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300.01 Introduction

During the project scoping and programming phase, WSDOT develops a plan to identify and address transportation facility performance needs and creates a preliminary budget for consideration by the state legislature. The process is required by state law ([RCW 47.05.010](#)) and is limited to solving safety and operational performance needs identified in WSDOT's modal plans, as well as addressing environmental factors.

Scoping defines time and cost-of-work estimates for each proposed project. It is important that estimates be as realistic as possible and consider budget and schedule implications of environmental documentation, permitting and compliance monitoring, as well as engineering work.

Programming refines and prioritizes the list of proposed projects. The process is based on the recommendations gathered during Planning from community engagement activities and the costs and schedules developed during Project Scoping.

Scoping and programming fulfill the need for WSDOT to:

- Create and submit to the legislature a ten-year investment program as defined in [RCW 47.05.030](#). The legislature considers and approves this program along with a 2-year budget. The approved program and budget can include legislative modifications. For details, see WSDOT's [Project delivery plan](#) webpage.
- Create fiscally-constrained lists of projects to submit for inclusion on the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) (that includes the Transportation Improvement Programs (TIP) developed by Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs)) as required by [23 CFR 450.218](#). Projects on the STIP are eligible for federal funding. For details on this process, see WSDOT's [Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan](#) webpage.

Through this process:

- WSDOT creates a financially constrained list of projects for consideration by the legislature. The list is based on realistic schedules and cost estimates that include all phases of the work.
- The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) approve the STIP. A project must be included in the TIP and the STIP to be eligible for federal funding (Title 23 U.S.C. and the Federal Transit Act). For details on this process, see WSDOT's [Local Programs](#) webpage.
- The legislature considers and approves WSDOT's 6- to 10-year Capital Improvement and Preservation Program (CIPP) along with a 2-year budget. The approved plan and budget can include legislative modifications.

300.02 Project scoping

This section provides agency policies for project scoping. [Chapter 400](#) explains the importance of public and agency outreach (public scoping) during pre-NEPA and scoping of our environmental documents.

Practical Solutions is a two-part strategy that includes practical solutions planning and practical design, as defined in WSDOT Executive Order (EO) [E 1090.01](#) and *Design Manual Section 1100.02*. This process defines the method WSDOT uses to scope and design projects.

WSDOT's practical design process consists of seven primary procedural steps listed below, providing the basis for modal choice, alternative development, and selection of design elements. Minimize re-work by documenting the practical design process (*Design Manual Section 1100.04*) in enough detail to help fulfill National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) documentation requirements.

WSDOT's practical design process steps include:

1. Assemble an advisory team. The Project Engineer will usually invite Environmental staff to participate on the Advisory Team (see *Design Manual Sections 1100.04* and [1100.03\(2\)](#)).
2. Clearly identify the baseline and contextual needs (see *Design Manual Chapter 1101*).
3. Identify the land use and transportation context for the project location (see *Design Manual Chapter 1102*), including the environmental, economic, and social demographic data that indicate livability and travel characteristics.
4. Select design controls compatible with the context (see *Design Manual Chapter 1103*).
5. Formulate and evaluate potential alternatives that resolve the baseline/contextual need and are bound by design controls (see *Design Manual Chapter 1104*).
6. Select design elements employed and/or changed by the selected alternative(s) (see *Design Manual Chapter 1105*).
7. Determine design element dimensions consistent with the alternatives' performance needs, context, and design controls (see *Design Manual Chapter 1106*).

The Basis of Design (BOD) is used to document the outcomes of applying these procedural steps. A BOD is required for all projects. The BOD should serve as the background and context for detailed environmental analysis and documentation.

One of the major responsibilities of the advisory team environmental staff is to assist the team in establishing appropriate environmental measures, such as the number of square feet of impact to Category I and II wetlands. The environmental staff also ensure:

- The process, participants and decisions made by the team comply with NEPA and State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) requirements.
- The team considers all appropriate environmental disciplines (such as Section 4(f), Section 106, ESA, noise, etc.). See the [User Guide for Corridor Sketch Summaries](#) for additional key WSDOT environmental assets to consider.
- Decisions are included in the project's supporting documentation.

During project scoping, all major costs of the project are used to prepare a realistic schedule and cost estimate. Scoping is described in the *Design Manual* [Chapter 300](#). The process is documented in the Project Profile and identifies the transportation needs that have generated the project, the purpose or goal of the work and the recommended solution.

The Environmental Review Summary (ERS) is attached to the Project Profile as a part of the Project Summary package. The ERS:

- Documents known baseline environmental conditions.
- Describes potential environmental impacts, mitigation options and anticipated permits necessary for the project.
- Establishes project classification (see [Section 300.03](#)) and anticipated level of environmental documentation required (see [Chapter 400](#)) for the project. The Region Environmental Manager approves the ERS, which indicates concurrence with the anticipated project NEPA and/or SEPA Classification.

For many projects, the WSDOT Geographic Information System (GIS) Workbench coupled with a site visit provides sufficient information to complete the ERS for projects classified as Categorical Exclusions (CEs). Additional detailed analysis may be required for projects that require an Environmental Assessment (EA) or Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The ERS database includes a help guide that provides detailed guidance for completing the ERS forms. Contact your Region Environmental Office and the [NEPA/SEPA Program](#) to get set up in the database.

For CE level projects, the information in the ERS is exported to the Environmental Classification Summary (ECS) database and becomes the basis for NEPA/SEPA environmental documentation (see [Chapter 400](#) for more information).

300.03 Project classification

The project classification determines the anticipated level of environmental documentation required for a WSDOT project. It is based on the information contained in the ERS and can change as more information is discovered.

State projects with a federal nexus are subject to NEPA and SEPA. Projects that have only state funding and no federal nexus follow SEPA guidelines. If future funding is undetermined, NEPA guidelines are usually followed so the project can qualify for federal funding in the future. See the [NEPA and SEPA](#) webpage for more information.

300.04 NEPA classifications

Projects with federal dollars or approvals are subject to NEPA and fall into one of the three classifications described below.

1. **NEPA Class I projects** – These actions are likely to have significant impact on the environment because of their effects on land use, planned growth, development patterns, traffic volumes, travel patterns, transportation services or natural resources. They require preparation of an EIS (see [Chapter 400](#)) because the action is likely to have significant adverse environmental impacts. Projects that usually require an EIS, as defined in [23 CFR 771.115](#), are:
 - New controlled-access freeways.
 - Highway project of four or more lanes in a new location.
 - New construction or extension of fixed rail transit facilities (e.g., rapid rail, light rail, commuter rail, automated guideway transit) not within the existing right of way.
 - New construction or extension of a separate roadway for buses or high occupancy vehicles not located within an existing highway facility.

Although examples are given, it is important to remember that the context and intensity of the potential impacts, and the level of controversy on environmental grounds, determine the need for an EIS, not the size of the project.

2. **NEPA Class II projects** – These actions are Categorical Exclusions (CEs). These actions are not likely to cause significant adverse environmental impacts, meet the definition contained in [40 CFR 1508.1](#), and are excluded from completing an EA or EIS. A completed ECS Form serves as the environmental documentation for these types of projects (see [Chapter 400](#)).

Each federal agency is required to identify its own categories of actions that qualify as CEs, although all USDOT agencies agree that Class II projects typically:

- Do not induce significant impacts to planned growth or land use.
 - Does not require the relocation of significant numbers of people.
 - Do not have a significant impact on any natural, cultural, recreational, historic, or other resource.
 - Do not involve significant air, noise, or water quality impacts.
 - Do not have significant impacts on travel patterns.
 - Do not otherwise, either individually or cumulatively, have significant environmental impacts.
- a. **FHWA** – CEs are described in [23 CFR 771.117](#). Under the 2024 [WSDOT/FHWA NEPA CE Programmatic Agreement \(PCE\)](#), WSDOT approves the NEPA documentation for all Class II (CE) projects described in [23 CFR 771.117 \(c\) and \(d\)](#). These actions normally do not require further approval or documentation by FHWA. If your project includes relocations, contact the [NEPA/SEPA program](#) to assist you in determining whether your project may require review by FHWA to determine the NEPA class of action.

Environmental documentation for CE projects is accomplished by completion of the ECS Form, which is approved by the Region Environmental Manager (see [Chapter 400](#)). The NEPA documentation process for Local Agencies is described in the WSDOT Local Programs [NEPA Categorical Exclusions Guidebook](#).

WSDOT may request FHWA review and signature for individual projects on a case-by-case basis ([PCE - Section IV\(B\)\(1\)](#)).

- b. **FTA** – CEs are described in [23 CFR 771.118](#). FTA has its own process and worksheets for documenting CEs.
 - c. **Federal Railroad Administration (FRA)** – CEs are described in [23 CFR 771.116](#). FRA has its own process and worksheets for documenting CEs. Contact the WSDOT Rail Division Environmental Compliance Manager for assistance.
 - d. **Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)** – CEs are described in [FAA Order 5050.4](#) Chapter 6. FAA has its own process for documenting CEs.
3. **NEPA Class III projects** – When the potential environmental impacts of a proposed project are not clearly understood, an EA is prepared. The EA determines the extent and level of environmental impact.

The content and complexity of an EA will vary depending on the project. See [Chapter 400](#) and the WSDOT [NEPA and SEPA](#) webpage for details on EA documentation and procedure.

300.05 SEPA classifications

[Chapter 400](#) explains WSDOT's SEPA responsibilities and how NEPA documentation can satisfy SEPA requirements. Many of our actions are exempt from the SEPA process. If an action is not exempt, it is either found to have non-significant or significant impacts.

WSDOT serves as the SEPA lead agency on actions undertaken by our agency. As such, we are required to determine the level of environmental review and documentation required for an action. The SEPA determinations fall into one of three broad categories: Determination of Significance (DS), Determination of Nonsignificance (DNS) and a Categorical Exemption (CE).

- **Determination of Significance (DS)** – Issued for actions that are likely to result in a probable significant adverse environmental impact. A DS requires that an EIS be completed for the action. **Note:** if an action has a probable significant adverse impact, the project team may immediately begin the EIS process without issuing a DS.
- **Determination of Nonsignificance (DNS)** – Issued for actions that are not likely to have a significant adverse environmental impact but are not categorically exempt.
- **Categorical Exemption (CE)** – Covers actions identified by statute or rule that are unlikely to cause significant adverse environmental impacts.

The types of projects that qualify as categorically exempt can be found in:

- [RCW 43.21C.470](#) – [43.21C.480](#) – Statutory Exemptions
- [WAC 197-11-800](#) – Categorical exemptions listed in state SEPA rules.
- [WAC 197-11-860](#) – Nine categorical exemptions specific to WSDOT.
- [WAC 468-12-800](#) – WSDOT categorical exemptions based on WSDOT's interpretation of the categorical exemptions listed in state SEPA rules.

Note: Fish passage projects typically qualify as Fish Habitat Enhancement Projects (FHEP), which follow a streamlined process under [RCW 77.55.181](#). For additional information, see the scoping tab on WSDOT's [Environmental guidance – Fish](#) webpage.

300.06 Revision of project scope and classification

If the scope of a project that was projected to be a CE changes substantially, a revised ERS is advised. This revised ERS may demonstrate that the project is no longer a SEPA CE and now requires a SEPA Checklist or is no longer a NEPA CE and now requires an EA.

See [Section 400.06](#) and WSDOT's [NEPA and SEPA](#) webpage (design tab) for details on project re-evaluations and preparation of supplementary environmental documentation.

300.06(1) NEPA Reclassification

The 2024 [WSDOT/FHWA NEPA CE Programmatic Agreement](#) (PCE) allows WSDOT to approve the NEPA classification for projects that are clearly categorically excluded in [23 CFR 771.117](#). However, CE projects that include unusual circumstances like residential or non-residential relocations must be reviewed by FHWA to determine the classification or reclassification. Project teams should communicate early and often with their regional or headquarters Real Estate Services team to identify any potential right of way activities that could result in residential or non-residential relocations.

A scope change may require a new ERS, and most minor project changes may be handled informally with a letter to the project file. However, for NEPA CE projects, once NEPA has begun, a revised NEPA ECS must be completed for any major change project change.

Contact the [NEPA/SEPA Program](#) if a scope change during NEPA requires a change in NEPA classification (CE to EA/EIS, or EA to EIS).

If the project scope changes *after a NEPA CE is complete, a re-evaluation process may be required*. See [Section 400.06](#) and WSDOT's [NEPA and SEPA](#) webpage (design tab) for details on project re-evaluations and preparation of supplementary environmental documentation.

300.06(2) SEPA Reclassification

A significant change in the scope of a state funded project with no federal nexus (SEPA only) usually requires revision of the ERS. This may include reassessment of the environmental classification. The Region Environmental Office, in coordination with the Region Program Management Office, determines if the ERS needs to be revised and the environmental classification changed. For example, if the scope of an anticipated CE project changes substantially, a revised ERS is advised. This revised ERS may demonstrate that the project is no longer a SEPA CE and now requires a SEPA Checklist. Any changes in classification are documented by a note to the file or a follow-up memo.

Contact the [NEPA/SEPA Program](#) if scope changes occur after SEPA has been completed on a project to discuss SEPA process and documentation revisions.

300.07 Highways over national forest lands

WSDOT and the United States Forest Service (USFS) established procedures through a [Memorandum of Understanding](#) (MOU) for coordination of transportation activities on national Forest lands in 1991 (updated in May 2019). The MOU covers coordination, project programming and planning, pre-construction, rights of way, construction/reconstruction, maintenance, signs, access control and third-party occupancy. The agreement does not apply to local agency projects. Elements that pertain to environmental analysis and documentation include the stipulation that:

- WSDOT will coordinate with USFS at project inception for projects using or affecting National Forest Service lands or interests.
- WSDOT and USFS will agree on needed environmental documents and lead agency responsibilities. WSDOT will have the primary responsibility for highway related projects.
- WSDOT and USFS will cooperate in development of a single set of environmental documents for each project and jointly seek public involvement when necessary.
- Draft and final environmental documents will be circulated to each agency for review before distribution for public comment.

300.08 Project types with special requirements

Fish passage and Chronic Environmental Deficiency (CED) projects follow a different planning and scoping process than standard transportation projects. These project types are constructed to improve fish habitat or access to fish habitat and have specific coordination and approval requirements with Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) and the Tribes.

Project scoping for Washington State Department of Transportation Ferries Division (WSF) projects is described in the *Terminal Design Manual* Chapters [200](#) and [205](#).

300.08(1) **Fish passage projects - Fish Passage Delivery Planning**

WSDOT created the fish passage program in 1991 to inventory, prioritize, and correct fish passage barriers along state highways.

WSDOT corrects fish passage barriers mainly through stand-alone projects or as part of larger transportation projects. Sometimes highway barriers are corrected in partnerships with local agencies, Tribes, regional fisheries enhancement groups and other project sponsors. Other barriers are corrected when culverts are replaced at the end of their useful life.

WSDOT's Fish Passage project delivery plans are updated quarterly, or sooner, based on new information. See WSDOT's [Fish passage](#) webpage for updated information on the delivery plan: [2030 Fish passage project delivery plans](#) webpage. You can also find the latest Fish Passage Delivery Plan updates on WSDOT's [Fish Passage](#) webmap. These lists include information on fish barrier corrections that are planned as stand- alone fish passage projects or through larger transportation projects.

300.08(2) Stand-alone I-4 Funded Fish Passage Projects

These projects are part of the WSDOT Environmental Retrofit Subprogram (I-4). The sole purpose of these projects is to correct fish passage barriers.

The Environmental Services Office (ESO) contracts with the WDFW's Fish Passage Program for project support for I-4 funded, injunction barrier corrections. WDFW's fish passage agreement does not include support for barriers corrected through larger transportation projects or barriers corrected outside of the culvert injunction case area. The Agreement is available on the [Fish Passage Program Delivery](#) tab in [WSDOT's Fish Passage Database](#). Contact FishPassageTeam@wsdot.wa.gov for assistance with the Fish Passage Database.

The following tasks are covered by the WDFW Agreement managed by ESO's Stream Restoration Program Manager:

- WDFW Fish Passage Biologists and engineers provide technical support
- Verify fish passage barrier status
- Verify fish species present and habitat information
- Attend interdisciplinary team site visits
- Review and comment on the preliminary hydraulic design (PHD)
- Identify fish work windows for permitting
- May provide input on design build Request for Proposals
- Biologists issue Hydraulic Project Approvals (HPAs)
- Biologists provide construction support

WDFW project support biologist and engineer assignments are found in the [Fish Passage Program Delivery](#) tab of [WSDOT's Fish Passage Database](#) (see [WSDOT_Fish_Passage_WDFW_Work](#) spreadsheet). This spreadsheet also includes project assignments for WSDOT staff working on fish passage projects, including the Project Engineering Offices (PEOs), Headquarters Hydraulics engineers and ESO Stream Restoration biologists.

Large Transportation Projects

Fish passage barriers often exist within the project boundaries of large transportation projects whose main objective is to alter the roadway, modify the road prism, or add infrastructure within the existing right of way. WSDOT is responsible for protecting and maintaining fish passage through WSDOT owned water/road crossings, and often corrects these barriers as part of these transportation projects.

Notify Stream Restoration Program staff early during the project scoping phase to screen for fish passage barriers in the vicinity of the project limits.

Use the 'WSDOT Sites' data layer in the GIS Workbench to locate known fish passage barriers and corrected barriers within or adjacent to the planning study area.

Contact WSDOT's Stream Restoration Program Manager to verify information and determine if the fish passage inventory needs an update. Updating fish passage inventories during planning helps us identify future funding needs.

Barriers corrected through larger transportation projects are permitted by WDFW Local Area Biologists, rather than WDFW Fish Passage Biologists.

ESO Stream Restoration Program biologists are available to provide technical assistance and support on fish barriers corrected through larger transportation projects, including culvert injunction compliance.

300.08(3) Chronic Environmental Deficiency (CED) Projects

A Chronic Environmental Deficiency (CED) is a coastal or stream-adjacent location along a state highway where recent, frequent emergency repairs or maintenance (typically 3 times in 10 years) to WSDOT infrastructure cause adverse impacts to fish habitat. During large storms, these sites are vulnerable to erosion, sedimentation, flooding, washouts or other environmental threats and can require expensive repairs, threaten safety, result in road closures, and repeatedly pull limited resources from other needs during emergencies.

In 2002 WSDOT signed a [Memorandum of Agreement](#) (MOA) with WDFW, in which WSDOT agreed to establish the CED Program. The purpose of the CED Program is to identify these chronic repair sites, prioritize and construct long-term, nature-based retrofits that protect the highway and reduce impacts to fish from repeat repairs and maintenance. This commitment satisfies WDFW's compensatory mitigation requirements under the HPA permitting process for highway maintenance activities identified in Section VIII of the MOA.

The [MOA](#) established a specific collaborative project scoping and implementation process to ensure CED retrofit projects are long-term, reduce impacts to fish from repetitive repairs and maintenance, improve fish habitat, and meet WSDOT's infrastructure preservation needs. To support this, WSDOT developed a funding category and an inventory, scoping, prioritization, and programming process for CED projects. The [MOA](#) was most recently updated in 2016.

See WSDOT's [Chronic Environmental Deficiencies](#) webpage for more information about the CED program and links to relevant documents and resources.

Addressing Chronic Environmental Deficiencies

The CED program is implemented from within WSDOT's Headquarters Stream Restoration Program by the CED Coordinator, who oversees and leads the inventory, assessment, scoping, and prioritization of CED projects and coordination with WDFW. This process includes four general steps:

1. Nomination and analysis
2. Interagency coordination and CED concept selection
3. Project funding and implementation
4. Post-project monitoring

The CED Coordinator works closely with WSDOT Hydrology and regional staff to identify, prioritize, and evaluate CED sites, develop project alternatives, and then facilitate a concurrence process with WDFW to select a preferred CED project concept. As appropriate, the CED coordinator invites tribal biologists, adjacent institutional landowners, restoration practitioners, and other potential project partners to participate in the site analysis and concept selection process.

Then, the CED Coordinator works with regional staff and CPDM to prioritize projects and request funds for project implementation. When funds are designated for a CED project, WSDOT regional staff become responsible for overseeing its design and construction.

Two project documents are produced by the CED program that document the proposed conceptual designs and agreement with WDFW on a proposed CED solution. These include:

- **Site and Reach Assessment** prepared by a geomorphologist or hydrologist, that defines the problem, evaluates the processes occurring in the watershed, and identifies the cause of the CED problem. It discusses alternative solutions and provides a feasible recommendation. The site and reach assessment also identifies actions to maintain the infrastructure until a permanent solution is constructed.
- **CED Concurrence form** signed by WDFW and WSDOT headquarters and regional staff. This form summarizes the problem, considered alternatives, and documents agreement with the proposed conceptual design.

WSDOT documents its progress addressing CEDs in the [CED Annual Report](#), which is published early each calendar year and distributed to WDFW and other interested parties.

CED Roles and Responsibilities

The CED process involves staff throughout WSDOT, including the following headquarters and regional staff:

- **Environmental Services Office (ESO)** – The CED Coordinator oversees the CED program and leads the CED process, including CED nomination, outreach to WDFW and other participants in the concept selection process, CED concurrence, prioritization, and reporting. They provide biological technical assistance and coordinate with regional staff and WDFW regarding CED nominations, conceptual designs, concurrences, and prioritization.
- **Hydraulics Office** – Hydrology Staff assist the CED coordinator in approving CED nominations and prioritizing CED sites. They prepare site and reach assessments, conceptual designs and provide technical assistance to regional staff throughout project development and implementation.
- **Capital Program Development and Management (CPDM)** – The CED Coordinator works with the Priority Programming Manager to communicate CED priorities and secure project design and construction funds. CPDM programs and approves funding for proposed CED projects and coordinates them with other agency priorities. They also manage the timing of funding availability to address changes in scope, project delays, and to commit matching funds for grant opportunities.
- **Regional Maintenance** – The Regional Maintenance Environmental Coordinators (RMEC) and Maintenance Superintendents recommend potential new CED sites, provide updates on the status of active CEDs, and assist with prioritization of CED projects.
- **Regional Environmental Manager** – Serves as the regional point of contact for the CED process, concurrence, and CED project implementation. They assist with regional, interagency, tribal, local, and early permit coordination.
- **Project Engineer** – Participates in CED project pre-scoping and scoping to ensure that CED proposals are constructable and feasible, and includes the CED Coordinator at major milestones throughout project design and construction.
- **Regional Program Management** – Scopes and proposes CED construction projects and provides preliminary cost estimates.

CED Project Scoping

The CED Coordinator ranks each CED project relative to other CEDs based on potential benefits to fish and aquatic habitat; risk to infrastructure and safety; maintenance burden; and WDFW, tribal, or local priorities, partnership, or grant opportunities. The prioritization is used by the Capital Program Development and Management (CPDM) to queue projects for funding approval.

As described in the [MOA](#), WSDOT is obligated to make a good-faith effort to fund and construct CED projects and can do so using any source. Most CED projects are funded through a stand-alone retrofit program in the Highway Construction Improvement (I-4) Program. CEDs are also repaired as part of [fish passage improvement projects](#), highway safety and mobility projects, and occasionally using other funding sources, such as emergencies, highway preservation, or through partnerships with other entities.

The scoping and design process for CED projects differs depending on the funds used for construction.

CEDs Corrected using Stand-alone CED I-4 Funds

1. CPDM issues scoping instructions to regional staff each fall for priority CED projects.
2. Regional program management contacts the CED coordinator for project documentation, and then scopes and programs the CED project based on the agreed-on conceptual design.
3. Once funding is received, the project is assigned to a Project Office for design, permitting, and construction with oversight from CED program staff. The Project Office notifies the CED Coordinator at major project milestones.
4. Prior to project advertisement, the Project Office submits the final design to the CED Coordinator for review to ensure the project meets the intent of the CED agreement prior to construction.

CEDs Corrected as part of Fish Passage Correction Projects

1. The CED Coordinator works closely with ESO Fish Passage Program staff to identify planned fish barrier removal projects that are also CEDs.
2. If an up-to-date concurrence form has not yet been approved for an active CED, the CED Coordinator will lead a concept selection and concurrence with WDFW and regional staff to identify and agree on an appropriate CED solution.
3. The CED problem is addressed in the Preliminary Hydraulic Design (PHD) for the Fish Barrier Removal Project based on the CED concurrence.
4. The project is scoped, designed, and constructed through WSDOT's Fish Passage process, with input from CED Coordinator. See [Section 300.08\(2\)](#) for more information.
5. The completed project is monitored through WSDOT's Fish Passage Monitoring program.

CEDs Corrected during Other Transportation Projects

1. The Region contacts the CED Coordinator early during the project scoping phase to screen for active CEDs in the vicinity of the project limits.
2. The CED Coordinator notifies the Region of CEDs located in the project vicinity and determines if a site and reach assessment was previously prepared, and a conceptual design agreed on by WDFW.
3. The Region determines which deficiencies would be addressed during the proposed transportation project.
4. If WDFW concurrence on a CED concept has not been completed or is out of date, the CED Coordinator may initiate a site and reach assessment and obtains WDFW agreement on a CED project concept.
5. The Region works with the CED Coordinator and hydrologist to ensure the scope is compatible with the concept in the CED site and reach assessment and concurrence.
6. The Project Office designs, permits, and constructs the CED project as part of the transportation project, with oversight from CED program staff.

CEDs Corrected during an Emergency Repair

1. During planning of an emergency construction project, the Project Engineer or the RMEC (depending on funding source of the emergency repair) contacts the CED Coordinator to determine if a site and reach assessment has been completed and if a concurrence form has been signed. If so, the CED Coordinator and Hydrologist may recommend incorporating the agreed-upon CED concept into the emergency repair.
2. The Project Office determines the feasibility of constructing the proposed CED concept during the emergency response. Construction of emergency projects often occurs during high flows and challenging conditions, and at times there are funding limitations associated with emergency funds.
3. The Region works with WDFW to design and permit the project under emergency conditions with input from the CED Coordinator.

300.09 Environmental database resources

300.09(1) WSDOT's GIS Workbench

WSDOT's GIS Workbench is an internal data system available for use by WSDOT staff in preparing the "Env Context" portion of the ERS. The Workbench is a user-friendly interface covering a wide range of environmental resources gathered from a variety of public agencies and WSDOT sources. The database has over 500 layers of environmental and natural resource management data, in the following major data categories:

- **General Reference** – Transportation routes, political and administrative boundaries, major public lands and geographic reference.
- **Environmental Data** – Air quality, fish and wildlife, priority species and habitats, geology and soils, groundwater and wells, hazardous materials, hydrography, plants, and water quality, WSDOT's Fish Passage and Chronic Environmental Deficiency (CED) inventories. WSDOT staff looking for environmental data should change the GIS Workbench's "Business Area" selection to "Environmental" before searching for any data.

The data provided to WSDOT staff through the GIS Workbench is usually sufficient for the Project Summary's ERS form. However, some data require field verification. For example, wetland data available from the GIS Workbench are not always reliable and may show wetlands as absent when they are present or may show wetlands as present when they are not. Field work by a qualified wetland biologist is necessary to determine the presence or absence of wetlands.

Expansion of GIS Workbench

GIS resources for environmental data are expanding rapidly. WSDOT staff work with federal, state, and local agencies to maintain a collection of the best available data for statewide environmental analysis. New data resources are continuously being incorporated into the WSDOT GIS Workbench. To facilitate getting the best data into the system, contact the [ESO Environmental Information Program](#) with information about newly identified data resources.

Citing a GIS Database

The GIS Workbench itself should not be cited as a data source or referenced on paper or digitally. Data source or reference citation should be specific to the exact dataset viewed using the GIS Workbench. The proper citation format for digital data is evolving, but typically includes the name of the data system, the name of the agency that maintains/updates the data, and the date of the data retrieval. If the data comes from an Internet website, the title of the site should be included with the full Uniform Resource Locator (URL). The citation information can be found in the Metadata (Item Description) for each Workbench dataset.

300.09(2) Other Online Resources

Other environmental data are included on the [WSDOT Geospatial Open Data Portal](#) and the [WSDOT Online Map Center](#).

Data about the status of WSDOT fish passage culverts and CEDs are available through [WSDOT's Fish Passage Inventory webmap](#). Additional information about the inventory and project delivery status of WSDOT fish passage projects and culverts that are CEDs are available internally through [WSDOT's Fish Passage Database](#). Updated delivery plan information can be found on the 2030 Fish passage project delivery plan webpage. The [Washington State Fish Passage webmap](#) provides WDFW's inventory of WSDOT and non-WSDOT fish passage sites throughout the state. WDFW's fish passage inventory protocols are described in the [Fish Passage Inventory, Assessment, and Prioritization Manual \(WDFW 2019\)](#).

300.10 Applicable statutes and regulations

- [42 United States Code \(U.S.C.\) 4321 National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 \(NEPA\)](#)
- [23 Code of Federal Regulations \(CFR\) Part 450 Planning Assistance and Standards](#)
- [23 Code of Federal Regulations \(CFR\) Part 771 Environmental Impact and Related Procedures](#)
- [23 CFR Part 774; 49 U.S.C Section 303 Policy on Lands, Parks, Recreation Areas, Wildlife and Waterfowl Refuges, and Historic Sites](#)
- [36 CFR Part 800 Protection of Historic and Cultural Properties](#)
- [40 CFR Parts 1500-1508 Council for Environmental Quality Regulations for Implementing NEPA](#)

- [Chapter 197-11 WAC SEPA Rules](#)
- [Chapter 468-12 WAC WSDOT Agency SEPA Procedures](#)
- [Chapter 43.21C RCW State Environmental Policy Act \(SEPA\)](#)
- [Chapter 47.05 RCW Priority Programming for Highway Development](#)
- [RCW 77.55.181 Fish Habitat Enhancement Projects \(FHEP\)](#)

300.11 Abbreviations and acronyms

BOD	Basis of Design
CE	Categorical Exclusion (NEPA) or Categorical Exemption (SEPA)
CED	Chronic Environmental Deficiency
CIPP	Capital Improvement and Preservation Program
DNS	Determination of Nonsignificance (SEPA)
DS	Determination of Significance (SEPA)
EA	Environmental Assessment (NEPA)
ECS	Environmental Classification Summary
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
EO	Executive Order
ERS	Environmental Review Summary
ESO	Environmental Services Office
FAA	Federal Aviation Administration
FHEP	Fish Habitat Enhancement Projects
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FRA	Federal Railroad Administration
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
GIS	Geographic Information System
MOA	Memorandum of Agreement
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
PCE	2024 FHWA/WSDOT NEPA CE Programmatic Agreement (PCE)
RCW	Revised Code of Washington
RTPO	Regional Transportation Planning Organization
SEPA	State Environmental Policy Act
STIP	Statewide Transportation Improvement Program
URL	Uniform Resource Locator
USDOT	United States Department of Transportation
USFS	United States Forest Service
WAC	Washington Administrative Code
WDFW	Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife

300.12 Glossary

Categorical Exclusion – A NEPA action defined by a specific agency through CFR or FR that does not individually or cumulatively have a significant environmental effect (see [Section 300.04](#)).

Categorical Exemption – A SEPA action defined through WAC that does not individually or cumulatively have a significant environmental effect (see [Section 300.05](#)).

Chronic Environmental Deficiency (CED) – A WSDOT designation defined in the WDFW-WSDOT Memorandum of Agreement that refers to a location along a state highway that is adjacent to a waterbody, and recent, frequent repairs or maintenance to WSDOT infrastructure cause adverse impacts to fish habitat. This designation is given by the CED Coordinator when the site is added to WSDOT's CED inventory (see [Section 300.08](#)).

Federal Nexus – A project has a federal nexus when a federal agency must take an action on a project. Before the federal agency takes an action, environmental impacts must be evaluated under NEPA. Common actions that create a Federal Nexus include:

- Federal land decision required within the project area.
- Federal money is used on the project.
- Federal permits or approvals are required.

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