

Glossary of Terms and Definitions

Environmental Impact - Any alteration of existing environmental conditions, or creation of a new set of environmental conditions, adverse or beneficial, caused or induced in whole or in part, directly or indirectly, by a proposed project under Title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 as amended.

Cumulative Impacts - Impacts on the environment resulting from the incremental impact of the action which added to the past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions regardless of what agency (Federal or non-Federal) or person undertakes such other actions.

Environmental Assessment (EA) - A concise public document (40 CFR 1508.9) for which a Federal agency is responsible that serves to:

- 1) Briefly provide sufficient evidence and analysis for determining whether to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or a finding of no significant impact (FONSI).
- 2) Aid an agency's compliance with National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) when no EIS is necessary.
- 3) Facilitate preparation of an EIS when one is necessary.

Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) - A detailed written statement (Section 102(2)(C) of NEPA and 40 CFR Part 1502) describing, analyzing and assessing any alteration of environmental conditions or creation of a new set of environmental conditions, adverse or beneficial, caused or induced by the action or set of actions under consideration, and the alternatives to such action or group of actions. The statement should include qualitative measure of importance of the environmental impacts.

Environmental Review Process - All analysis and findings necessary for compliance by the grant recipient with NEPA and all related laws and authorities cited in 24 CFR Part 58 with respect to a project funded under Title I.

Project - An activity or a group of integrally related activities designed by the grant recipient to accomplish, in whole, or in part, a specific goal. Geographically or functionally related activities designed to accomplish a specific goal, irrespective of the funding sources of those activities, shall be grouped together for consideration as a single project. Because of the inter-relationships of the activities comprising the project, the project as a whole shall be subject to a single environmental review in accordance with 24 CFR Part 58.

Activity - Those actions funded or authorized to be funded with Title I assistance and those related actions which are not funded (or not authorized to be funded) but which are put forth by the applicant as part of its strategy for the treatment of a project area (24 CFR 58.2(a)(2)). In the context of environmental review, it is not the source of funds for an activity, but the nature of the activity and its relationship to other activities which is relevant.

- 1) Exempt Activities - Title I activities for which there is no environmental requirement are "exempt" from both NEPA requirements and all other related statutory environmental requirements (24 CFR 58.34).
- 2) Categorical Exclusion - A category of activities or projects which do not individually or cumulatively have a significant effect on the human environment and which have been found to have no such effect in procedures adopted by a Federal agency (HUD) (40 CFR 1508.4). In such cases, neither an EA nor an EIS is required (24 CFR 58.35). Categorically excluded projects must comply with non-NEPA statutes and regulations.

Mitigation - Measures to reduce potential impacts which can include:

- 1) Avoiding the impact by not taking a certain action or parts of an action.
- 2) Minimizing impacts by limiting the degree or magnitude of the action and its implementation.
- 3) Rectifying the impact by repairing, rehabilitating, or restoring the affected environment. Reducing or eliminating the impact over time by preservation and maintenance operations during the life of the action.
- 4) Compensating for the impact by replacing or providing substitute resources or environments.

Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (Phase I) - An investigation of the subject property which must be conducted following ASTM standards which conform to the All Appropriate Inquiry standards, acceptable to the USEPA for provision of certain defenses against CERCLA liability. Or, in layman's terms, it's an investigation of a property by a trained professional who must meet certain professional qualifications, known as an "environmental professional".

- 1) Investigation of the current and past history and uses of the property in question. What was previously on the site? What could past usage have done? Did any usage contaminate the soil or groundwater underlying the site? How about the current operation? Are any petroleum, hazardous materials or chemicals in use at the site, or have they been released to the air, soil or groundwater at or near the site?
- 2) Investigation to determine if there are any conditions that are indicative of releases of petroleum or hazardous materials or chemicals at the site, now or in the past. These conditions are collectively known as "REC" or recognized environmental conditions.

Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) - A document by an agency or a recipient briefly presenting the reasons why an action, not otherwise excluded (40 CFR 1508.4) or exempt will not have a significant effect on the human environment and for which an EIS therefore will not be prepared. It shall include the EA (or a summary of it) and shall note any other environmental documents related to it. If the assessment is included, the finding need not repeat any of the discussion in the assessment but may incorporate it by reference.

Human Environment - Interpreted comprehensively to include the natural and physical environment and the relationship of people with that environment (40 CFR 1508.14). This means that economic or social effects are not intended by themselves to require preparation of an EIS. When an EIS is prepared and economic or social and natural or physical environment effects are inter-related, then the EIS will discuss all of these effects on the human environment.

Scoping - An early and open processing for determining the scope of issues to be addressed and for identifying the significant issues related to a proposed project (40 CFR 1501.7). A scoping process is initiated after the decision to prepare an EIS.

Tiering - as defined in 40 CFR 1508.28, is a means of making the environmental review process more efficient by allowing parties to "eliminate repetitive discussions of the same issues and to focus on the actual issues ripe for decision at each level of environmental review" (40 CFR 1502.20). **Funds cannot be spent or committed on a specific site or activity until both the broad-level review and the site-specific review have been completed for the site.** A tiered review consists of two stages: a broad-level review and subsequent site-specific reviews.

- 1) The broad-level review (Tier I) should identify and evaluate the issues that can be fully addressed and resolved, notwithstanding possible limited knowledge of the project. In addition, it must establish the standards, constraints, and processes to be followed in the site-specific reviews.
- 2) As individual sites are selected for review, the site-specific reviews (Tier II) evaluate the remaining issues based on the policies established in the broad-level review. Together, the broad-level review and all site-specific reviews will collectively comprise a complete environmental review addressing all required elements.

Environmental Assessment Checklist – Developed to provide a suitable starting point for any environmental review process. The checklist provides the means for early review of potential impacts in 36 categories and decision-making as to whether or not a detailed environmental analysis is needed in a select number of categories.

Statutory Checklist - A checklist that covers environmental compliances required by other Federal laws and implementing regulations, Executive Orders and other HUD regulations (24 CFR 58.5). The Statutory Checklist should be completed for projects whether or not they are categorically excluded from NEPA procedures.

Environmental Analysis - The technical process of identifying and evaluating the potential environmental effects of a specific project both within each impact category and as a whole. Completion of an EA Checklist helps identify environmental problems or issues which require additional analysis. A written discussion of this analysis becomes a part of the environmental assessment and is included in the Environmental Review Record.

Environmental Review Record (ERR) - The documentation of the environmental review process including all assessments or EIS, published notices, notifications and correspondence relating to a specific project or group of projects.

Common Acronyms:

- ❖ CDBG – Community Development Block Grant
- ❖ REC - Recognized Environmental Conditions
- ❖ CEQ – Council on Environmental Quality
- ❖ CFR – Code of Federal Regulations
- ❖ RE – Responsible Entity
- ❖ EO – Environmental Officer
- ❖ HUD – Department of Housing and Urban Development
- ❖ NOI/RROF - Notice of Intent to Request Release of Funds
- ❖ ROD – Record of Decision
- ❖ RROF – Request for Release of Funds
- ❖ SHPO – State Historic Preservation Office
- ❖ THPO – Tribal Historic Preservation Office
- ❖ SOA – Statement of Activities
- ❖ LDWF – Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries
- ❖ USFWS – United States Fish and Wildlife Service
- ❖ NRCS – National Resource Conservation Service
- ❖ EPA – Environmental Protection Agency
- ❖ LDEQ – Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality
- ❖ OCM – Office of Coastal Management
- ❖ CUP – Coastal Use Permit
- ❖ ASTM – American Society for Testing and Materials