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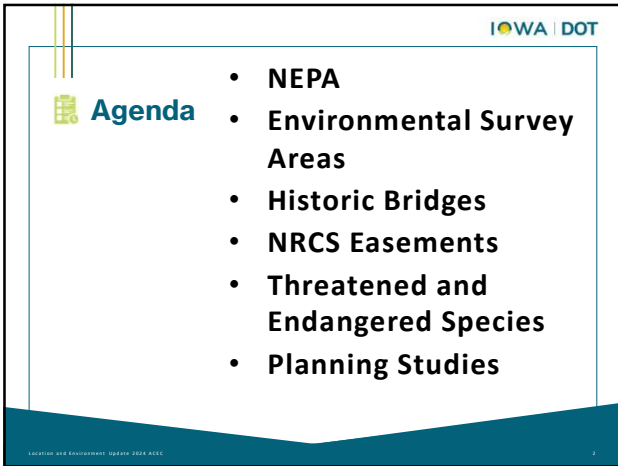
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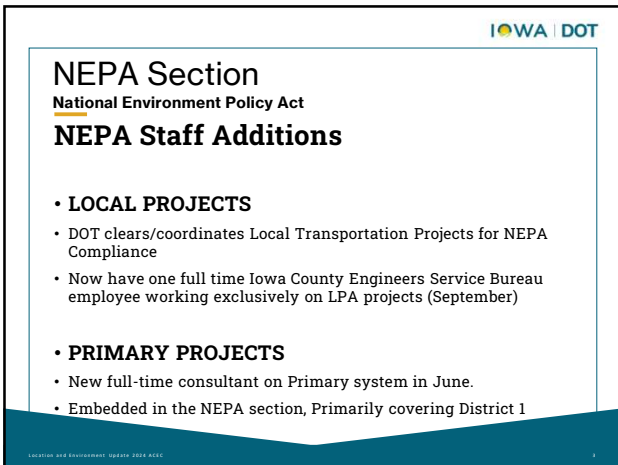
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### Environmental Study Area

**NEW PROCESS BEING DEVELOPED**

- Pre-concept review meetings
- Cooperatively create an Environmental Study Area
- Will create a DGN, KMZ, or GIS shape file
- Deliverable with the Concept
- Updated as changes are made through project development
- Notifications of changes
- Developing work-flow and details

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### Historic Bridge Survey

- New historic bridge survey (third one) is in the works – done late 2025
- Look at all bridges constructed from 1970 through 1985
- Reevaluate determinations from the two other studies completed in 1995 and 2011
- Primary and secondary system ~ (16,000) bridges
- If a project involves a bridge built between 1970 and 1985. You must evaluate the bridge for historic status, allow time for that.



<https://iowadot.gov/historicbridges/Cultural-resources/Historic-Bridge-Surveys-and-Background>

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### Natural Resource Conservation Service

<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov>

- **NRCS EASEMENTS**
- Conservation easements.
- If there is an impact it gets complicated.
- It will add time to the project development.
- May require additional environmental documentation.
- We are coordinating with NRCS to develop workflows and processes.
- Still figuring out the process.

- **If you see NRCS easements in your project area, let Ken Brink with LEB know asap for best outcome.**
- **Kenneth.brink@iowadot.us**

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### Threatened and Endangered Species

**USFWS (US Fish and Wildlife Service)**

- **Tricolored Bat (*Perimyotis subflavus*) – Proposed Endangered**
- On September 13, 2022 a proposal to list as endangered.
- The species is facing extinction due primarily to white-nose syndrome, a deadly disease that affects cave-dwelling bats across the continent.
- The USFWS has begun to provide guidance for development of projects pending the decision-making process of whether or not the species will be listed.

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### Threatened and Endangered Species

**USFWS (US Fish and Wildlife Service)**

- **Western regal fritillary (*Argynnis idalia occidentalis*) – Proposed Threatened**
- On August 5, 2024 a proposal to list as threatened.
- It is found in 14 states in the native grasslands of the central and northern Great Plains and portions of the Midwest (Arkansas, Colorado, Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, North Dakota, Nebraska, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Wisconsin, and Wyoming).




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### Planning Studies

**Types**

- Preliminary Assessment
- Feasibility Study
- PEL (Programming and Environmental Linkage)
- Corridor Planning Study



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## Planning Studies Guide

### Four General Types

- **Preliminary Assessment (PA):** The goal of the preliminary assessment is to investigate the issues/needs of a particular location(s). This type of study will be conducted internally primarily by central office bureaus and the district and should take no longer than six months. A PA is not always required to initiate a Feasibility Study but may be helpful in determining whether further study is necessary.
- **Feasibility Study (FS):** The goal of the feasibility study is to take an identified need, designate a study corridor, collect desktop data relevant to the natural, social, and economic environment, and identify and evaluate location, operations or modal alternatives that detail possible solutions. Transportation systems management and operations (TSMO) solutions will also be evaluated to right size proposed solutions. A FS is not always required to prepare a business case or initiate a PEL study, but the information gathered during this study may be helpful to support a business case submission.
- **Planning and Environmental Linkage (PEL) (traditionally called a Location study):** Conducted after a project has been programmed, the goal of the PEL study is to identify a technically preferred, environmentally permissible, and generally publicly acceptable improvement plan (recommended alternative) for a project. The PEL portion is completed before the Environmental Assessment (EA) or Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process.
- **Corridor Study:** Corridor studies review an entire corridor (or segments with rational end points) for environmental constraints, operations, and safety issues. Public outreach, in the form of public surveys, is conducted to gather information on perceived problem areas and future community planning. The resulting vision document is a guide to provide for consistent design, and to help identify showstoppers/potential snags, and inform timelines in project development.

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## What is a Preliminary Assessment?

Evaluate need for a project

Pre NEPA

Identifies Showstoppers

Considers non-traditional alternatives

A preliminary assessment will be used to evaluate the need, investigate range of possible solutions, determine initial cost estimates, and assess the potential impacts of a proposed project.

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## What is a Feasibility Study?

More refined analysis

Pre-NEPA

Pre-Programming

Feasibility Studies are conducted when more information is needed to make a decision on a project.

Results will be incorporated into a NEPA document if the project is programmed.

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## What is a PEL?

**Programming and Environmental Linkage)**

After Programming  
Pre-NEPA  
Expect an EA or EIS

Planning and Environmental Linkages studies are conducted after the project is programmed.

They are distinguished from Feasibility Studies by more detailed decision making resulting in a preferred alternative.

Results will be incorporated into an EA or EIS.




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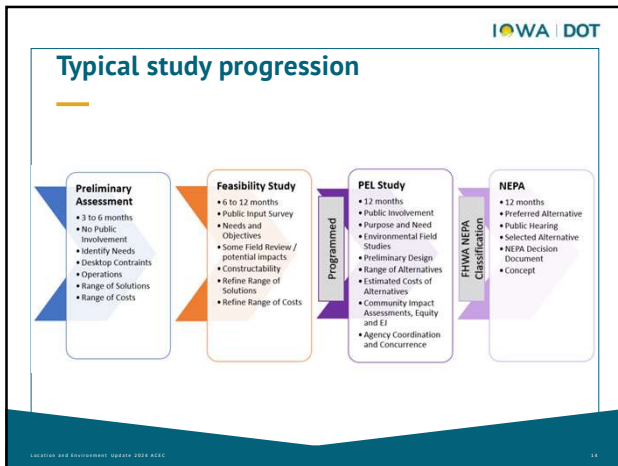
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## What is a Corridor Planning Study?

Corridor Review/Plan  
Pre NEPA

Corridor planning studies review the entire corridor for environmental constraints, operations, safety, public input, and serve as a guidance document for future improvements.

NEPA is conducted later at the project level (typically CEs).

Examples range from Super-2 to I-380 corridor

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## Study Initiation?

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Business Case submission for a study

Must be approved to proceed

PELs after Business Case is approved for the project

Studies have been added to the Business Case process and will be approved in same way.

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## Questions?

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iowadot.gov

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