

Environmental Assessment Format

Project Development and
Environmental Analysis Branch



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Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to provide a standardized format for writing Environmental Assessments (EA). This format will be used as appropriate for each project that requires an EA prepared by PDEA staff or private engineering firms. The format is applicable for both federal and state EAs. In order to fit a specific project situation, the recommended format may need to be modified.

Responsibility

The project planning engineer (or person assigned to prepare EA documentation) is responsible for following or modifying this recommended format when preparing environmental assessments. If the project is federally funded, the format should be agreed to by FHWA.

Scheduling and Time Constraints

None

Procedures

The project planning engineer (or person assigned) is responsible for including all information in the recommended format that is pertinent to the project situation while preparing Environmental Assessments. Procedure inputs include existing applicable environmental documentation and project plans. The output from this procedure is a completed Environmental Assessment.

- Step 1.** Follow the recommended format for the Environmental Assessment documentation, to include all alternatives, as the project is developing. (Refer to the [Resources and Tools](#) section for the recommended EA format). In the Resources and Tools section is the standard EA Format and an EA Template. The template is set up to allow you to start typing directly in the file. This file is set up to produce a searchable pdf when the document has been completed.
- Step 2.** **Include in the EA all sections of the recommended format that are applicable to each specific project.** According to the project situation, there may be

additional sections to the format that need to be considered.

- Step 3.** Review the format with supervisor. Also review format with FHWA if project is federally funded.

Background

According to FHWA regulation 23 CFR 771.119, an Environmental Assessment should be prepared for each action that is not a Categorical Exclusion (CE) and does not clearly require the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) – or if FHWA believes an EA would assist in determining the need for an EIS. The corresponding regulation for preparation of a State Environmental Assessment (SEA) is North Carolina General Statute 113A-11. The purpose of this document is to provide a decision-making tool to determine if a planned project is of such significance or scope and impact on the environment as to require the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). If the EA indicates there is a significant impact on the environment, then please reference the EIS standardized format on the [PDEA web page](#).

Policy, Regulatory, and Legal Requirements

- FHWA regulation [23 CFR 771](#) (specifically Sec. 771.119 Environmental Assessments)
- [North Carolina General Statute 113A-11](#)

Warnings and Precautions

Some format sections may not be applicable to all projects. However, according to the project situation, there may be additional sections to the format that need to be considered.

Resources and Tools

- FHWA regulation [23 CFR 771](#) (specifically Sec. 771.119 Environmental Assessments)
- FHWA Technical Advisory ([T66400.8a](#))
- [North Carolina General Statute 113A -11](#)
- [Environmental Assessment \(EA\) Format](#)
- [Environmental Assessment \(EA\) Template](#)

Contacts

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User Access

- Restricted NCDOT, FHWA, MPO, RPO, Consultants, etc.

Flowchart

- None

