

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

(Descriptive Title for Proposed Action)

(Location of Action)

(Author of Document)

(Date Prepared)

Section I: PURPOSE AND NEED FOR ACTION

A. Purpose for Taking Action:

Explain what you hope to accomplish by taking action. By explaining what you hope to accomplish by taking action, you can then determine the appropriate range of actions to satisfy your need and purposes.

B. Need for Taking Action:

This section must describe the situation (problem or opportunity) compelling the agency to take action. Now that a need is identified, describe what action you are proposing to take to address the stated need and accomplish your stated goal(s). This is the proposed action.

C. Identify the decision to be made by the responsible official.

Usually the responsible official decision is to select one of the action alternatives. In situations involving a permit decision (i.e. special use permit), typically the responsible official must decide whether to issue or deny the permit.

D. Identify issues raised during project planning or public scoping (also refer to App. B and C).

Identify all the issues raised. For those issues which will obviously not result in significant impacts or are outside the scope of the project, the EA should identify them and explain why they will not be analyzed in detail. Those actions and/or alternatives which have the potential to result in significant impacts must be analyzed in detail in the EA.

Section II: ALTERNATIVES INCLUDING THE PROPOSED ACTION

(Add alternatives as necessary.)

In this section, the EA must describe all of the various courses of action which could satisfy the stated purpose and need. This is not a description of goals or concepts but descriptions of actions which are proposed for implementation (e.g. use levels, facilities developed, miles of roads, management prescriptions, etc.) Alternatives which were considered but determined to be infeasible (that is, not meet the stated purpose and need) should be identified with an explanation as to why it is considered infeasible. Typically alternatives are found to be infeasible due to economic, technological, and legal considerations not consistent with satisfying the purpose and need for which the EA is being prepared.

Alternative A. (No Action Alternative)

Describe this alternative. (Describe the actions which would continue to occur if the agency decided not to pursue one of the proposed alternative actions) **Describe the extent to which this alternative would or would not satisfy the problems, opportunities or needs identified in Section I. Briefly describe the principal environmental (biophysical, social and economic effects associated with implementation of this alternative? (Summarize effects from Section IV.)**

Alternative B. _____ (Descriptive title for alternative)

Describe the action elements of this alternative. Describe the extent to which this alternative would or would not satisfy the problems, opportunities or needs identified in Section I. Briefly describe the principal environmental (biophysical), social and economic effects associated with implementation of this alternative? (Summarize effects from Section IV.)

Alternative C. _____ (Descriptive title for alternative)

Describe the action elements of this alternative. Describe the extent to which this alternative would or would not satisfy the problems, opportunities or needs identified in Section I. Briefly describe the principal environmental (biophysical), social and economic effects associated with implementation of this alternative? (Summarize effects from Section IV.)

Alternative D. _____ (Descriptive title for alternative)

Describe the action elements of this alternative. Describe the extent to which this alternative would or would not satisfy the problems, opportunities or needs identified in Section I. Briefly describe the principal environmental (biophysical), social and economic effects associated with implementation of this alternative? (Summarize effects from Section IV.)

Section III: AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

Briefly describe the area in which the proposed action is to occur. If the action will occur on a National Wildlife Refuge or National Fish Hatchery, attach the Refuge/Hatchery public information leaflet to help orient the reader to the general vicinity. For site-specific proposals, include page-sized maps of the general area and the project site. This section should focus on those resources which would be affected through implementation of the proposed action or its alternatives; it should not be a detailed description of the environment at large. The EA need only supply as much information as is needed for the reader to understand the discussion in section IV pertaining to the anticipated changes in the affected resources from implementation of the various alternatives. Particular mention should be made of the presence (or absence) of any endangered or threatened species or their critical habitat, historic or cultural resources, parklands, prime or unique farmlands, wetlands, 100-year floodplains, wild and scenic rivers, or other ecologically critical areas (e.g., wilderness areas, research natural areas, etc.)

Section IV: ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

Develop the analysis for this section by referring to the checklists in Appendices A and B. For each alternative, discuss any item answered "Yes" in either the Significance Checklist or the General Environmental Checklist. From this list identify impact topics to be addressed under each of the alternatives. Typically there would be approximately three to five impact topics. Where adverse effects are identified, discuss any proposed mitigating measures. (Add pages to this section as necessary.) Discuss effects in relation to issues identified in Section I. Describe the severity or magnitude of the expected effects and their significance, for each impact topic, as compared to the No Action scenario.

Alternative A (No Action):

Describe the impacts expected from not implementing any of the action alternatives. How would biological, physical, social, or economic conditions change in the event the Service did not implement the action alternatives? This description constitutes your environmental baseline to which all effects of implementing the action alternatives will be compared.

Alternative B:

Describe how biological, physical, social, or economic conditions would change in the event the Service implemented this alternative. Explain whether any of the anticipated changes in resources conditions constitute a significant effect (either positive or negative) for each impact topic and provide a rationale for your conclusion.

Alternative C:

Describe how biological, physical, social, or economic conditions would change in the event the Service implemented this alternative. Explain whether any of the anticipated changes in resources conditions constitute a significant effect (either positive or negative) for each impact topic and provide a rationale for your conclusion.

Alternative D:

Describe how biological, physical, social, or economic conditions would change in the event the Service implemented this alternative. Explain whether any of the anticipated changes in resources conditions constitute a significant effect (either positive or negative) for each impact topic and provide a rationale for your conclusion.

Once all the effects and their significance for each impact topic have been described, display a summary of the environmental effects in table format.

SUMMARY of IMPACTS BY ALTERNATIVE
(Expand table as necessary)

Impact Topics	Alternative A. No Action	Alternative B. (Title)	Alternative C. (Title)
Physical Resources (air, soil, water, etc)	(briefly summarize effects)	(briefly summarize effects)	(briefly summarize effects)
Biological Resources (T&E species, wildlife, habitat, vegetation)	(briefly summarize effects)	(briefly summarize effects)	(briefly summarize effects)
Cultural Resources	(briefly summarize effects)	(briefly summarize effects)	(briefly summarize effects)
Recreation	(briefly summarize effects)	(briefly summarize effects)	(briefly summarize effects)
Social or Economic issues	(briefly summarize effects)	(briefly summarize effects)	(briefly summarize effects)
[other issues/ resources]	(briefly summarize effects)	(briefly summarize effects)	(briefly summarize effects)

Section V: COMPLIANCE, CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION WITH OTHERS

A. List parties contacted during the planning process. Summarize results of consultation or coordination with these parties. If the EA was circulated for public comment, also provide a summary of any significant issues raised and how they were resolved.

B. List pertinent laws, executive orders and regulations, and state how these have been complied with.

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

(Title of Project)

[complete in a narrative format, this is not fill-in-the blanks]

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service proposes to (briefly describe alternatives or combination of selected alternatives and/or actions)

FWS has analyzed a number of alternatives to the proposal, including the following: (List and refer to EA)

The proposal was selected over the other alternatives because:

Implementation of the agency's decision would be expected to result in the following environmental, social, and economic effects: (List)

Measures to mitigate and/or minimize adverse effects have been incorporated into the proposal. These measures include: (List)

The proposal is not expected to have any significant adverse effects on wetlands and floodplains, pursuant to Executive Orders 11990 and 11988 because:

The proposal is not expected to have any significant effects on the human environment because:

The proposal has been thoroughly coordinated with all interested and/or affected parties. Parties contacted include: (List)

Therefore, it is my determination that the proposal does not constitute a major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment under the meaning of section 102(2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (as amended). As such, an environmental impact statement is not required. An environmental assessment has been prepared in support of this finding and is available upon request to the FWS facility identified above.

References: (List title of EA, and any other pertinent references)

Assistant Regional Director Date _____

Appendix A
General Environmental Checklist

This checklist is intended to facilitate effect analysis for the various alternatives under consideration. The list of physical, biological and social considerations can be answered with a "yes" or "no" response. For any item answered "yes," discuss under the appropriate alternative in Section IV.

Would implementation of the alternative be expected to affect any of the physical, biological or social consideration listed below?

Physical Considerations

- A. Climate
- B. Air Quality
- C. Topography
 - 1. Relief
 - 2. Cuts/Fills
- D. Geology
 - 1. Earthquake/Landslide
 - 2. Minerals
 - 3. Energy Resource Depletion/Conservation
 - 4. Radioactive and Toxic Substances/Heavy Metals
 - 5. Erosion/Deposition
 - 6. Siltation
 - 7. Soil Quality
- E. Hydrology
 - 1. Surface and Ground Water Quality/Quantity
 - 2. Absorption/Drainage
 - 3. Flooding
 - 4. Hydro/Geothermal Energy Source

Biological Considerations

- A. Vegetation
 - 1. Species of Special Concern
 - 2. Critical Wildlife Habitat
 - 3. Species Diversity/Abundance
 - 4. Noxious Weeds/Exotic Plants/Pathogens
- B. Wildlife
 - 1. Species of Special Concern
 - 2. Species Diversity/Abundance
 - 3. Game/Non-Game Species
 - 4. Pests/Pathogens/Vectors/Predators/Feral or Exotic Animals

Social Considerations

- A. Cultural

1. Archaeologic/Historic Sites
 2. Educational/Recreational Opportunities
 3. Public Access
- B. Economic
1. Cost
 2. Employment
 3. Commercial/Industrial Buildings
 4. Taxes/Property Values
- C. Land Use
1. Plans/Policies/Controls
 2. Development/Growth
 3. Farmland/Open Space, Natural Areas
 4. Transportation Facilities/Public Utilities
- D. Social
1. Quality of Life
 2. Community Cohesion
 3. Residents/Residences
 4. Population Change
 5. Human Health/Safety
 6. Public Services
 7. National Defense
- E. Aesthetics
1. Scenery
 2. Noise
 3. Odor

[Back to Table of Contents](#) 