

**From:** [Indiana Department of Transportation](#)  
**To:** [Bales, Ronald](#)  
**Subject:** INDOT Environmental Services Division, Environmental Policy Updates - Standard Language  
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All,

The NEPA standard language for Categorical Exclusions (CE) has been updated (Effective September 1, 2019). Now available is NEPA standard language for the CE1 form (New) and NEPA standard language for the CE2-EA form (Revised). Refer to the [Environmental Policy Website](#). Some of the updates to the standard language for the CE2-EA form include: additional notes throughout to provide clarity, the language of presence updated throughout, an update on early coordination with IDEM about wellhead protection areas and source water, an update on language to include in the permits section of the CE, and the addition of environmental commitment information.

There have been questions recently about the definition of “presence.” Below is updated definitions to help define “presence” when writing CE document.

**Construction Limits:** The farthest limits of construction as measured perpendicular to a base line (e.g., toe of slope, top of ditch backslope). The construction limits are usually the farthest extent of ground disturbance at a project site.

**Presence:** A resource should be considered present if the resource is within the project area or directly adjacent to the project area. If the resource could be directly or indirectly impacted by the project, it should be listed in the NEPA document as present.

**Project Area:** That area involved in a highway improvement that will be directly impacted by the project. This area can either be within existing right-of-way or include new right-of-way.

**Study Area:** The boundary of the study area is based on the logical geographic termini, the project purpose and need, and the expected limits of potential impacts. It is important that the study area be large enough to encompass the range of alternatives that will be developed to meet the project purpose and need. The area within which transportation impacts can be measured will likely be substantially larger than the area within which direct environmental impacts are measured. It is important to ensure that the forecasting is extensive enough in its geographic reach to reasonably estimate the transportation and land development impacts.

New CE document submittals after September 1, 2019 should use the new CE standard language. Thank you.

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