



Statement of Principles

The goal of the NEC FUTURE Program is to prepare a Passenger Rail Corridor Investment Plan (PRCIP) for the Washington D.C.–Boston Northeast Corridor (NEC). The PRCIP, consisting of a Service Development Plan (SDP) that articulates the overall scope and approach for proposed service and Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), will define an integrated, comprehensive passenger rail transportation solution for the Northeast. The purpose of this solution is to improve mobility, effectively serve travel demand due to population and jobs growth, support economic development, reduce growth in carbon emissions and dependence on foreign oil, and contribute to improved land utilization and investment in both urban and non-urban communities in the region.

The federal agencies (Parties) listed below are committed to following a Statement of Principles demonstrating cooperation throughout the process of the Federal Railroad Administration’s (FRA) development of the Tier 1 EIS for the NEC (NEC Tier 1 EIS):

EARLY ENGAGEMENT AND COLLABORATION

1. Create a framework where all Parties have a voice in the NEC Tier 1 EIS process, and agree to open, frequent and candid communication, including the efficient resolution of any issues, misunderstandings or disagreements.
2. Facilitate early engagement and coordination in identifying issues, studies and overall development of the NEC Tier 1 EIS.
3. Identify goals and issues for the NEC Tier 1 EIS with the intent of using these goals to improve project level coordination in subsequent environmental processes on the Northeast Corridor.
4. Work collaboratively to identify environmental issues related to the development of a range of alternatives and environmental analysis.
5. Work collaboratively to pursue opportunities that allow for increased efficiency and to support the responsibilities of the Parties with regard to advancing the NEC Tier 1 EIS.
6. Participate in the planning process in a meaningful and substantive way, including attendance at periodic meetings and conference calls to the extent that staffing resources and competing priorities allow.

COMMUNICATION AND SCHEDULING PROTOCOLS

7. The Parties agree to communicate with each other within an agreed upon timeframe if a Party is unable to meet the schedule from the coordination plan to be developed.
8. Designate a point-of-contact (POC) for each Party and agree that all written communication to that Party will include the POC, and the POC agrees to provide or coordinate timely written communication on behalf of the POC's Party. The POC's routine communications on collaborative matters are not binding on that Party.
9. A Party's POC issuing a written binding communication regarding the Party's concurrence, decision-making, approvals or disapprovals should clearly state that the written communication is intended to represent the Party's position on certain planning milestones, issues or draft documents.
10. FRA will provide the Parties with information and materials in an agreed upon timeframe. In turn, the Parties agree to perform the review of documents and provide substantive feedback to FRA in an agreed upon timeframe.
11. FRA will inform the Parties in writing as to milestones or decision-points in the planning process that require feedback or input and FRA and the Parties will agree to the timeframe for such feedback or input.
12. Develop a coordination schedule for the NEC Tier 1 EIS with input from each Party, and use best efforts to meet that schedule. FRA will post the schedule on the Infrastructure Dashboard (permits.performance.gov).

STATUTORY AND LEGAL RESPONSIBILITY

13. Integrate each Party's mission and each Party's statutory and legal responsibilities into this framework because content of this Statement of Principles cannot alter the Parties' independent governing or regulatory obligations. Affirm that FRA is the lead agency under NEPA and Section 106.

The federal agencies listed below have concurred with this Statement of Principles:

Federal Railroad Administration

United States Coast Guard

Advisory Council on Historic Preservation

United States Environmental Protection Agency

**National Marine Fisheries Service,
National Oceanic and Atmospheric
Administration**

United States Fish and Wildlife Service

United States National Park Service

United States Army Corps of Engineers