

ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTATION

An environmental document ensures that the project has been reviewed for potential impacts to the natural, cultural, and human environment.

POLICY: All federally-funded projects must be in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), in order for ROW or construction funds to be authorized.

The National Environmental Policy Act, or NEPA, is applicable to all federally-funded projects. Many projects that are locally administered can often qualify for the lowest level of NEPA analysis, which is a Categorical Exclusion (CE).

NOTE: This guidance does not address preparation of an Environmental Assessment (EA) or an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Contact your NCDOT Program Manager for more information on these types of documents.

Local Government Agencies are responsible for undertaking environmental review, obtaining appropriate clearances or approvals, and submitting documentation to NCDOT for final review and signatures.

The Department has recently signed a new Agreement with the Federal Highway Administration that updates and streamlines the policy and procedures associated with approval of a Categorical Exclusion.

PROCEDURE:

1. Review Help Resources – follow these directions to find the updated information on Categorical Exclusions:
 - Go to www.connect.ncdot.gov
 - Click on Resources
 - Click on Division Managed Project Delivery Training
 - Open up “Categorical Exclusion Checklist” folder.
2. There are three types of Categorical Exclusion Actions, each with a corresponding Classification Form to complete. Refer to the [2019 Final Programmatic CE Agreement](#), Appendices A – E, to determine the appropriate checklist:
 - *Type I Non-Ground Disturbing*
 - *Type I and II Ground Disturbing*
 - *Type III Ground Disturbing*

3. Complete the *Categorical Exclusion Action Classification Form* associated with your project type. Please include a brief set of maps, plans, photos (tied to a photo key), and any pertinent information as directed to assist with NCDOT/FHWA review.
 - Project Numbers – all relevant project numbers can be found on the front of your Local Project Agreement.
 - Ensure Backup Documentation (letters, memos, maps, etc.) are included in the package or easily accessible if requested.
4. Submit *CE Checklist* through the EBS Portal if your project is managed in the on-line project management tool or directly to your program contact by e-mail.

RESOURCES:

[23 CFR 771](#) – See Section 117 for more information on Categorical Exclusions.

<https://connect.ncdot.gov/resources/DMPDT/Pages/default.aspx>:
Division Managed Project Delivery Website – Categorical Exclusion Checklist Folder for blank templates, examples, powerpoints, and related training.

[NCDOT Environmental Resources website](#) for more details on specific topics

The [NCDOT Environmental Policy Unit](#) is a statewide resource across all environmental topics and can help direct you to the right guidance or NCDOT staff.

IMPORTANT: An approved Environmental Document is required before NCDOT can request ROW or Construction Authorization.