

## NEPA GLOSSARY

**Affected Environment** – A description of the existing environment to be affected by the proposed action (40 CFR 1502.15).

**Alternative** – A reasonable way to fix the identified problem or satisfy the stated need (40 CFR 1502.4).

**Categorical Exclusion (CX)** – A category of actions that do not individually or cumulatively have a significant effect on the human environment and have been found to have no such effect in procedures adopted by a Federal agency pursuant to NEPA (40 CFR 1508.4).

**Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ)** – Established under Title II of NEPA to develop Federal agency-wide policy and regulations for implementing the procedural provisions of NEPA, resolve interagency disagreements concerning proposed major Federal actions, and to ensure that Federal agency programs and procedures are in compliance with NEPA.

**Cumulative Effect** – The incremental environmental impact or effect of the proposed action, together with impacts of past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions, regardless of what agency (Federal or non-Federal) or person undertakes such other actions. Cumulative effects can result from individually minor but collectively significant actions taking place over a period of time (40 CFR 1508.7).

**Environmental Consequences** – Environmental effects of project alternatives, including the proposed action, any adverse environmental effects which cannot be avoided, the relationship between short-term uses of the human environment, and any irreversible or irretrievable commitments of resources which would be involved if the proposal should be implemented (40 CFR 1502.16).

**Environmental Action Statement (EAS)** – A Service-required document prepared to improve the Service's administrative record for categorically excluded actions that may be controversial, emergency actions under CEQ's NEPA regulations (40 CFR 1506.1 1), decisions based on EAs to prepare an EIS, and any decision where improved documentation of the administrative record is desirable, and to facilitate internal program review and final approval when a FONSI is to be signed at the FWS-WO and FWS-RO level (550 FW).

**Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)** – A detailed written statement required by section 102(2)(C) of NEPA, analyzing the environmental impacts of a proposed action, adverse effects of the project that cannot be avoided, alternative courses of action, short-term uses of the environment versus the maintenance and enhancement of long-term productivity, and any irreversible and irretrievable commitment of resources (40 CFR 1508.1 1).

**Environmental Assessment (EA)** – A concise public document, prepared in compliance with NEPA, that briefly discusses the purpose and need for an action, alternatives to such action, and provides sufficient evidence and analysis of impacts to determine whether to prepare an environmental impact statement or finding of no significant impact (40 CFR 1508.9).

**Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)** – A document prepared in compliance with NEPA, supported by an environmental assessment, which analyzes whether a Federal action will have no significant effect on the human environment and for which an environmental impact statement, therefore, will not be prepared (40 CFR 1508.13).

**Human Environment** – Includes the natural and physical environment and the relationship of people with the environment (40 CFR 1508.14).

**Impact (Effect)** – A direct result of an action which occurs at the same time and place; or an indirect result of an action which occurs later in time or in a different place and is reasonably foreseeable; or the cumulative results from the incremental impact of the action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions regardless of what agency or person undertakes such other actions (40 CFR 1508.8).

**Lead Agency** – The agency or agencies responsible for preparing the environmental impact statement (40 CFR 1508.16).

**Major Federal Action** – Actions with effects that may be major and which are potentially subject to Federal control and responsibility (40 CFR 1508.18).

**Mitigation** – Planning actions taken to avoid an impact altogether to minimize the degree or magnitude of the impact, reduce the impact over time, rectify the impact, or compensate for the impact (40 CFR 1508.20)

**National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA)** – Requires all agencies, including the Service, to examine the environmental impacts of their actions, incorporate environmental information, and utilize public participation in the planning and implementation of all actions. Federal agencies must integrate NEPA with other planning requirements and prepare appropriate NEPA documents to facilitate better environmental decision making. NEPA requires Federal agencies to review and comment on Federal agency environmental plans/documents when the agency has jurisdiction by law or special expertise with respect to any environmental impacts involved. (42 U.S.C. 4321- 4327) (40 CFR 1500-1508).

**Notice of Intent (NOI)** – A notice that an environmental impact statement will be prepared and considered (40 CFR 1508.22).

**No Action Alternative** – The alternative where current conditions and trends are projected into the future without another proposed action (40 CFR 1502.14(d)).

**Proposed Action** – A plan that contains sufficient details about the intended actions to be taken, or that will result, to allow alternatives to be developed and its environmental impacts analyzed (40 CFR 1508.23).

**Record of Decision (ROD)** – A concise public record of decision prepared by the Federal agency, pursuant to NEPA that contains a statement of the decision, identification of all alternatives considered, identification of the environmentally preferable alternative, a statement as to whether all practical means to avoid or minimize environmental harm from the alternative selected have been adopted (and if not, why they were not), and a summary of monitoring and enforcement where applicable for any mitigation (40 CFR 1505.2).

**Relationship of Short-Term Uses and Long-Term Productivity** – The balance or trade-off between short-term uses and long-term productivity need to be defined in relation to the proposed activity in question. Each resource, of necessity, has to be provided with its own definitions of short- term and long-term (40 CFR 1502.16).

**Scope** – The range of actions, alternatives, and impacts to be considered in an environmental impact statement (40 CFR 1508.25).

**Scoping** – An early and open process for determining the extent and variety of issues to be addressed and for identifying the significant issues related to a proposed action (40 CFR 1501.7).

Significant - Use in NEPA requires consideration of both context and intensity (40 CFR 1508.27):

Context - significance of an action must be analyzed in its current and proposed short-and long-term effects on the whole of a given resource (e.g.-affected region) Intensity - Refers to the severity of the effect.

**Tiering** – The coverage of general matters in broader environmental impact statements with subsequent narrower statements of environmental analysis, incorporating by reference, the general discussions and concentrating on specific issues (40 CFR 1508.28).

**Unavoidable Adverse Effects** – Effects that can not be avoided due to constraints in alternatives. These effects do not have to be avoided by the planning agency, but they must be disclosed, discussed, and mitigated, if possible (40 CFR 1500.2(e)).

## ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AD-ES:	Assistant Director - Ecological Services
BLM:	Bureau of Land Management
BR:	Bureau of Reclamation
CEQ:	Council on Environmental Quality
CERCLA:	Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act of 1980
CG:	U.S. Coast Guard
Corps:	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
CX:	Categorical Exclusion
DHC:	Division of Habitat Conservation
Director:	Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
D-J:	Dingell-Johnson Act (Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Act)
DOI or Department:	Department of Interior
DOT:	Department of Transportation
EA:	Environmental Assessment
EC:	Environmental Coordination
ED:	Environmental Document
EIS:	Environmental Impact Statement
EO:	Executive Order
EPA:	Environmental Protection Agency
ER:	Environmental Review
ES:	Ecological Services
ESA:	Endangered Species Act
FAA:	Federal Aviation Administration
FERC:	Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
FHWA:	Federal Highway Administration
FONSI:	Finding of No Significant Impact
FWCA:	Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act
ES Transmittal:	ES Environmental Review Distribution Transmittal
MOA:	Memorandum of Agreement
MOU:	Memorandum of Understanding
MMPA:	Marine Mammal Protection Act
NEPA:	National Environmental Policy Act
NEPA Regulations:	CEQ Regulations for Implementing the Procedural Provisions of NEPA
NOA:	Notice of Availability
NOI:	Notice of Intent
NPS:	National Park Service
OEA:	Office of Environmental Affairs (DOI)
P-R:	Pittman-Robertson Act (Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act)
PNRS:	Preliminary Natural Resources Survey
REC:	Regional Environmental Coordinator (Service)
REO:	Regional Environmental Officer (DOI)
Secretary:	Secretary of the Interior
Service:	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
SOW:	Scope of Work
WO:	Washington Office