



ENVIRONMENTAL AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION (EHP) DOCUMENTATION (REQUIREMENT 14)

14.1 Attachment (Required): Submit a document which includes the following:

Description of how the Eligible Entity will comply with applicable environmental and historic preservation (EHP) requirements, including a brief description of the methodology used to evaluate the Eligible Entity's subgrantee projects and project activities against NTIA's National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) guidance. The methodology must reference how the Eligible Entity will use NTIA's Environmental Screening and Permitting Tracking Tool (ESAPTT) to create NEPA project records, evaluate the applicability of categorical exclusions, consider and document the presence (or absence) of Extraordinary Circumstances, and transmit information and draft NEPA documents to NTIA for review and approval.

Description of the Eligible Entity's plan to fulfill its obligations as a joint lead agency for NEPA under 42 U.S.C. 4336a, including its obligation to prepare or to supervise the preparation of all required environmental analyses and review documents.

Evaluation of the sufficiency of the environmental analysis for your state or territory that is contained in the relevant chapter of the FirstNet Regional Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS), available at <https://www.firstnet.gov/network/environmental-compliance/projects/regionalprogrammatic-environmental-impact-statements>.

Evaluation of whether all deployment related activities anticipated for projects within your state or territory are covered by the actions described in the relevant FirstNet Regional PEIS.

Description of the Eligible Entity's plan for applying specific award conditions or other strategies to ensure proper procedures and approvals are in place for disbursement of funds while projects await EHP clearances.

The Office of Broadband took extensive steps to ensure comprehensive compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (42 U.S.C. § 4321 et seq.) and National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) (54 U.S.C. § 300101 et seq.) in relation to the administration of its BEAD program. The Office is committed to continuing such efforts moving forward to support NEPA and NHPA compliance amongst its subgrantees.

While not exhaustive, the below list summarizes several actions taken by the Office of Broadband to ensure NEPA and NHPA compliance internally and for its subgrantees:



- Developed, presented, and posted technical guidance on applicable NEPA/NHPA topics prior to the BEAD application opening to bolster prospective subgrantee understanding of the requirements and streamline the EHP process.
- Encouraged prospective subgrantees to design their projects and other eligible activities to minimize the potential for adverse impacts on the environment.
- Fulfilled responsibilities as a Joint Lead Agency in relation to NEPA/NHPA requirements.
- Engaged with Subject Matter Experts in the Commonwealth to assist in FirstNet Regional PEIS evaluation.
- Required prospective subgrantees whose projects or activities contained construction and/or ground disturbing activities to submit all requirement environmental documentation to the Office for submission with the Final Proposal
- Analyzed the potential environmental impacts of awardee projects and other eligible activities that sought to utilize BEAD funding.
- Projects that failed to comply with EHP regulations were not considered to receive BEAD funding.

The Office of Broadband will employ a structured methodology to evaluate subgrantee projects and activities for compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) guidance. Upon approval of Virginia's Final Proposal, this process begins with the use of the Environmental and Statewide Assessment Project Tracking Tool (ESAPTT), which serves as the central system for creating and managing NEPA project records. Each subgrantee project entered into ESAPTT will undergo a preliminary review to determine the applicability of categorical exclusions (CEs) consistent with federal regulations. The Office of Broadband will work with Planning District Commissions to facilitate and streamline the review process, where needed.

Where a CE is potentially applicable, the Office of Broadband staff will systematically assess and document the presence or absence of any extraordinary circumstances that may require further environmental review. This evaluation ensures that no significant environmental impacts are overlooked. All findings, including documentation of CE applicability or the need for additional analysis, will be recorded within the ESAPTT to maintain transparency and compliance.

Upon completion of this evaluation, draft NEPA documentation and relevant project information will be compiled and transmitted electronically via the ESAPTT to the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) for review and concurrence. This integrated workflow facilitates timely, accurate, and consistent environmental review, ensuring that subgrantee projects funded under the BEAD program meet federal environmental standards while advancing broadband deployment across Virginia.