the contacts below.

GRANITView data mapper (https://granitview.unh.edu/html5viewer/index.html?viewer=granit_view)

Conservation Land Stewardship Program (<https://www.clsp.nh.gov>)

Land & Community Heritage Investment Program (LCHIP) (<https://lchip.org>)

Land & Water Conservation Fund Program (<https://www.nhstateparks.org/about-us/community-recreation/land-water-conservation-fund-grant>)

Charlotte Harding
Stewardship Specialist
Conservation Land Stewardship Program
NH Office of Strategic Initiatives
(603) 271-6809
Charlotte.J.Harding@clsp.nh.gov

Ben Engel
Land Conservation Specialist
LCHIP
(603) 224-4113, Ext. 14
BEngel@lchip.org

Bill Gegas
LWCF Program Specialist
NH Division of Parks & Rec.
(603) 271-3035
vasillios.n.gegas@dncr.nh.gov

Wetlands/Surface Waters⁽⁷⁾

NHDES and/or the US Army Corps of Engineers should not receive an initial contact letter and should only be contacted during the preparation of wetland impact plans/permit application should questions arise regarding jurisdictional impacts or the permitting process.

Bureau of Environment Wetlands Program

(<https://www.nh.gov/dot/org/projectdevelopment/environment/units/program-management/wetlands.htm>)

NHDES Wetlands Permit Planning Tool (<https://nhdeswppt.unh.edu/Html5Viewer/index.html?viewer=WPPT.gvh>)

NHDES Wetlands Bureau Permitting (<https://www.des.nh.gov/water/wetlands/permit-assistance>)

NHDES OneStop Data Mapper (<https://www4.des.state.nh.us/onestopdatamapper/onestopmapper.aspx>)

NHDES Shoreland Water Quality Protection Act (<https://www.des.nh.gov/land/waterfront-development>)

US Army Corps of Engineers NH General Permits (<https://www.usace.army.mil/Missions/Regulatory/State-General-Permits/New-Hampshire-General-Permit/>)

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Wetlands Program Manager
NHDOT Bureau of Environment
(603) 271-0556
Andrew.M.OSullivan@dot.nh.gov

Karl Benedict
Public Works Subsection Supervisor
NHDES Wetlands Bureau
29 Hazen Drive, Po Box 95
Concord, NH 03302-0095
Karl.D.Benedict@des.nh.gov

Michael Hicks
Project Manager
US Army Corps of Engineers
Regulatory Branch
696 Virginia Road
Concord, MA 01742-2751
Michael.C.Hicks@usace.army.mil

US Coast Guard⁽⁸⁾

US Coast Guard Bridge Program (<https://www.dco.uscg.mil/Our-Organization/Assistant-Commandant-for-Prevention-Policy-CG-5P/Office-of-Bridge-Program/Bridge-Permit-Application-Process>)

Gary Croot
Bridge Management Specialist
First Coast Guard District – Boston
(603) 397-9361
gary.t.croot@uscg.mil

Floodways/Floodplains⁽⁹⁾

Office of Strategic Initiatives Floodplain Management Program
(<https://www.nh.gov/osi/planning/programs/fmp/index.htm>)

Jennifer Gilbert, CFM
Floodplain Management Coordinator
National Flood Insurance Program
NH Office of Strategic Initiatives
(603) 271-1762
Jennifer.R.Gilbert@livefree.nh.gov

Water Quality⁽¹⁰⁾

Prior to contacting the Water Quality Program Manager, please consider if your project requires analysis. Coordination should not be made via initial contact letter, but on an as needed basis.

Bureau of Environment Water Quality Program

<https://www.nh.gov/dot/org/projectdevelopment/environment/units/program-management/water-quality.htm>

NHDES Alteration of Terrain Program (<https://www.des.nh.gov/land/land-development>)

NHDES Section 401 Water Quality Certification (<https://www.des.nh.gov/water/rivers-and-lakes/water-quality-certification>)

NPDES Construction General Permit (<https://www.epa.gov/npdes/2022-construction-general-permit-cgp>)

NH MS4 Permit (<https://www.epa.gov/npdes-permits/new-hampshire-small-ms4-general-permit>)

Mark Hemmerlein
Water Quality Program Manager
NHDOT Bureau of Environment
(603) 271-1550
Mark.T.Hemmerlein@dot.nh.gov

General Environmental/Air Quality & Noise^(11, 12, 14, 15, 16)

Prior to contacting the Bureau of Environment Project Management Section Chief, please consider if your project requires analysis. Coordination should not be made via initial contact letter, but on an as-needed basis.

Bureau of Environment Air Quality and Noise

<https://www.nh.gov/dot/org/projectdevelopment/environment/units/program-management/air-noise.htm>

Wild and Scenic Rivers (<https://www.rivers.gov/new-hampshire.php>)

Coastal Zone Management Act (https://www.des.nh.gov/sites/g/files/ehbemt341/files/documents/r-wd-19-28_0.pdf)

Jon Evans
Project Management Section Chief
NHDOT Bureau of Environment
(603) 271-4048
Jonathan.A.Evans@dot.nh.gov

Coastal Zone Management
Christian Williams
Program Coordinator
NHDES Watershed Management
(603) 559-0025
Christian.Williams@des.nh.gov

Endangered Species/Wildlife/Invasive Species⁽¹³⁾

Prior to contacting the individuals listed below, the following websites should first be consulted to determine what, if any, follow up coordination is necessary.

NH Natural Heritage Bureau (NHB) DataCheck Tool (<https://www4.des.state.nh.us/NHB-DataCheck/>).

US Fish & Wildlife Service, Use the 'Information for Planning and Conservation'(IPaC) tool

(<http://ecos.fws.gov/ipac/>).

NH Fish & Game Department (<https://wildlife.state.nh.us/wildlife/environmental-review.html>).

Bureau of Environment Northern Long-Eared Bat

(<https://www.nh.gov/dot/org/projectdevelopment/environment/units/program-management/long-eared-bat.htm>)

Rebecca Martin
 Plants & Wildlife Program Manager
 NHDOT Bureau of Environment
 (603) 271-6781
Rebecca.A.Martin@dot.nh.gov

Kevin Newton
 Wildlife Biologist
 NH Fish & Game Department
 (603) 271-5860
NHFGreview@wildlife.nh.gov
kevin.m.newton@wildlife.nh.gov

Maddie Severance
 Environmental Reviewer
 NH Natural Heritage Bureau
 (603) 271-2214
nbhreview@dncr.nh.gov

Essential Fish Habitat⁽¹³⁾

Contact the National Marine Fisheries Service only if the project will involve work within tidal waters or waters designated as Essential Fish Habitat (EFH). EFH for Atlantic Salmon is listed in Appendix C of the US Army Corps of Engineers General Permits for NH. Tributaries of the waters listed in Appendix C are also considered EFH if they exhibit Atlantic Salmon habitat characteristics. EFH for Atlantic Salmon and for all other species can be found via the EFH mapper tool.

Army Corps GPs for New Hampshire (<https://www.nae.usace.army.mil/Missions/Regulatory/State-General-Permits/New-Hampshire-General-Permit/>)

EFH Habitat Mapper (<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/resource/map/essential-fish-habitat-mapper>)

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 NOAA/National Marine Fisheries Service
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 Northeast Regional Office
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 National Marine Fisheries Service
 Maine Field Station
 17 Godfrey Drive
 Orono, Maine 04473
 (207) 866-4172
David.Bean@noaa.gov

NHDOT Resource Agency Coordination Meetings

Bureau of Environment Natural Resource Agency Meeting

(<https://www.nh.gov/dot/org/projectdevelopment/environment/units/project-management/nracrmeetings.htm>)

Bureau of Environment Cultural Resource Agency Meeting

(<https://www.nh.gov/dot/org/projectdevelopment/environment/units/program-management/crmeetings.htm>)

Natural Resource Agency Coordination Meeting
 Andrew O'Sullivan
 Wetlands Program Manager
 NHDOT Bureau of Environment
 (603) 271-0556
Andrew.M.OSullivan@dot.nh.gov

Cultural Resource Agency Coordination Meeting
 Jill Edelmann
 Cultural Resources Program Manager
 NHDOT Bureau of Environment
 (603) 271-7968
Jillian.L.Edelmann@dot.nh.gov

Appendix 3

Environmental-Related Weblinks

ACOE NH GPs – <https://www.nae.usace.army.mil/Missions/Regulatory/State-General-Permits/New-Hampshire-General-Permit/>

ACOE Section 404(b) guidelines – [404\(b\)\(1\) guidelines](#)

Clean Air Act – [Clean Air Act of 1970](#)

Clean Air Act Amendments – [Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990](#)

Conservation Land Stewardship Program – <https://www.clsp.nh.gov>

Green Sheet – project initiation request – [“Request for Environmental Documentation”](#)

CZMA link – <https://www.des.nh.gov/resource-center/publications?keys=CZMA+022019&purpose=&subcategory=Coastal>

DES OneStop – <https://www4.des.state.nh.us/onestopdatamapper/onestopmapper.aspx>

NHDES PFAS Sampling Map – <https://nhdes.maps.arcgis.com/apps/View/index.html?appid=66770bef141c43a98a445c54a17720e2&extent=-73.5743,42.5413,-69.6852,45.4489>.

Enhanced Mapping & Management Information Tool (EMMIT) – <https://www.nh.gov/nhdhr/emmit/index.htm>

e-NEPA filing link – <https://www.epa.gov/nepa/environmental-impact-statement-filing-guidance>

e-NEPA guidance – <https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2021-01/documents/e-nepa-guide-on-registration-and-preparing-an-eis-for-electronic-submission.pdf>

EPA GCP – <https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2022-01/2022-cgp-final-permit.pdf>

EPA MS4 Permit – <https://www.epa.gov/npdes-permits/new-hampshire-small-ms4-general-permit>

Executive Order 11988 – [Floodplain Finding](#)

Executive Order 11990 – [Wetlands Finding](#)

Executive Order 12372 Intergovernmental Review process – [Executive Order 12372](#)

Federal approach to NEPA – [Section 102\(2\)\(C\) of NEPA \(42 USC. 4332\)](#)

FHWA Categorical Exclusions – [23 CFR 771.117](#)

FHWA c-List Projects – [23 CFR 771.117\(c\)](#)

FHWA d-List Projects – [23 CFR 771.117\(d\)](#)

FHWA guidance for preparing NEPA and Section 4(f) documents – [Technical Advisory T6640.8A](#)

FHWA Section 4(f) Policy Paper – [Section 4\(f\) evaluation](#)

FHWA Section 4(f) tutorial – https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_topics/4f_tutorial/default.aspx

Flood Plain Management – <https://www.nh.gov/osi/planning/programs/fmp/index.htm>

General NEPA information – [National Environmental Policy Act](#)

Layout of State Highways – [RSA 230:13](#)

LCHIP – https://www.landscape.org/new-hampshire/programs/NH_Land_Community_Heritage/

National Historic Preservation Act – [National Historic Preservation Act](#)

National Marine Fisheries Service – [National Marine Fisheries Service](#)

NEPA and Project Development FHWA Toolkit – https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/nepa/nepa_projDev.aspx

NH Fish and Game environmental review – <https://wildlife.state.nh.us/wildlife/environmental-review.html>

NH Fish and Game project review rules – [Fis 1002-1005](#)

NH Wetlands Statute – [RSA 483-B](#)

NHB data check mapping tool – <https://www4.des.state.nh.us/NHB-DataCheck/>

NHDES AOT Program – <https://www.des.nh.gov/land/land-development>

NHDES permitting assistance – <https://www.des.nh.gov/node/3446>

NHDES Section 401 Water Quality Certification – <https://www.des.nh.gov/water/rivers-and-lakes/water-quality-certification>

NHDES Shoreland Program – <https://www.des.nh.gov/land/waterfront-development>

NHDES wetlands permitting assistance – <https://www.des.nh.gov/water/wetlands/permit-assistance>

NHDHR Request for Project Review – <https://www.nh.gov/nhdhr/review/rpr.htm>

NHDOT AOT procedures – [ENV 1-9: Alteration of Terrain Program Compliance](#)
NHDOT BOE initial reporting summary – [“NHDOT Bureau of Environment Summary of Initial Environmental Review”](#)
NHDOT CLS coordination procedure – [ENV 1-4: Conservation Land Stewardship Coordination](#)
NHDOT environmental commitments procedure (draft) – [ENV 1-X: Environmental Commitments](#)
NHDOT environmental policy – [ENV 1: Environmental Policy](#)
NHDOT Invasive Species Manual – [ENV 1, Manual 1: Best Management Practices for the Control of Invasive and Noxious Plant Species](#)
NHDOT LCHIP procedure – [ENV 1-3: Land and Community Heritage Investment Program Coordination](#)
NHDOT LWCF procedure – [ENV 1-5: Land and Water Conservation Fund Coordination](#)
NHDOT NEPA Public Involvement Manual – [ENV 1, Manual 2: NEPA Public Involvement Manual](#)
NHDOT Noise Policy – [ENV 4: Policy for the Assessment and Abatement of Highway Traffic Noise for Type II & Type II Highway Projects](#)
NHDOT Noise Policy Document – [NHDOT Noise Policy](#)
NHDOT procedure for documentation of state-funded projects – [ENV 1-2: Environmental Documentation of State-Funded Projects](#)
NHDOT Programmatic CE Checklist – [Categorical Exclusion Programmatic Determination Checklist](#)
NHDOT Stonewall Policy – [Policy ENV 3: Consideration of Stonewalls in Department Projects/Activities](#)
NHDOT Stormwater Management Plan – [Stormwater Management Plan \(EPA NPDES #NHR043000\)](#)
NHOSI Floodplain Program – [NH Office of Strategic Initiatives Floodplain Management Program](#)
NOAA EFH – <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/new-england-mid-atlantic/habitat-conservation/essential-fish-habitat-assessment-consultations>
NOAA project reviews – [Section 7: Species/Critical Habitat Information & Maps in the Greater Atlantic Region | NOAA Fisheries](#)
Programmatic CE Agreement – [NHDOT/FHWA Programmatic Agreement for Categorical Exclusions](#)
Section 106 NHPA – [Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act](#)
Section 4(f) policy – [Section 4\(f\)](#)
US Fish and Wildlife Service – [US Fish and Wildlife Service](#)
USCG bridge permitting – https://www.dco.uscg.mil/Portals/9/COAST%20GUARD%20BRIDGE%20PERMITTING_Sep2019.pdf
USDOT Environmental Impact Procedures – [23 CFR Part 771](#)
USDOT NEPA Re-Evaluations – [Environmental Review Toolkit \(dot.gov\)](#)
USFWS Bald Eagle Screening Form – [Northeast Bald Eagle Project Screening Form | FWS.gov](#)
USFWS project mapping tool – <http://ecos.fws.gov/ipac/>
USFWS project reviews – [IPaC: Home \(fws.gov\)](#)
Wetlands Planning Permit Tool – <https://nhdeswppt.unh.edu/Html5Viewer/index.html?viewer=WPPT.gvh>