
TEMPORARY CAUSEWAY GUIDANCE

Reference: Recurring Plan Detail 205-B-326d and RSP 205-B-326

BACKGROUND

In collaboration with the Indiana Departments of Natural Resources (IDNR) and Environmental Management (IDEM), INDOT has established a recurring special provision (RSP) and plan details (RPD) for Temporary Causeways.

For most stream crossings, these documents should provide enough detail in the design development phase to acquire environmental permits while also providing the Contractor the flexibility after letting to use preferred means and methods. Larger navigable waterway crossings may warrant additional requirements as determined through the environmental permitting process. Those requirements should be included in a unique special provision that supplements these recurring plan details and provision.

The recurring special provision and plan details were approved as item 5 at the [June 2025 INDOT Standards Committee](#) and will be available on the RSP table effective for the December 2025 Letting. Designers can begin using these documents (attached to this BDA) in environmental permit applications immediately since its unlikely projects currently in the permit application phase will be on letting prior to December.

PERMIT APPLICATIONS

Moving forward, designers should show an approximate outline of the proposed causeway location in the plan view on the disturbed area drawings in the permit application. The recurring plan details and provision should also be included in the permit application to show the acceptable limits that will be provided to the Contractor.

In the permit application, the designer should note the expected length of time the causeway will be in place. This estimate of time should be conservative to allow flexibility in the field. Applicants should be aware that temporary impacts expected to last longer than 12 months may be considered permanent by the permitting agencies when determining mitigation requirements. When durations of more than 12 months are expected, an explanation should be included to justify the extended need.

To estimate the area of disturbance below the ordinary high-water mark (OHWM), designers should multiple the OHWM width by 40'. This 40' value represents the maximum disturbance length along the channel for any of the three causeway options.

CONTRACT DOCUMENTS (December 2025 letting and later)

As a reminder, these recurring plan details and provision refer to the permits for further information. This is why **the permits file submitted at Final Tracings must include the approval letter, permit conditions, and all application documents**, such as the waters report. Designers should clearly show the OHWM width and depth provided in the waters report in the design plans. Erosion Control sheets are the most appropriate location for this information. See example OHWM details provided at the end of this document.

For projects that have not started the permit application process as of this publishing:

- Follow permit guidance above. Include OHWM information on the design plans.
- Do NOT include a pay item for Temporary Causeway per the RSP.
- Include estimated cost of causeway work in other pay items*.
- Attach the entire permit application to the permits file at final tracings.
- Select the temporary causeway provision and drawings on the RSP menu.

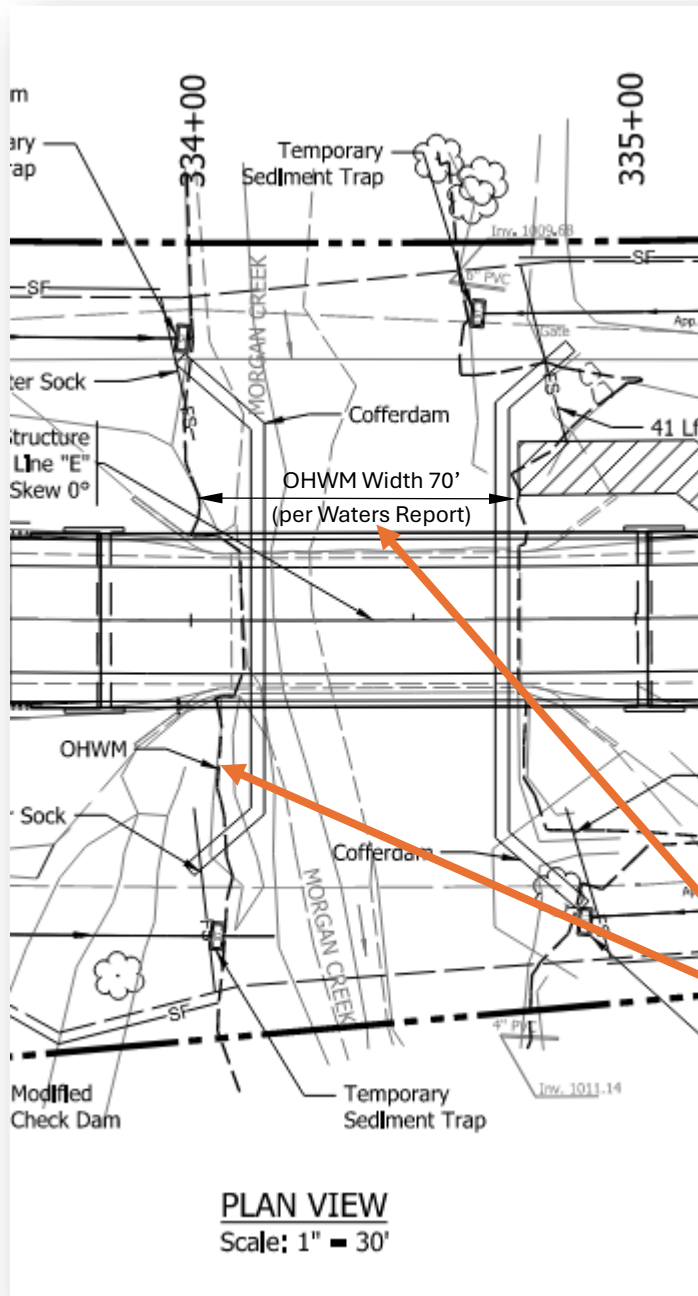
* In rare cases where the estimated causeway cost is a significant portion of the total project cost, a causeway pay item may be warranted. An example of this type of project would be a project where the work is limited to scour countermeasures.

For projects with previously submitted permit applications as of this publishing:

- Contact the INDOT Waterway Permit Reviewer and the INDOT Bridge Design Office (BridgeDesignOffice@indot.in.gov) for guidance on how to proceed if there are conflicts.

TIPS & CONSIDERATIONS




Example OHWM Details as shown on an Erosion Control Sheet:



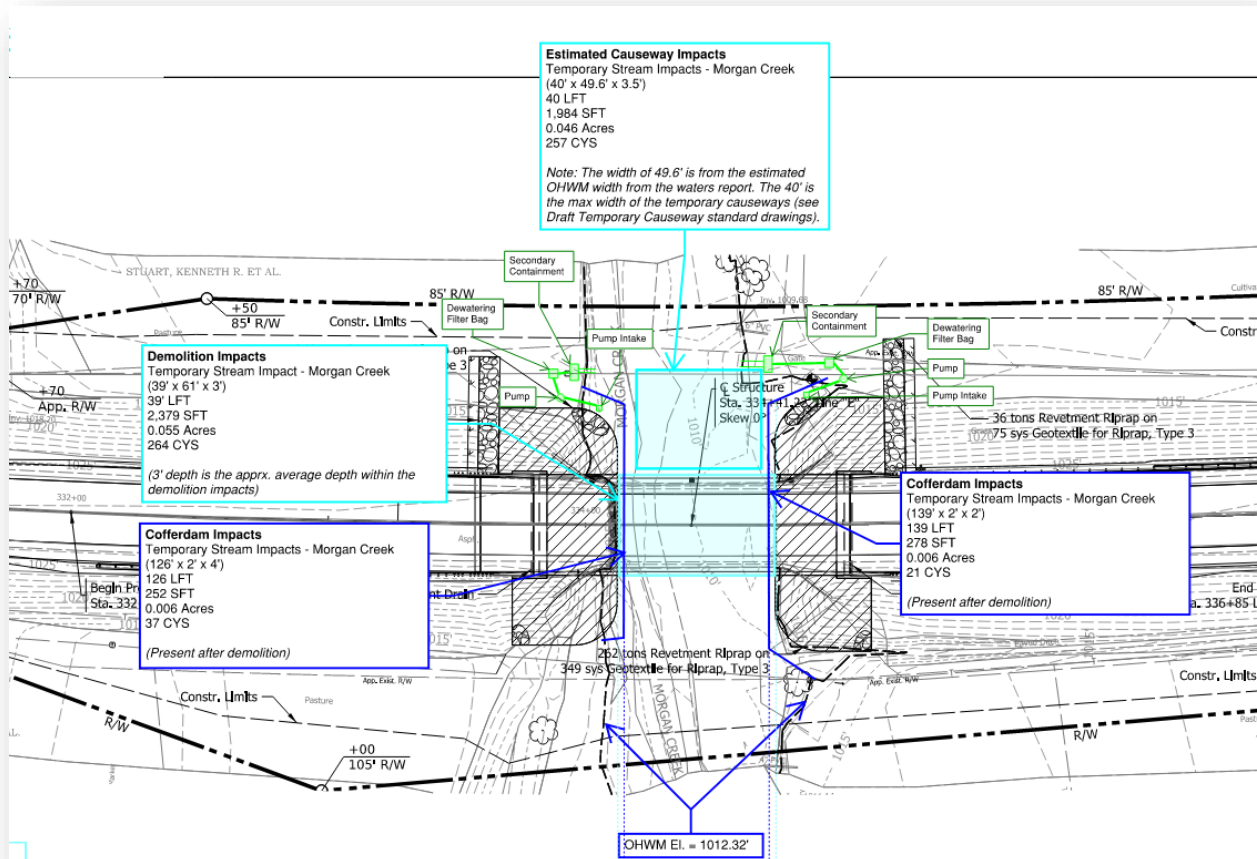
Tip for showing OHWM in Plans:

The OHWM can be shown on plans by using the appropriate contour lines (as shown), showing the approximate edges by using on site observations, or showing a theoretical width based on the waters report value. Using contours or site observation can create a scenario where the measured width in the drawing doesn't exactly match the waters report. In cases where the two values are significantly different, good practice is to add a dimension showing the OHWM width as based on the waters report and state as such in the callout.

LEGEND

-  Temporary Sediment Trap
-  Modified Check Dam
- SF— Silt Fence
- FS— Filter Sock
- Est. OHWM (Depth = 3.5 ft)
-  Construction Entrance

Example of Temporary Causeway Impacts in Permit Application:



Work Type: The installation of scour countermeasures and construction of interior piers may require equipment in the channel such as excavators. A causeway may be the only way to access a pier even in a narrow channel.

Unique Site Condition: If access at one of the corners is limited due to unique site conditions, such as limited right-of-way or environmentally sensitive areas, a causeway may be warranted on a relatively narrow stream for access to either bank.

Potential for Scour

The RSP and RPD limit the height of causeway to allow for overtopping during larger rain events. This overtopping, while more desirable than damming, could create an unanticipated scouring of the channel. Special consideration may be warranted for structures designed for scour.