

# ATLAS Search & Screening Tool Tips

- Users must have an active NCID and provide your NCID username to [ATLAS@ncdot.gov](mailto:ATLAS@ncdot.gov) to get permissions to access ATLAS. Your NCID can be created here: <https://myncid.nc.gov>
- Bookmark the ATLAS Resources page for easy access to the Search & Screening Tools, as well as training materials and other reference documents: <https://connect.ncdot.gov/resources/Environmental/EAU/Project-Atlas/Pages/default.aspx>.
- When searching for layers:
  - By Category: layers are grouped first by human or natural resource, then by subcategories; a full list of layers and their categories can be found in the “ATLAS Search and Screening GIS Layers” on the [ATLAS Resources page](#).
  - By Document: some layers are used in multiple documents and therefore can be found in multiple options within the “Document” search bar
  - By Organization: these can include municipality, county, city, and national organizations, among others
  - Using Keyword: try using different keywords such as “crash” vs “safety,” or different versions of the same word such as “road” vs “roads.”
- Zoom into an area before adding layers to reduce processing speed in the map.
- To see the attributes within a layer, use the “Identify” function; zoom into the map to more easily select a single feature.
- Some layers only appear when the map is zoomed into a specific extent – these will appear as greyed out in the legend until sufficiently zoomed in.
- Layers without checkboxes are secure and cannot be viewed on the map
- The tools will time out after 30 minutes of inactivity. That may result in the screen freezing, or some of the buttons becoming inactive. A pop-up window will appear when there are 5 minutes remaining before time-out. If time-out occurs, restart the tool.
- When uploading a study area, a complete shapefile in zipped form is needed (including .shp, .shx, and .dbf files).
- When using a GIS template to pre-select a group of layers, you can then add or remove individual layers from the list after you have loaded the template.
- After adding a study area, if a buffer is not needed for a polygon, leave it blank; you cannot enter “0” in the buffer distance.
- When selecting layers, opt for fewer layers when possible; selecting many layers may lead to delays in processing and may result in some layers timing out as they are pulled from their host servers.
- After layers are selected in Search, use the “Save Layers” button to create your own template, which can be used for future projects.

- After layers are selected and a screening ran, use the “Save Screening Settings” button to create your own template, which can be used to screen future projects.
- Shapes drawn with the “Draw” function in ATLAS Search are different from “Add study area” – the Draw function creates temporary shapes displayed in the current session. Use the ”Add study area” function to designate the area in which you want to clip and download your chosen layers.
- When printing a map from the Search Tool, clicking “export” does not automatically download the file to the user’s Download folder; click the “Exported files” link to download the map to your computer.