

# NHDOT Guidance on Using the Program Comment for Common Post-1945 Concrete and Steel bridges

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## How to Review Bridges under the Program Comment:

1. Initiate the project with the NHDOT Cultural Resources Program Staff using the processes established for either the [Request for Project Review](#) or the Section 106 Programmatic Agreement for Federal Aid projects, Appendix A or B Certification Forms (available on the NHDOT Bureau of Environment's webpage: <http://www.nh.gov/dot/org/projectdevelopment/environment/units/program-management/cultural.htm>).
2. If you feel the subject bridge falls within the criteria described below for inclusion in the Program Comment, please also fill out and include in your submission the [NHDOT Recordation of Bridges that Apply to the Program Comment Form](#) (available on the NHDOT Bureau of Environment's webpage: <http://www.nh.gov/dot/org/projectdevelopment/environment/units/program-management/cultural.htm>).
3. NHDOT Cultural Resources Program Staff will review the information and either approve or disagree with inclusion of the bridge in the Program Comment.
  - a. If NHDOT Cultural Resources Program Staff approves the inclusion of the bridge in the Program Comment, it will be checked on the form and a copy will be returned to the project contact. The subject bridge does not need to undergo additional cultural resources review (inventory form, etc.). **However please note:**
    - i. Features in the surrounding area (structures, landscapes, etc.) may still need to be evaluated for historic significance.
    - ii. The Program Comment does not negate the need to complete necessary phases of archaeological review. Archaeological sensitivity will still be determined on a case-by-case basis.
  - b. If NHDOT Cultural Resources Program Staff disagrees, the reason will be noted on the form, a copy returned to the project contact, and the project will continue under the Section 106 review process, outlined in 36 CFR 800.3-800.7, or the Programmatic Agreement process.
4. NHDOT Cultural Resources Program will provide a copy of the Recordation Form to the NH Division of Historical Resources (NHDHR) for their files. It will also be recorded in the State Historic Archaeological & Architectural Resources Database (SHAARD) (when completed). Annually, NHDOT will provide FHWA and NHDHR a list of the bridges that were included in the Program Comment in the previous year.

## Program Comment Federal Regulations:

At the request of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) has issued a Program Comment that will eliminate individual historic review requirements under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act for common post-1945 concrete and steel bridges and culverts. The intent of the Program Comment is to ensure that more unique historic bridges receive the attention they deserve while the process is substantially streamlined for common, "cookie-cutter" bridges that are unlikely to be significant for preservation in place. These bridges were constructed in vast numbers after World War II using standardized plans. Although there has been little public interest in the preservation of these common bridges and culverts, FHWA was required under Section 106, to consider and document the potential historic significance of any bridge approaching 50 years of age that might be affected by FHWA projects.

For the full overview of the Program Comment, please visit FHWA's website:

[http://environment.fhwa.dot.gov/histpres/program\\_comment.asp](http://environment.fhwa.dot.gov/histpres/program_comment.asp)

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## Applicable Bridge Types:

The following common bridge types, constructed post-1945, apply to the Program Comment:

*(No individual review under Section 106 would be required for the bridge. Cultural resources review for the adjacent area may still be required.)*

Bridge Type	NHDOT abbreviation
Concrete Box	CB
Concrete Pipe	CP
Concrete Slab	CS
Concrete Tee Beam	CTB
I-beams w/ bridge plank	IB-BP
I-beams w/ concrete deck	IB-C
I-beams w/ steel deck	IB-G
I-beams w/ steel plate	IB-S
I-beams w/ wood deck	IB-W
Inverset I-beam/concrete	INVER
Metal Pipe	MP
Metal Plate Arch	MP-A
Metal Plate Box Culvert	MP-B
Pre-stressed Bulb Tee	NEBT
Pre-stressed Butted Boxes	PBB
Pre-stressed I-beams	PIB
Pre-stressed Spread Boxes	PSC
Pre-stressed Tee Beams	PTB
Pre-stressed Voided Slabs	PVS

The following culvert types are also included: reinforced concrete boxes, concrete boxes, concrete pipes, and steel pipes.

In addition, the following types of common railings are not considered to possess exceptional significance: Concrete barrier with sidewalk, Kansas Corral Railing, New Jersey concrete barrier, Tubular W-beam railing.

## Exemptions and Exceptions Include:

A bridge listed on the [NH List of Bridges to be Exempt from the Program Comment](#), located on the Bureau of Environment's website. This list is updated periodically, please visit the website for the most current and up-to-date list. This list can also be found under the [Program Comment section of FHWA's website](#).

**Should the subject bridge fall within any of the below exceptions, the bridge cannot be included in the Program Comment review process and must be reviewed under the regular Section 106 process of the National Historic Preservation Act:**

1. Bridge is listed in, or already eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, or is located adjacent to or within a National Register listed, eligible, or potentially eligible historic district, including linear historic districts.

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- 2. Bridge includes spans that are of the following type:
  - a. Arch bridges
  - b. Truss bridges
  - c. Bridges with movable spans
  - d. Suspension bridges
  - e. Cable-stayed bridges
  - f. Covered bridges
  
- 3. Bridge may have exceptional significance, because:
  - a. It is associated with an (historical) event or individual
  - b. It is a very early or particularly important example of its type in the state or the nation
  - c. It has distinctive engineering or architectural features that depart from standard design, such as:
    - ii. aesthetic railing or balustrade
    - iii. spans of exceptional length or complexity
    - iv. displays other elements engineered to respond to a unique environmental context

## Photo Submission Guidance for the Program Comment:

Photographs submitted with the Recordation Form can be printed on any paper type and can be in color or black & white. No special archival treatment needs to be taken into consideration.

Photos do need to clearly show the bridge and its features. Snow and vegetation covered bridge photos will not be accepted. Photos should not be washed out or fuzzy in appearance.

If the overall bridge, abutments and rails cannot be seen in one picture, please submit multiple photographs.

### Acceptable Photograph Examples:



The bridge structure, wing walls and/or abutments, and guardrail are visible. For these examples, only one photograph would need to be submitted.

### Unacceptable Photograph Examples:

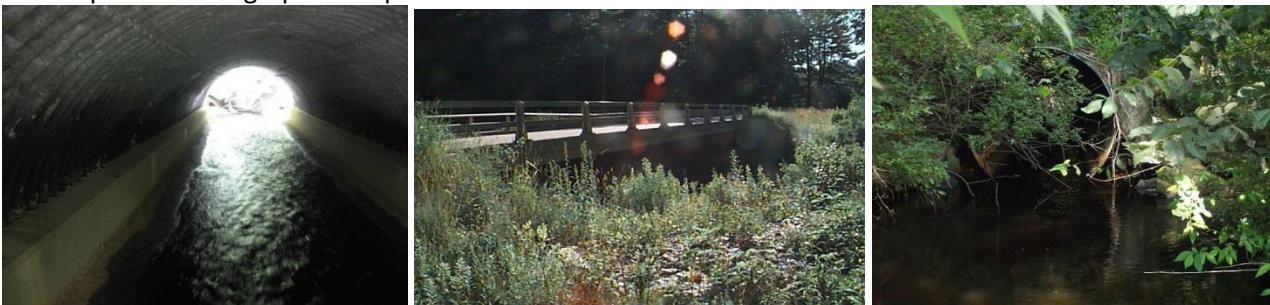


Photo 1 (metal pipe culvert) would be acceptable as supplemental information, but not as an overall view of the bridge/culvert. Photos 2 and 3 are heavily vegetated and the structures are obscured.