# The Environmental Review Process for Federally Funded LPA Projects



Kevin T. Nyhan Administrator Bureau of Environment

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#### Presentation Overview

- What is NEPA?
- Laws, Rules & Regulations
- A NEPA Process
- What is Section 4(f)?
- Environmental Review Timeline

#### Federal Laws

- National Historic Preservation Act
- Endangered Species Act
- Clean Water Act
- US DOT Act
- Land & Water Conservation Fund
- Coastal Zone Management Act
- Others

#### State Laws

NEPA

- Native Plan Protection Act
- Dredge & Fill in Wetlands
- Endangered Species Conservation Act
- Shoreland Water Quality Protection Act
- Others

#### What is NEPA?

- Environmental review does not supercede the need to obtain other permits, etc. (i.e. Wetlands Bureau, Corps of Engineers, Coast Guard, etc.), which are the responsibility of the project sponsor.
- SRTS Non-Infrastructure Projects do NOT require individual review since they do not lead to construction or require construction

#### A NEPA Process...

- Interdisciplinary approach
- Stepwise process
  - Identify the Purpose and Need
  - Contacting affected groups
  - Identifying the resources
  - Involving the public and other stakeholders
  - Environmental documentation
    - Purpose and Need
    - Alternatives
    - Expected impacts after minimization
    - Mitigation, if needed

#### Identify the Purpose and Need

- What are the major conditions that need to be changed.
- List major objectives (purpose) for each identified need
- Link your analysis (documentation) and the final decision (FHWA classification) to achievement of objectives and resolution of environmental issues

## Identify the Purpose and Need

- Project Purpose and Need
  - The purpose of this project is...
  - The need for this project is demonstrated by...
- The purpose is NOT the proposed action
  - The purpose of this project is to <u>replace the</u> <u>bridge...</u>(WRONG)
  - The purpose of this project is to correct structural deficiencies associated with a red list bridge... (**RIGHT**)

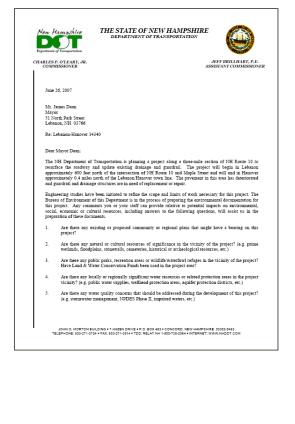
#### Tying Purpose & Need to Proposed Action

- The <u>purpose</u> of this project is to remove a structurally deficient bridge from the NHDOT Red List and increase safety of the traveling public.
- The <u>need</u> for this project is demonstrated by the structurally deteriorated condition of the bridge deck and structural steel (FSR 18/100), poor site distance, high frequency of flooding at the bridge, and substandard approach guardrail
- The **proposed action** consists of the replacement of the bridge that carries NH Route X over the Y River, with associated approach work.

## **Contacting Affected Groups**

- Send letters to:
  - Local Officials
  - State and Federal
     Officials responsible
     for resources
  - Others as appropriate





## Identifying (known) resources

- On-line Tools
  - Natural Heritage Bureau
  - US Fish & Wildlife Service
  - **GRANIT**
  - NHDES OneStop
  - **FIRMETTE** 
    - Local ordinances
- May require coordination with other resource agencies









## Identifying (known) resources

- Environmental Justice
  - Minority Populations
  - Low Income Populations
  - US Census Block Data
  - Consult with NHDOT in most cases
- Section 6(f) Properties
  - Land & Water Conservation Fund
  - DRED (State liaison)







- Wetlands
  - CWS
- Rivers/streams
- Shoreland
- Invasive species
- Stream crossings



- Cultural resources
  - Archaeology/History
  - NHDHR (SHPO)
  - **RPR** Form
  - Section 106 NHPA
  - Forms
    - Project Area
    - District Area
    - Individual



#### mpshire Division of Historical Res

This is additional information relation to DVP 9 Replace C. t from Busho het hak NH Route Map & Lot # N/ State NH Zip 03302 Email



- Air Quality Considerations (qualitative)
  - All projects
  - Sidewalks and crosswalks typically exempt (unless they involve signal installation/ alteration)
- Air Quality Analysis (quantitative)
  - Installation/ adjustment of traffic signals
  - Intersection reconfiguration
- Contact BOE prior to:
  - Any project in Manchester or Nashua
  - Any project listed as "Regionally Significant in the STIP.





- Noise Considerations (qualitative)
  - All projects
  - Sidewalks and crosswalks typically exempt
- Noise Analysis (quantitative)
  - Construction of a new highway
  - Substantial alteration to vertical or horizontal alignment
  - Addition of through lanes



### **Special Contamination Issues**

- Sources of contamination for all projects
  - Adjacent sites listed with DES UIC, LUST, GMP, AUR, Landfills, Laundromats, Spills/releases (OneStop)
  - Visual evidence of contamination
    - Stained soils
    - Stressed vegetation
    - Monitoring wells
  - Suspected sources of contamination
    - Manufactured gas plants
    - Urban fill
    - Railroads
    - People in hazmat suits



## **Special Contamination Issues**

#### Sources of contamination for all projects (cont.)

- Asbestos Containing Materials (ACM)
  - Bridges constructed between 1958 and 1978
    - Mastic
    - Pavement
    - Membrane
  - Transite pipe
  - Any project in Nashua or Hudson
  - Lead Paint
    - Manifests
    - Handling, Transportation, Disposal



#### **Evaluating Alternatives**

- Proposed Action
- Alternatives Considered
  - No Build
  - Reduce/avoid impacts
  - Rehabilitation (bridges)
- All alternatives should relate back to Purpose and Need



# Involving the public

- Public Officials Meetings
- Public Informational Meetings
- Public Hearings
- Resource Agency Meetings



# NHDOT Monthly Resource Agency Meetings

- NHDOT Natural Resource Agency Meeting
  - <sup>3rd</sup> Wednesday of Each Month
  - Contact Christine Perron
- NHDOT Cultural Resource Agency Meeting
  - 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of Each Month
  - Contact Jill Edelmann

## Natural Resource Agency Meetings

- Schedule when:
  - Initial Review
  - Alternatives Analysis
  - Environmental impacts
    - Wetlands
    - Floodplains
    - Other resource impacts
  - May not be necessary if natural resource impacts are <u>not</u> anticipated

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A review at this meeting streamlines wetlands permitting also

#### Cultural Resource Agency Meetings

- Agencies Represented
  - NHDHR
  - FHWA (Lead Agency)
  - Consulting Parties
- Laws/rules
  - **RSA 227-C**
  - Section 106 NHPA
  - Section 4(f)



"Everyone here? Good. Meeting topic: Setting world record for shortest meeting. All in favor say aye. Ayes have it. Meeting over."

## Cultural Resource Agency Meetings

#### Process

- Request for Project Review (RPR) Form
- Determine Area of Potential Effect (APE)
- Project Effects
  - No Historic Properties Affected
  - No Adverse Affect
  - Adverse Affect
- May require historic/archaeological surveys
- Adverse effects require mitigation
- FHWA decision w/SHPO concurrence

#### Cultural Resource Agency Meetings

- LPA Effects Memo
  - Discuss project effect
  - Detail mitigation
  - Represents approval
  - Required

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RPR form is not sufficient to satisfy Section 106

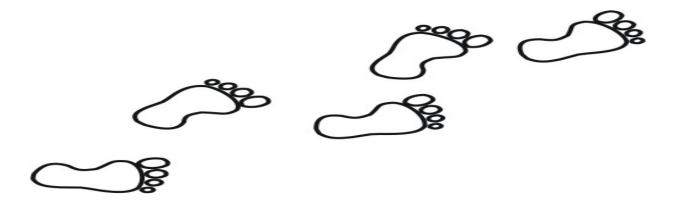


### **NEPA Documentation Options**

- Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)
   (Class I)
- Environmental Assessment (EA) (Class III)
- Categorical Exclusion (CE) (Class II)
  - Individual CE (25%)
  - **CE Programmatic Determination Checklist** (*The Checklist*) (75%)

## Programmatic Categorical Exclusions (Programmatic CE)

- Projects with demonstrated history of <u>not</u> having <u>significant</u> environmental impact
- Stepwise Process applies to all categories of NEPA action!



#### **Project Description**



state of new frampshile - Department of fransportation

#### CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION PROGRAMMATIC DETERMINATION CHECKLIST

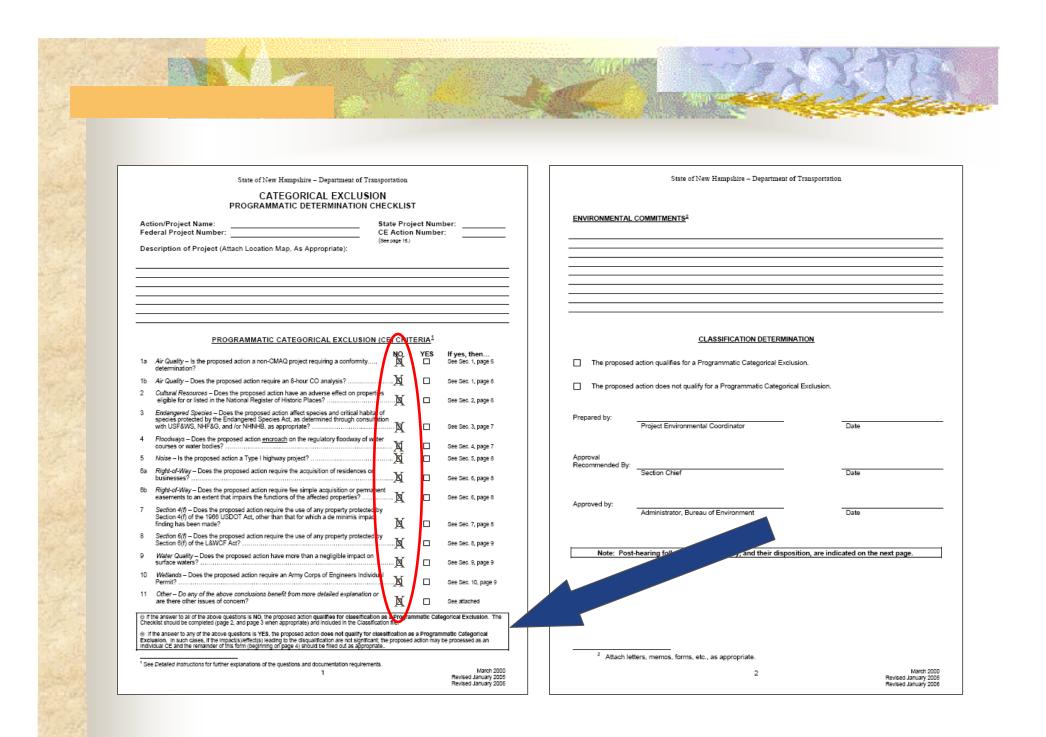
CITY Action/Project Name: Federal Project Number: X-A001(###)

##### State Project Number: CE Action Number:

Description of Project (Attach Location Map, As Appropriate):

**DETAILED DESCRIPTION SHOULD INCLUDE:** 

**RPOSE AND NEED** ESIGN PARAMETERS. NY OTHER SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS.



- Environmental Commitments
  - Items needing follow up after approval of NEPA
  - Successful implementation
  - Applies to all categories of action

		State of New Hampshire – Department of Trans	portation
		0011111111702	
ENVI	RONMENTAL	COMMITMENTS <sup>2</sup>	
$\checkmark$			/
		CLASSIFICATION DETERMINATION	
П	The proposed	action qualifies for a non-comparing Categorical Evolution	
_			
	The proposed	action does not qualify for a Programmatic Categorical Exclu	usion.
Prepa	red by:	Project Environmental Coordinator	Date
Appro Recor	wal mmended By:		
		Section Chief	Date
Appro	wed by:		
		Administrator, Bureau of Environment	Date
<b>—</b>	Noto: Post	-hearing follow-up actions, if any, and their disposition, a	are indicated on the part page
L	Note: 1 Ost	meaning follow-up actions, it any, and their disposition, a	are mulcated on the next page.
	<sup>2</sup> Attach lot	ters, memos, forms, etc., as appropriate.	
	Attaurret	2	March 2000 Revised January 2005
			Revised January 2005 Revised January 2006

- Detailed Discussion
  - Additional information
  - Demonstrates
     understanding of issues
  - Allows NHDOT/FHWA to complete approval process

#### DETAILED DISCUSSION OF PROGRAMMATIC CE CRITERIA

1a & 1b. Air Ouality – Is the proposed action a non-CMAQ project requiring a conformity determination? A conformity determination is not required as this project is consistent with the projects listed in Table 2 of 40 CFR 93.126.

 Cultural Resources – Does the proposed action have an adverse effect on properties eligible for or listed in the National Register of Historic Places? No. The project was determined to have [effect] on historic resources. Detail any stipulations conditioning the effect memo from SHPO.

3. Endangered Species – Does the proposed action affect species and critical habitat of species protected by the Endangered Species Act, as determined through consultation with USF&WS, NHF&G, and /or NHNHB, as appropriate: The work will not affect species and/or critical habitat of species protected by the Endangered Species Act, as no work will be completed within waterways, wetlands or require removal of vegetation.

 Floodways – Does the proposed action <u>encroach</u> on the regulatory floodway of water courses or water bodies: No. No work will be completed within wetlands or waterways.

5. Noise - Is the proposed action a Type I highway project? No.

6a & 6b. Right-of-Way – Does the proposed action require the acquisition of residences or businesses? No.

 Section 4(f) – Does the proposed action require the use of any property protected by Section 4(f) of the 1966 USDOT Act, other than that for which a de minimis impact finding has been made? No. There will be no easements or acquisitions from property considered historic, publicly-owned public parks, or fish and wildlife refuges.

 Section 6(f) – Does the proposed action require the use of any property protected by Section 6(f) of the L&WCF Act? No. Based on coordination with the Department of Resources and Economic Development there will be no Section 6(f) properties impacted, either permanently or temporarily, during construction.

 Water Quality – Does the proposed action have more than a negligible impact on surface waters? No. There are no waterbodies within 1 mile of the project area listed on the 303(d) list as available through the Department of Environmental Services website. OR

The project area lies within one mile of an impaired water as listed with the Department of Environmental Services. However, the proposed project will not further impair the area for the listed pollutarits.

Wetlands – Does the proposed action require an Army Corps of Engineers Individual Permit?
 No. There will be no surface waters or wetlands impacted by the construction of this project.

11. Other – Do any of the above conclusions benefit from more detailed explanation or are there other issues of concern? No.

- Attachments/ Back up
  - Location map
  - Section 106 memo
  - NHNHB memo
  - USF&WS memo
  - FIRMETTE and/or NHOEP memo
  - Section 6(f) memo
  - Contamination review
  - Photographs
  - Plans

#### State of New Hampshire - Department of Transportation

#### <u>Exhibits</u>

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Exhibit 1 – Location Map
Exhibit 2 – USGS Topographic Map
Exhibit 3 – Traffic Data
Exhibit 4 - No Adverse Effect Memo
Exhibit 5 – NH Natural Heritage Bureau Memo
Exhibit 6 - NH Natural Heritage Bureau correspondence
Exhibit 7 - NH Division of Parks and Recreation Memo
Exhibit 8 - Surface Water Impairments
Exhibit 9 - Conservation Land Stewardship Program correspondence
Exhibit 10 - Land & Water Conservation Fund correspondence
Exhibit 11 - Office of Energey & Planning correspondence
Exhibit 12 – White Mountain National Forest correspondence
Exhibit 13 - Pemigewasset River Local Advisory Committee correspondence
Exhibit 14 - Conference Report - Dept of Resources & Economic Development
Exhibit 15 - Meeting Reports - White Mountain Environment Committee
Exhibit 16 - 1983 Memorandum of Agreement Cover Sheet
Exhibit 17 - Photographs
        Photo A – Franconia Notch State Park sign on southbound barrel
        Photo B - Typical metal pipe and MRM header
        Photo C - Typical MRM wingwalls
        Photo D - Stone retaining wall along Pernigewasset River
        Photo E – Stone dam
        Photo F - Stone retaining wall along southbound barrel (view S) and bike path/snowmobile trail
                 adjacent to Echo Lake
        Photo G - Computer rendering of proposed 3-foot snow fence at Echo Lake
       Photo H – Typical two lane section of the Parkway (view N)
Photo I - Existing thrie beam median guardrail in typical two lane section (view N)
        Photo J - Existing thrie beam median guardrail in typical two lane section (view N)
        Photo K - Typical condition of existing thrie beam median guardrail
        Photo L - Computer rendering of proposed NuGuard-31 median guardrail
        Photo M – Existing curb and catch basin
        Photo N - Computer rendering of proposed shoulder without curb
        Photo O - Location of proposed chain link snow fence (view N)
       Photo P - Existing chain link snow fence
```

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March 2000 Revised January 2005 Revised January 2006

#### Projects that cannot be a Programmatic CE

- Modernization of a highway by reconstruction,
   adding shoulders or adding auxiliary lanes (e.g. parking, weaving, turning, climbing)
- Bridge reconstruction, replacement or the construction of grade separated rail crossings
- Transportation corridor fringe parking facilities
- Construction of new truck weigh stations or rest areas
- MAP-21 WILL EVENTUALLY CHANGE THIS

#### Individual/Non-Programmatic CE

- Proposed Action
- Purpose and Need
- Alternatives
- Affected Resources
  - Description
  - Impacts
- Mitigation
  - Environmental Commitments



#### **Categorical Exclusion**

- Impact Analysis
  - Avoidance Alternative selection
  - Minimization Variations on selected alternative
  - Mitigation Additional actions to offset unavoidable impacts



#### **Categorical Exclusion**

- Environmental Commitments
  - Successful implementation is a requirement.
  - Tracking
  - "SHALL," not "should" or "will"
  - Made by resource agencies or NHDOT

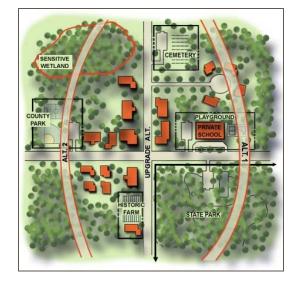
"Prior to the commencement of construction related activities, the contractor responsible for the work shall implement a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP)."

"All work in front of the cemetery, exclusive of work within the footprint of the existing roadway shall be monitored by an archaeologist with experience recovering historic burials."

#### Section 4(f) Evaluations

#### Work with NHDOT Bureau of Environment







#### Section 4(f) Evaluations

- < 5% of LPA Projects</p>
- Resources
  - Publicly Owned Public Parks and Recreation Areas
  - Fish & Waterfowl/wildlife Refuges
  - National Register
     Listed/eligible Historic
     Properties



# Section 4(f) Evaluations

- Feasible and Prudent
- Avoidance Alternative
- Least Overall
  - Harm
- Officials with Jurisdiction



#### Types of Section 4(f) Evaluations

- De minimis impact finding
- Programmatic 4(f) Evaluation
- Full Section 4(f) Evaluation

# NEPA/Section 4(f) Processing

- Initial draft review (PDF) (1-2 weeks)
- Final to Ronald Crickard (c.c. DOT PM)
  - 4 Copies
  - Full 4(f):
    - Draft: 17 Copies (1 hard copy, 16 electronic (CD))
    - Final: 12 Copies (1 hard copy, 11 electronic (CD))



#### **Classification and NEPA Completion**

- Classification
  - In house (Prog. CE)
  - By FHWA (CE)
- Environmental Commitments Memo

#### STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE INTER-DEPARTMENT COMMUNICATION

FROM Charles H. Hood Acting Administrator DATE September 17, 2007 AT (OFFICE) Department of Transportation

Bureau of

Environment

- SUBJECT PORTSMOUTH X-0000(368) 14428 (Market Street Extension/ Bike-Ped Route)
- TO Ram Maddali, P.E. Project Manager Bureau of Planning and Community Assistance

Enclosed is a copy of the environmental document prepared for the subject project by the City of Portsmouth.

In accordance with the Agreement executed by the Department and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) the subject project has been determined to meet the oriteria for processing as a <u>Agregomentic</u> <u>Categorial Evolusion</u> (09/1707). This determination represents design approval. This project does not require a public hearing; therefore, this conditioned the NEPA process.

This project is exempt from FHWA oversight.

A NH Wetlands Bureau (NHWB) permit is required for this project. An application has been submitted to the NHWB. This project will not require a US Army Corps of Engineers permit.

Environmental commitments have been made, as noted on page 2 of the environmental document. It is the responsibility of the City to assure that environmental commitments are implemented as intended. It is expected that appropriate stormwater pollution prevention measures will be implemented in the field, as necessary. This is particularly important where wetlands and/or other water resources lie adjacent to construction zones.

Please be advised, if project changes occur this bureau should be consulted to determine if a follow-up review of environmental impacts is required.

CHHittn

Encl.

c.c. D Deporter (w/Encl.) City of Potsmouth, through R. Maddali (w/Encl.) C. Schmidt (via E-mail) Project Programming (via E-mail) FHWA (via E-mail)

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# **Classification Timetable**

- Programmatic CE: 1-2 Weeks
- Non-Programmatic CE: 2-3 Weeks
   (Requires review and approval by FHWA)
  - Programmatic 4(f): 3-4 Weeks
  - Full 4(f): 14-16 Weeks (DOI review)



- Early Coordination
- Bureau of Environment is available to assist you
- Understand your project before setting scope and fee
  - Consider alternatives don't pre-decide
  - Consider the issues/constraints
  - Is it likely a Programmatic CE or Individual CE?

- NEPA is conducted as part of <u>PRELIMINARY DESIGN</u>
  - Cannot move to final design until NEPA is approved by FHWA
  - For Programmatic CEs, NHDOT has FHWA authority to approve NEPA
- NEPA process takes time

#### NHDES Stream Crossing Rules

- Bridge and culvert projects
- Compliant" designs ((1.2 X Bfw) + 2')
- Alternative designs







- Special Contamination Issues
  - The presence of contamination does not typically change project classification
  - Requires provisions in the contract documents, if impacted
  - Bureau of Environment can provide guidance



- Environmental Commitments
  - Successful implementation is required
  - Track them before and during construction

- Plan for potential expenses
  - Archaeological surveys
  - Historic surveys



- Endangered Species/Habitat surveys
- Air/Noise analyses
- Stream crossing rules
- Contamination surveys



#### MAP-21

- New Categorical Exclusions for:
  - Emergencies roads, highways, bridges (same location)
  - Projects w/in the ROW
  - Projects with limited Federal assistance
    - >\$5M
    - Project > \$30M, and Fed funds comprise less than 15%

