



# Community Connect Farm Bill Broadband Environmental Reviews



This table provides a general list describing the level of environmental review and extraordinary circumstances to address for typical simple projects. These guidelines do not guarantee the appropriate classification nor do they guarantee that more documentation will not be needed based on site specific circumstances.

If you are applying to do this for your CCG project:	Then, this is the anticipated environmental review requirements and the categorical exclusion that would likely apply:
<b>1. Actions Outside a Plant</b>	
a. Buried cable	1970.53(d)(2); 1970.54(b)(4) depending on if new or replacement. If using 1970.53(d)(2), no further action for NHPA is required. If using 1970.54(b)(4), need to contact SHPO and tribes for S106 review. Need to avoid wetlands or identify why project must be in a wetland.
b. Aerial cable – existing cable, possibly with new poles	1970.53(d)(1); 1970.54(b)(4) depending on if new or replacement. If using 1970.53(d)(2), no further action for NHPA is required. If using 1970.54(b)(4), need to contact SHPO and tribes for S106 review.
c. Underground cable	1970.53(d)(2); 1970.54(b)(4) depending on if new or replacement. If using 1970.53(d)(2), no further action for NHPA is required. If using 1970.54(b)(4), need to contact SHPO and tribes for S106 review. Need to avoid wetlands or identify why project must be in a wetland.
<b>2. Towers</b>	
a. New construction	1970.54(a)(6), if under 450 feet and not visible from areas of documented scenic value. Will need to consider impacts to prime farmland and listed species. Maps regarding floodplains and wetlands are generally needed. Need to contact SHPO and tribes for S106 review.
b. Existing towers, equipment collocation only	1970.53(d)(5), no further action for NHPA is required
c. Equipment put on building instead of tower	1970.53(d)(5), no further action for NHPA is required
<b>3. Buildings</b>	
a. New building	1970.54(a)(3) – if it meets other requirements of the categorical exclusion. Will need to consider impacts to prime farmland and listed species. Maps regarding floodplains and wetlands are generally needed. Need to contact SHPO and tribes for S106 review.
b. Modular building	1970.54(a)(3) Need to contact SHPO and tribes for S106 review. Will need to consider impacts to prime farmland and listed species. Maps regarding floodplains and wetlands are generally needed.
c. Renovating existing building	1970.53(c)(2) Need to contact SHPO and tribes for S106 review. Impacts of siting project in floodplain may need to be addressed.
<b>4. Equipment</b>	
a. Within existing building	1970.53(c)(2) Need to contact SHPO and tribes for S106 review.
b. Outside in a field	1970.54(b)(4) Need to contact SHPO and tribes for S106 review. Will need to consider impacts to prime farmland and listed species. Maps regarding floodplains and wetlands are generally needed.



## Guidelines and Details

Any activity categorized under 1970.54 is a Categorical Exclusion with an Environmental Report. This means all potential extraordinary circumstances must be discussed to some degree, including wetlands and floodplains. For example, applicants should not just state “no floodplain or wetlands” and end the discussion there. Applications should include supporting information such as a map. If a resource is present, applicants should describe and support how the project will not have an adverse impact to the resource. For example, if the project is in the floodplain but there are no above ground structures to impact or be impacted by any floods. Or there is a wetland in the project area, but the line will be directionally bored under the wetland to avoid any impact.

Section 106 review information regarding the National Historic Preservation Act can be found in subpart H of our regulations (link below), and DOES require coordination with the State Historic Preservation Office and notification to any federally recognized tribes that have an interest in the area (details and template letters can be found in subpart H).

Endangered Species Act (ESA) review is also generally needed for each project. Depending on the type of project, a simple commitment may be enough to alleviate any concern. The following steps should be taken to expedite the review:

1. Go to IPaC (link below) and print off an official species list for the area your project impacts. If no species are on the list, include the list and move on.
2. If any species are on the list but based on the type of project, they would NOT be impacted, write up a few sentences explaining that, include it in your report, and move on. This is often the case if you are in an already maintained ROW.
3. If a species is present and COULD be affected, such as any species of bat and you are doing tree clearing, more commitments/limitations or coordination with US Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) may be required to conclude that the action is “not likely to adversely affect” the species. Using IPaC may assist you in concluding any consultation with USFWS. Also, subpart N (link below) has more details on ESA requirements.
4. Bat and beetle species are the two most likely to actually be impacted by any of these actions. US FWS has extensive information on them and what should be done to avoid any adverse impacts and conclude consultation.

### Helpful links:

<a href="#">List of 1970.53 and 1970.54 Categorical Exclusions</a> from our regulations	
<a href="#">Subpart H</a>	Historic and Cultural Resources
<a href="#">Subpart N</a>	Biological Resources
<a href="#">Subpart L</a>	Land Use and Formally Classified Land, for more details regarding prime farmland
<a href="#">IPaC</a>	Assistance for ESA coordination and determinations

