



Environmental Responsibilities

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) integrates environmental considerations into its mission of disaster response and recovery, mitigation, and preparedness. FEMA provides guidance to local, State, and Federal partners on environmental requirements, and engages in a review process to ensure that FEMA-funded activities, such as the selection of temporary housing sites; debris management; repair, hardening, and construction of infrastructure; and hazard mitigation projects, etc., comply with Federal environmental laws and executive orders, protect people, and avoid or minimize adverse impacts to the environment. The goal of these compliance requirements is to protect the Nation's water, air, coastal, fish and wildlife, and agricultural resources, as well as to minimize potential adverse impacts to children and to low-income and minority populations.

Disaster and Non-disaster Projects

The following types of activities typically trigger environmental review:

Disaster	Non-Disaster
Temporary housing	Infrastructure hardening (i.e., against natural disasters and acts of terrorism)
Debris removal	Construction projects
Repair of public Infrastructure	Non-disaster-related hazard-mitigation projects
Disaster-related hazard mitigation projects	

National Environmental Policy Act

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) is a planning and decision-making process whereby FEMA must evaluate and document the potential

environmental consequences of a proposed project and alternatives, and share this information with the public and other agencies responsible for the protection and management of the nation's natural resources. For complex projects or projects with the potential to have significant adverse affects on the environment, FEMA prepares analyses such as Environmental Assessments, which are posted for public comment on FEMA's website at:

<http://www.fema.gov/plan/ehp/envdocuments/index>.

Biological Resources

FEMA-funded activities must comply with numerous laws intended to preserve and enhance biodiversity and protect wildlife and wildlife habitat, including the Endangered Species Act (ESA), Coastal Zone Management Act, Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, and Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

Floodplain Management and Protection of Wetlands

Executive Order (EO) 11988 (Floodplain Management) and EO 11990 (Protection of Wetlands) require Federal agencies to avoid, to the extent possible, actions within or affecting the floodplain and adverse impacts of wetlands. If there is a practical alternative, FEMA cannot fund a project located in a floodplain or wetland. Projects proposed to be located in a floodplain or wetland must follow a planning and decision-making process involving public notification, evaluation of project alternatives, and development of ways to avoid, minimize, or compensate for adverse impacts.

Emergency Operations

Emergency provisions in most environmental laws and regulations allow FEMA to deliver timely disaster assistance, while still being in compliance. Such laws include NEPA, ESA, and the Clean Air Act (CCA).