

Environmental Screening and Permitting Tracking Tool (ESAPTT) Overview

June 2026



Federal Funding to Improve Permitting IT

Over the past few years, the federal government launched new mandates and funding sources that aim to apply digital technologies to streamline permitting and environmental reviews.

TIMELINE

June 2023

Congress passed the Fiscal Responsibility Act of 2023 which mandated the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) to “study and report on the potential for online and digital technologies to address delays in reviews and improve public accessibility and transparency related to National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements.”

October 2023

The CEQ, Office of Management and Budget (OMB), and the Federal Permitting Improvement Steering Council (Permitting Council) convened agency officials and specialists from the environmental and information technology sectors to discuss how software and other tools can deliver more effective and efficient environmental reviews. The Permitting Council announced \$30 million intended to modernize permitting-related software and technology, and advance permitting strategy.

April 2024

The Permitting Council awarded \$2.6 million to NTIA to develop a Salesforce-based tool to support environmental review and permitting by screening for categorical exclusions and facilitating NEPA approvals for BEAD projects.

**September
2024**

NTIA began development of the Environmental Screening and Permitting Tracking Tool (ESAPTT) to modernize NTIA’s NEPA review processes and support permitting for the Broadband Equity Access and Deployment (BEAD) Program.

Environmental Screening and Permitting Tracking Tool (ESAPTT)

ESAPTT will help Eligible Entities obtain and track environmental screening approvals and ensure sub-recipient permitting compliance for the BEAD program.

WHAT IS ESAPTT?

ESAPTT is a Salesforce-based tool developed by NTIA to help streamline the NEPA review and permitting processes for BEAD. Eligible Entities will use the tool to **screen projects for environmental effects, to transmit and maintain NEPA documents, and to track subgrantee permitting requirements and timelines.** NTIA will use ESAPTT to review and approve final NEPA decisions.

ESAPTT HELPS ELIGIBLE ENTITIES



Accelerate NEPA Processing Timelines: ESAPTT expedites NEPA approvals for Eligible Entities by automating Categorical Exclusions (CATEX) and Extraordinary Circumstances (EC) reviews.



Increase Coordination and Efficiency: ESAPTT provides a centralized platform for Eligible Entities to submit the documentation of each project's potential environmental effects to NTIA for review.



Organize and Track Permitting Requirements: ESAPTT helps Eligible Entities identify the relevant permit requirements and monitor milestone schedule progress for federal permits.

ESAPTT COMPONENTS

ENVIRONMENTAL SCREENING

PERMITTING TRACKING

Environmental Screening Process

NEPA specialists within the State and Territory Broadband Offices will perform NEPA screening and certify the sufficiency of subgrantee documentation through the ESAPTT tool.



ENVIRONMENTAL SCREENING STEP-BY-STEP

- 1** **Input Project Information:** Users will upload a Project Description Summary, a Project Map and Project Description to ESAPTT.
- 2** **Initiate ESAPTT Questionnaires:** The State or Territory NEPA specialist will answer questions on the Categorical Exclusions on the project's scope to identify potentially applicable CEs; select the CE(s) that apply; and confirm that the project qualifies.
- 3** **Review for Extraordinary Circumstances (ECs) and Required Consultations:** Upload documentation showing consultation under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, and any additional EC documentation. Consult the BEAD Tribal Section 106 Requirement and include requisite documentation, if applicable. The State or Territory NEPA specialist will identify if environmentally sensitive resources (e.g., listed species, critical habitat, or historic properties) are present; upload documentation directly through ESAPTT; and indicate mitigation commitments to avoid potentially significant impacts.
- 4** **Summary, Validation, Submittal, and Approval:** The State or Territory NEPA specialist will use their professional expertise to validate that the categorical exclusion should be applied and transmit the Draft NEPA Decision Memo to NTIA for review and approval within ESAPTT.

ESAPTT | Permitting Tracking

Eligible Entities may track the progress of their projects' permits using the Permitting Tracking capabilities of ESAPTT.



PERMITTING TRACKING STEP-BY-STEP

- 1 Import Permit Information:** NTIA may, depending on the information provided by NTIA's ArcGIS Pro Permitting and Environmental Information Tool (APPEIT), pre-populate identified federal and Tribal permits for each project area.
- 2 Identify Permits:** Eligible Entities may cross-reference the imported permits with their milestone schedules and add additional permit details to each permit record, like permit type and application acceptance date. Eligible Entities may choose to add additional permits, where identified.
- 3 Track Permit Progress:** ESAPTT will have pre-built reports and dashboards to assist Eligible Entities in viewing their progress towards obtaining permits including upcoming deadlines, when data is available.
- 4 Escalate Issues to FPO:** Eligible Entities will be able to track permit progress against average permitting timelines, enabling them to identify and escalate any major delays and other permitting issues to FPOs for their review and resolution.
- 5 Document Permitting Progress:** Eligible Entities will be able to add updates about their permit progress including the date the permit was obtained, which will be reflected in the dashboard.

NEPA for BEAD Environmental Screening

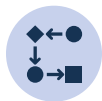
Eligible Entities will fulfill their responsibilities as joint lead agencies for NEPA review via the Environmental Screening and Permitting Tracking Tool (ESAPTT).



NTIA has partnered with States and Territories as joint lead agencies to maximize NEPA review efficiency.



States and Territories are building NEPA capacity within their organizations to support environmental compliance and permitting oversight for BEAD projects.



NTIA has developed ESAPTT to support Eligible Entities in applying categorical exclusions, considering extraordinary circumstances, and generating NEPA decision documents for BEAD.

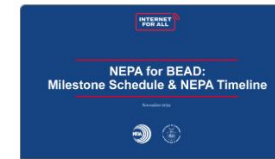
NEPA Resources

NEPA for BEAD



BEAD NEPA OBLIGATIONS are detailed in Section 13 Environmental and Historic Preservation (EHP) Review on page 7

2024 BEAD Program General Terms and Conditions (GTCs)



NEPA for BEAD: Milestone Schedule & NEPA Timeline

Download Guidance



NEPA for BEAD: Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement Evaluation Sample Memo & Recommendations

Download Now

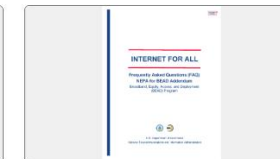


Evaluating FirstNet PEIS Statement Sections for States/Territories

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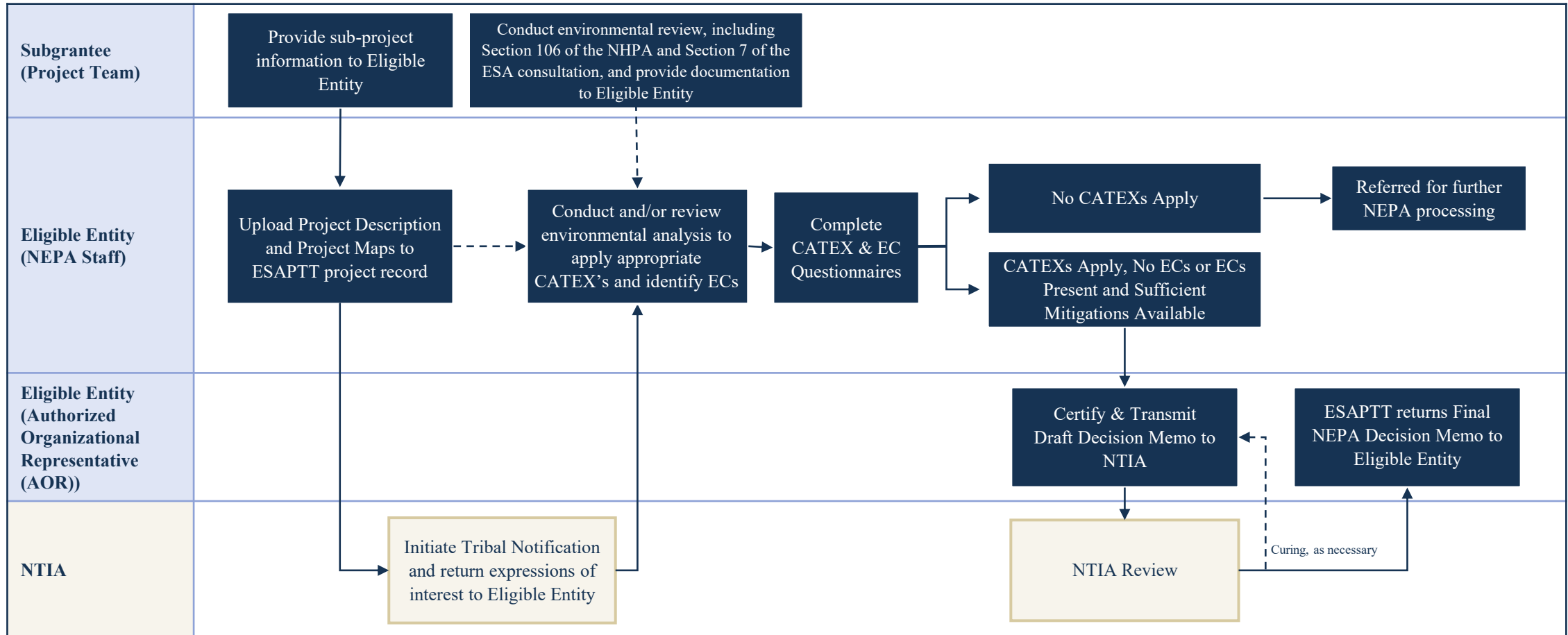
Smart Start - How to Plan and Prepare for National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Compliance for BEAD



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) NEPA for BEAD Addendum

Environmental Screening Process Flow

ESAPTT will help automate and expedite portions of the environmental screening review and expedite NTIA NEPA approvals for BEAD projects.



This is a notional and simplified flowchart, representing the external ESAPTT user experience.