

# NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT (NEPA)

NEPA is the basic national charter for the protection of the environment. NEPA requires all federal agencies to evaluate the potential environmental effects of any proposed major action and inform and involve the public in the decision-making process.

## What is an Environmental Assessment?

If it is uncertain whether a Proposed Action would have significant environmental effects, it is analyzed in an Environmental Assessment (EA). An EA includes the following:

- PROPOSED ACTION:** This is the major project a federal agency would like to complete.
- PURPOSE AND NEED:** This is why the Proposed Action is necessary, as defined by the federal agency.
- ALTERNATIVES:** These are reasonable alternatives that would satisfy the objectives of the Proposed Action defined in the Purpose and Need statement.
- RESOURCE AREAS:** The EA assesses the environmental effects of the Proposed Action and alternatives on each relevant resource area.

This is a Programmatic EA. A Programmatic EA is a broad, high-level environmental review conducted under NEPA to evaluate the potential effects of a proposed program, policy, or group of related projects. Unlike a site-specific EA, which focuses on a particular project at a specific location, a Programmatic EA assesses environmental effects at a programmatic level, often covering multiple actions over a large geographic area or extended timeframe.

Scoping	For this Programmatic EA, the Air Force published an early notice that they are considering construction within the floodplain, and invited public input.
Draft EA	An EA is prepared by a team of environmental professionals to describe the Proposed Action, alternatives, and environmental effects.
Draft EA Public Comment Period	The Air Force published a Notice of Availability which notified agencies and the public that the Draft EA is available for 30 days for review and comment.
Preparation of Final EA	After the 30-day public review period, the Air Force considers all comments received and prepares a Final EA.
Finding of No Significant Impact/No Practicable Alternative	If the Final EA finds that there will be no significant effects as a result of the Proposed Action, a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) is prepared. If the Air Force finds that there is no practicable alternative to implementing the Proposed Action in a floodplain, a Finding of No Practicable Alternative (FONPA) is prepared with the FONSI. A Notice of Availability will be published to announce the FONSI/FONPA, if warranted. The Air Force would then proceed with implementing the Proposed Action.

The Air Force will examine the direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of each alternative on the relevant resource areas.

### RESOURCE AREAS CONSIDERED

- Air Quality
- Water Resources
- Geological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Visual Resources
- Biological Resources
- Land Use
- Hazardous Materials & Wastes
- Airspace
- Noise
- Infrastructure
- Transportation
- Public Health & Safety
- Socioeconomics