

29 C.F.R. § 11.11

Development of environmental analyses and documents.

- (a) Potential environmental effects of agency actions shall begin to be examined at the time a topic for potential action is submitted to the agency staff for research, proposal development, or other consideration. During this stage the agency shall determine whether the type of action which may be proposed may be categorically excluded from NEPA environmental analysis requirements pursuant to § 11.10. If the type of action being considered is not categorically excluded, or is an extraordinary case of a normally excluded action which may have significant environmental impacts, development of the information needed to make an environmental assessment shall begin. Actions described in § 11.10(b) shall be submitted to the Assistant Secretary for Administration and Management at this point, pursuant to applicable Departmental procedures, for appropriate review, including a determination with respect to whether or not the action is located in or near a floodplain or wetlands area in connection with the requirements of Executive Orders 11988 and 11990.
- (b) When information gathered during the early stages of proposal development indicates that preparation of an environmental impact statement will be required, the agency shall begin preparation of such a document by initiating the scoping process in accordance with 40 CFR 1501.7. However, if the information is not clearly indicative of the need for preparation of an environmental impact statement, an environmental assessment shall be prepared.
- (c) Agencies are encouraged, in developing environmental assessments, to explore all factors which it may become necessary to examine should it be determined that preparation of an environmental impact statement is necessary, even though some of those factors, such as economic and social effects, “are not intended by themselves to require preparation of an environmental impact statement” (40 CFR 1508.14). Thus in making environmental assessments of real property actions described in § 11.10(b), agencies are encouraged to consider the following factors, among others:

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