

# LWCF ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS

An environmental assessment is required as part of the Land and Water Conservation Fund Program Federal application packets. This assessment will describe the effect that the project will have on the immediate and surrounding environment.

The assessment should include three major sections. The following format and outline can be used as a guide for preparing the assessment. Use of this outline will assist with completing Federal reviews.

## SECTION I

This section should include a description of the proposed project. If the site is to be acquired and/or developed over several years, discuss briefly the overall project and, more specifically, the work elements to be accomplished in the phase for which funding has been applied.

1. Introduce and describe the project. Is it divided into several individual phases? Discuss other future plans for the project such as adding on more property. Discuss the location of the project. If there are improvements on the property, describe their proposed use or disposition.
2. Discuss the actions planned to achieve project completion. Give an overall description of the work and projected time involved.
3. Explain both the major and minor benefits to be realized by this project.
4. Discuss whether or not there is an interrelationship between this project and other known Federal, State, or local projects.

## SECTION II

Discuss the existing environment of the site and surrounding areas as they now exist, and as they could be in the future if the project is not funded. Use of maps, sketches, and related graphics can help explain the project's value. The following outline should be followed and all topics discussed.

1. **Land Use:** Describe the current land uses at the project site and surrounding area. Identify potential uses possible for the site in the future (excluding the existence of this proposed project).
2. **Topography:** Briefly describe the topography of the project site and surrounding area including a discussion of natural and man-made features (streams, rivers, lakes, rock outcrops, plateaus, etc.).

3. **Fish and Wildlife:** Briefly describe the species of fish and wildlife that exist in the project area. Are any included on the endangered species list? What is the fish and wildlife population expected to be like in the future, depending on the types of development possible for the site?
4. **Vegetation:** List vegetative characteristics of the project area and what can be expected in the future. Discuss any endangered or rare species. Describe the amount and type of vegetative cover, on the site.
5. **Geology and Soil:** Briefly discuss the type of land formation and soils that exist and the development capabilities of the various soil types in the project area.
6. **Mineral Resources:** What types of mineral resources are present on the project site?
7. **Air and Water Quality:** Both the quality of air and water should be discussed as they presently exist and as they are, likely to exist in the future, depending on the type of development.
8. **Noise:** Describe the basic setting of the proposed site (rural, urban, neighborhood, commercial, industrial, etc.). What are typical noise levels in the area?
9. **Water Resources/Hydrology:** All water resources must be discussed, including present and future resources. Also, if applicable, describe any portion of the project site that lies in a designated flood plain or wetland, and discuss the effects of flooding on the sites.
10. **Historic/Archaeological/Cultural Resources:** Discuss whether there are any known historic, archaeological or cultural resources on the project site or surrounding area. (Does the proposed site involve, or is it adjacent to, a site listed or eligible for inclusion on the National Register?)
11. **Transportation Access:** Describe the present transportation system, discuss proposed or potential changes, depending upon possible development.
12. **Socio-economic Characteristics:** Describe the present socio-economic conditions of the area including a discussion of anticipated changes, future trends, etc.

### SECTION III

This section should include an objective discussion of direct and indirect changes to the environment resulting from the applicant's proposal and planned future development of the project site. Give specific facts that would account for change and what the change is, or will be, instead of general statements and assumptions. Include a discussion of possible environmental damage to the biological and physical environment as well as the economic, cultural, aesthetic, and social conditions.

Discuss all of the following subtopics regardless of the extent of the impact. Discuss beneficial and adverse impacts, mitigating measures, and unavoidable adverse impacts that cannot be mitigated.

1. **Land Use:** Discuss impacts of the proposed project on land use patterns. For example, is the anticipated use compatible with surrounding lands and/or development? Will the proposed acquisition and/or development cause the irreversible conversion of prime or unique farm land? Are there any potential health or safety problems? If so, how may these be corrected?
2. **Topography:** Discuss the impact of the proposed development on the topography of the site and surrounding area. Is the proposed site suitable for the intended use in terms of natural and man-made features? Discuss any man-made features in the area which may detract from the quality of the proposed development and discuss how their influence may be minimized.
3. **Fish and wildlife:** Discuss the impact of proposed development on fish and wildlife population. Be specific in terms of endangered and/or protected species.
4. **Vegetation:** Discuss the impact of the proposed project on vegetation. Be specific in terms of endangered or rare species of vegetation. Discuss short-term impact on vegetation during construction as well as permanent damage or loss of vegetative cover. How may the impacts be minimized or mitigated?
5. **Geology and Soils:** Discuss the impact of the proposed project in terms of development capabilities relative to the facilities proposed for construction. Consider underlying rock formations, soil percolation, etc. and other conditions in terms of underground wiring, waste disposal, etc.
6. **Mineral Resources:** What is the impact on mineral resources? Are there any mineral rights reserved by others on the site?
7. **Air and Water Quality:** Discuss the impact on the proposed project on air and water quality including short-term impact during construction as well as long-term impact.

8. **Noise:** Discuss the impact of the proposed project on existing noise levels. Identify any off-site changes, such as increased traffic on neighborhood roads, which will impact the noise level.
9. **Water Resources/Hydrology:** Discuss the impact of the proposed project on water resources including long range impacts on water supply. Will development involve dredging, filling, dumping, construction of structures, and other actions in navigable waters, thereby requiring the issuance of Army Corps of Engineers, DEP and/or U.S. Coast Guard permits?
10. **Historic/Archaeological/Culture Resources:** Discuss the impact of the proposed project historic/archaeological and cultural resources.
11. **Transportation:** Discuss the impact of the proposed project on area transportation. Is the present transportation network sufficient to handle increased traffic? Does the proposed project impact any long range changes to the transportation system?
12. **Socio-economic Characteristics:** Discuss the impact of the proposed project on socio-economic conditions of the area. Address median income, growth factors, etc. Will the proposed development and use of the site create a competitive situation with private enterprise?

#### SECTION IV

This section should summarize in one paragraph why the proposed grant would be the most beneficial use for the site.