

Instructions for NEPA Study Qualifications Submittal

Certification Period July 1 – June 30

Consulting firms or Local Public Agencies (LPAs) that desire to prepare Categorical Exclusions, Environmental Assessments, and/or Environmental Impact Statements for Nebraska Federal-Aid Transportation Projects administered by the Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT) must first be approved by NDOT. This is done by demonstrating qualified education and experience by the firm or LPA Project Manager, Principal NEPA Author and Key Personnel. The consulting firm or LPA must employ at least one designated Project Manager and Principal Author as described below.

The instructions below detail the NDOT NEPA Study Qualifications submittal requirements for firms and LPAs.

A. Requirements of the Consulting Firm or LPA Project Manager and Principal NEPA Author

Note: The Project Manager and Principal Author can be the same person.

1. A Project Manager is a current employee that possesses either:

- A Bachelor of Science or Arts degree in the field of environmental science, planning, engineering or a closely related field, (*i.e. Biology, Natural Resources, Geology, Geography, Landscape Architecture*) **AND** a minimum of three (3) years experience in NEPA document preparation.

OR

- A Master of Science or Arts degree or higher (*in one of the fields listed above*) **AND** a minimum of two (2) years experience in NEPA document preparation.

2. A Principal Author is a current employee that possesses the following training and experience:

- Demonstrated experience in preparing **Acceptable** Categorical Exclusions and/or Environmental Assessments and Environmental Impact Statements.
 - “**Acceptable**” means NEPA documents that were approved by the Federal Highway Administration or NDOT. Desired: have minimal document revisions, contain quality authorship and resource reviews, and meet project schedules.
- Certificate(s) of completion of the National Highway Institute (NHI) *Introduction to NEPA and the Transportation Decision-making Process Course (NHI-142052)*, or equivalent.
- Completion of additional NHI/FHWA NEPA courses is preferred (*include certificates in submittal*).
- Demonstrated experience authoring NEPA documents for transportation projects (*identify specific projects in Table 1*).
- Training and/or experience in the following desired disciplines (*detail experience in these Items in Table 2*): historic preservation & cultural resource coordination (Section 106), 4(f), 6(f), Public Involvement, etc.

B. NEPA Specialty Area Requirements of Key Personnel/Sub Consultants

Training certificates for current staff or Sub Consultant(s) **must** be included in the submittal to demonstrate training and experience in each study area below.

1. Noise Studies

- Certificate(s) of training from a noise modeling school. Training must include TNM 2.5, (or a later version of TNM) and the firm/LPA must possess the software to run the model.
- Demonstrated experience completing Department of Transportation and/or NDOT approved noise studies on transportation projects (*identify current staff/sub consultant(s) and specific projects in Table 1*).

2. Air Quality Studies

- Certificate(s) of training in Mobile Vehicle Emissions Simulator (MOVES).
- Firm must possess the software to run the MOVES model.
- Certificate(s) of training in CALINE-3 or an equivalent FHWA approved software for dispersion modeling near highways and arterial streets.
- Certificate(s) of training in CAL3QHC or an equivalent FHWA approved software for obtaining emissions at roadway intersections.
- Firm or LPA must possess an approved dispersion model and intersection emission modeling software.
- Demonstrated experience completing air studies on transportation projects (*identify current staff/sub consultant(s) and specific projects in Table 1*).

3. Wetlands

- Certificate(s) of training indicating completion of a wetland delineation training course for jurisdictional wetlands as defined by the most current Army Corps of Engineers Wetlands Delineation Manual.
- Meet criteria of the NDOT Qualified Scientist Qualification Requirements, (<https://dot.nebraska.gov/media/xksl05wh/app-wetland-del-consult-list.pdf>)
- Demonstrated experience conducting:
(Identify current staff/sub consultant(s) and specific projects in Table 1, demonstrating experience with the following activities).
 - Wetland delineations per the current Army Corps of Engineers Wetlands Delineation Manual, as applicable.
 - Preliminary Wetland Reviews/Jurisdictional Determinations
 - 404 permitting

4. **Hazardous Materials Review**

- Training certificate(s) in ASTM Phase I / Phase II Environmental Site Assessment Training.
- Experience in conducting Hazardous Materials Reviews per the current NDOT Hazardous Material Review Guidance Manual and/or preparing and documenting ASTM Phase I/Phase II Environmental Site Assessments (*identify current staff/sub consultant(s) and specific projects in Table 1*).
- Certificates of training for NDOT's Hazardous Materials Review (HMR) Course 101 and Hazardous Materials Review (HMR) Course 201 available through the Nebraska Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP at <https://www.ltap.unl.edu/assnfe/searchcourses.asp?csKeyword=hmr>)

5. **Threatened & Endangered Species**

- Certificate(s) of training in the preparation of Biological Assessments. Include in your submittal a list of any staff that attended the NDOT NEPA On-Call Consultant Threatened and Endangered Species training.
NOTE: NDOT has not offered this training in the recent past; therefore, any relevant Biological Assessment training provided by the USFWS or other State DOTs, or examples of completing acceptable Biological Assessments for NDOT or other State DOTs for highway transportation projects can be substituted.
- Experience in preparation of Biological Assessments and/or Biological Evaluation Forms (*identify current staff/sub consultant(s) and specific projects in Table 1*).

C. **NEPA Qualification Submittals will be judged on the following Criteria**

The firm or LPA must have a minimum of a Project Manager, a Principal Author (meeting the requirements listed in Section A) and demonstrate that they meet the qualification requirements in three (3) NEPA Specialty Areas listed in Section B. In order to be considered for EA and/or EIS qualification, the Project Manager and Principal Author must demonstrate that they have authored an acceptable EA(s) and/or EIS(s) (*use a format consistent with attached Table 1*).

- Qualifications of the Project Manager and Principal Author as detailed in Section A
- Qualifications of Key Personnel and Sub Consultants as detailed in Section B
- Certificates of training as detailed in Section B
- Experience of Key Personnel, LPA and/or the Consulting Firm which must be detailed in a format consistent with Table 1
- Experience of Project Manager, Principal Author and Key Personnel of the qualified firm or LPA, and/or the Sub Consulting Firm(s) must be detailed in a format consistent with Table 1 & 2.
- Past performance and Quality Management Plan

D. **Submittal Requirements**

The completed qualifications package must be submitted via NDOT's consultant certification process described at <https://dot.nebraska.gov/business-center/consultant/consultant-certification/>

The qualification package must include the items listed below:

- Qualifications must be attached to the electronic NDOT Form 497 during the consultant certification process.
- A list of projects the Firm or LPA has completed where current employees/sub consultants have been Project Manager, Principal Author, or key personnel in the preparation of NEPA documents. Include projects that current employees/sub consultants completed with a different employer(s) (*use the format of the attached Table 1*).
- Detailed resumes of each Project Manager, Principal Author and key personnel that will be used to prepare NEPA documents and for quality assurance. Include a listing of completed projects approved by FHWA or NDOT where the employee has been substantially involved (*use the format of the attached Table 1*).
- Project Experience Summary – List approved documents. Identify specific services provided by your firm/LPA and sub consultant(s) for each project (*use the format of the attached Table 2*).
- Describe other experiences with specific environmental studies provided by your firm/LPA and sub consultant(s) that might contribute to your NEPA qualifications.
- Copies of certificates of training (including in house training) as mentioned in Section B above must be included in the submittal.
- List of supporting sub consulting firm(s) the firm/LPA will draw upon to conduct specialty area environmental studies not included in the firm's/LPA's experience and expertise.
 - Include sub consulting firm's name, address, telephone number, key contact and indicate whether or not the sub consulting firm(s) and the firm/LPA have worked together on previous projects. Include the sub consulting firm's Statement of Qualifications.
- Identification of the NEPA document type(s) the firm/LPA wish to be considered for qualification (CE, EA and/or EIS).
- Firms not already certified by NDOT must submit a minimum of three (3) references that can verify your firm has authored FHWA and/or other State DOT acceptable NEPA Documentation for CEs, EAs or EISs authored within the last 5-years depending on NEPA document type(s) identified for certification consideration.
- A Quality Management Plan that describes the Firm's Quality Assurance/Quality Control (QA/QC) procedures relevant to NEPA and environmental documents. The Firm's plan should be compatible with NDOT's *NEPA Quality Assurance/Quality Control and Performance Measures Guidance* at https://dot.nebraska.gov/media/0elf3czy/qagc_manual.pdf

E. Certification Information

- Certification periods run from July 1st through June 30th of the following year. Firms/LPAs may request to be evaluated or reevaluated at any time throughout the year.
- Any changes in the Project Manager, Principal Author, key personnel, and/or sub consultants for any currently certified firm/LPA **MUST** be sent to NDOT within 30 days of change. Detailed resumes shall be included with notifications. Firms/LPAs failing to notify NDOT are subject to removal from NDOT's Certified Consultants for NEPA Studies list.

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Table 1
Current Employee and Sub Consultant Project Experience

| Employee | Firm' s NEPA | Arlington Expressway | I-80/680 Interchange | Westport Beltway | Hyland East | US-83 North | I-480 North |
|---|-------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Joe Doe, P.E. (Sub Consultant-HNB) | | W, T | W, T | W, T | W, T | W, T | W, T |
| Jane Doe, C.P.G. (Primary Firm-LBT) | | PM | PA | PM, PA | PM | PA | PA |
| Jack Rush (Primary Firm-LBT) | | PA | PM | | PA | PM | PM |
| Jill Jones (Sub Consultant-GMW) | | N, A, HW | N, HW | N, A | HW | N, HW | HWS |
| Sam Wilson, P.E. (Primary Firm-LBT) | | HC | HC | HC | HC | HC | HC |
| Project Location | | Nebraska | Nebraska | New York | Colorado | Missouri | Texas |
| Date of NEPA Document Approval | | 1/3/2021 | 9/12/2020 | 5/7/2021 | 3/7/2021 | 7/3/2020 | 11/9/2021 |

- PM = Project Manager for NEPA Project
- PA = Principal Author of NEPA Document
- N = Noise Technical Specialist
- A = Air Quality Technical Specialist
- HC = Historic Preservation & Cultural Resources Technical Specialist
- HW = Hazardous Waste Technical Specialist
- T = Threatened & Endangered Species Technical Specialist
- W = Wetland Technical Specialist

Table 2
Consulting Firm's or LPA's NEPA Project Experience

| | CE | EA | EIS | Wetland Delineation/Permitting/Mitigation | Threatened and Endangered Species Studies | Air Quality Studies | Noise Analysis/Abatement | Section 106 Resource Coordination | Public Involvement Process | Environmental Justice Evaluation | 4(f) | 6(f) | Date of Final NEPA Document Approval |
|-------------------------|----|----|-----|--|--|---------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|------|------|---|
| Arlington Expressway | | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | | | ✓ | | ✓ | | | 1/3/2021 |
| I-80/680 Interchange | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | 9/12/2020 |
| Westport Beltway | | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | 5/7/2021 |
| Hyland East | ✓ | | | ✓ | ✓ | | | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | | 3/7/2021 |
| US-83 North | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | 7/3/2020 |
| I-480 North | | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | 11/9/2021 |

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