

TECHNICAL INFO: WHAT IS AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT REVIEW?

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<http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/ppweb/242-01m.htm#H4>

An EIS is a detailed document presenting an evaluation and analysis of all relevant factors where a determination is made that a facility could significantly affect the quality of the human environment. The EIS process begins with the publication of a Notice of Intent in the Federal Register. The Agency performing the EIS begins the scoping process to determine the issues to be addressed in the EIS. Public participation is encouraged during the scoping process through public hearings. Once concluded, a draft EIS is prepared based on the identified issues. The public is then provided a 45-day comment period for review of the draft EIS. During this time, members of the public, Federal, State, and local agencies, American Indian Tribes, and other interested parties can review and comment. In addition, a copy of the draft EIS must be submitted to the EPA for review. After the review process, the Agency responds to all comments and incorporates these into the final document. The final EIS is published in the Federal Register for a 30- day public comment period. At the end of this time, the appropriate government official(s) makes a decision on the proposed action. To justify and explain the course of action, a Record of Decision (ROD) is published for public review.

List of EIS Issues for Consideration; not all will apply in every situation: "Will the proposed construction action...":

- A. Cause/contribute to soil erosion by wind/ water?
 - B. Affect soil surface stability?
 - C. Degrade water quality in a sole source aquifer?
 - D. Decrease aquifer yield or affect water rights?
 - E. Affect aquatic life?
 - F. Cause or contribute flow variation in a stream or spring?
 - G. Degrade aesthetic properties and/or potential uses of either ground or surface waters?
 - H. Affect chemical quality of ground or surface waters (pH, dissolved oxygen, nutrients, dissolved solids, pesticides, etc.)?
 - I. Affect physical quality of ground or surface waters (solids, turbidity, color, oil, temp., etc.)?
 - J. Cause odors/ release odoriferous substances to air or water?
 - K. Release toxic substances to the air in quantities that could affect human health or safety, or environmental quality?
 - L. Release particulate matter to air?
 - M. Change local meteorological conditions or patterns?
 - N. Release substances for which there is a National Ambient Air Quality Standard(i.e., sulfur & nitrogen oxides, carbon monoxide, lead, particulate matter, etc.)?
 - O. Affect undisturbed natural areas or a wild and scenic river?
 - P. Affect game animals or fish or their taking?
 - Q. Affect rare, threatened, or endangered species, or a critical habitat? (Consultation with U.S. Fish & Wildlife Serv. under the Endangered Species Act may be required).
 - R. Affect species balance, especially among predators?
 - S. Involve special hazards, such as radioactivity or electromagnetic radiation?
 - T. Affect or to be located in a wet-land, flood plain, or coastal zone?
 - U. Affect a known or potential cultural, historical, or archaeological site, district, or area? (A consultation with the State Historical Preservation Officer is required).
 - V. Affect local or regional systems related to:
 - 1) Transportation?
 - 2) Water supply?
 - 3) Power and heating?
 - 4) Solid waste management?
 - 5) Sewer or storm drainage?
 - W. Affect local land use through effects on:
 - 1) Flood plains or wetlands?
 - 2) Location land use?
 - 3) Aesthetics?
 - 4) Access to minerals?
 - X. Affect socioeconomic aspects of an area including:
 - 1) Population?
 - 2) Housing supply or demand?
 - 3) Employment?
 - 4) Commercial activities?
 - 5) Industrial activities?
 - 6) Cultural patterns?
 - 7) Environmental justice?
 - Y. Cause or contribute to unacceptable noise level?
 - Z. Affect public health or safety?
 - AA. Cause public reaction or controversy?
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