

An Introduction to FHWA eNEPA

An optional project collaboration tool for state transportation agencies.

Why should I consider using eNEPA?

eNEPA was developed by FHWA to allow personnel within an agency or between different agencies to communicate, coordinate review timelines, share data and review documents through a common, internet-based platform. The tool works much like SharePoint or a sophisticated FTP site and is intended for use on larger projects such as EAs and EISs. ¹ Once you have access to the site you can also view documents from other projects for examples and ideas.

eNEPA allows WSDOT Project Managers to post project schedules; invite, collect and share comments on documents; post due dates, and display project status. The chat room style comment function can be used to facilitate interagency discussion. There is also a feature in eNEPA that may be used to help build the project's administrative record.

Are we required to use eNEPA?

No, it is not a requirement to use eNEPA on our projects – it is an optional tool available to us.

Who can access my project in eNEPA?

The general public cannot access eNEPA; therefore it does not replace the need for public web pages. Documents posted on eNEPA may be viewed by everyone with access to the site and require the same level of editing, review, and approval as those released for public scrutiny in any other forum. Therefore, this tool cannot replace your project files and should not be used for internal correspondence with WSDOT staff or consultants. In addition, other agency staff with permission to participate in your project may post their own documents to your site. These documents will also be accessible to everyone with access to eNEPA across the nation.

Will posting documents to eNEPA meet all of my NEPA process requirements?

Posting a document to eNEPA will enable participating and cooperating agencies to review and comment on your documents. However, it will not send your document to the Federal Register, transmit your document to the EPA eNEPA website, or replace the requirement to provide tribes or other agencies with electronic copy of your document in compliance with NEPA procedural requirements unless they specifically waive the requirement in writing.

¹ The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers may be moving away from allowing the use of FTP sites for exchange of documents due to security risks. However, eNEPA is a tool they could use.

What will I need to do to use eNEPA?

No software license is required to use eNEPA, but, as with any web-based tool, the site requires time to administer and maintain. You will need to designate a point person to serve as your eNEPA Lead. This person will need to:

1. Learn how to use eNEPA and provide WSDOT and consultant staff support for their project. The FHWA [User Handbook](#) and [Quick Start Guide](#) are good self-explanatory reference guides. Software [support](#) is provided via email from FHWA HQ in Washington D.C. They generally respond to questions within one day. FHWA is looking to give up ownership of the tool. It is uncertain who will support eNEPA and how the tool will be supported in the future.
2. Create, update, and maintain the project pages.
3. Develop and maintain a list of WSDOT staff that needs access to eNEPA, including name, title, email, phone and appropriate user role and privileges information for the life of your project.
4. Develop and maintain a list of non-WSDOT staff that needs access to eNEPA, including name, title, email, phone and appropriate user role and privileges information for the life of your project.
5. Post approved documents, schedule information and meeting dates to eNEPA.
6. Moderate the chat room comment function.
7. Retrieve and save documents and comments posted on eNEPA to the project file.
8. Manage project schedule information and post meeting invitations.

For additional information or to register for access to eNEPA contact Erin Gardner at 360-704-6313 or Vicki Steigner at 360-705-7493.