**The Minnesota Practical Guide to Preparing Environmental Reports**

1. **Project Description and Location**

Provide a complete project description including an explanation of all project-related activities such as utility installations, parking facilities or other project components.

Describe the amount of property to be disturbed by the project and the site’s current land use, ownership and/or zoning. Applicants of non-governmental nature should contact the local government office (city or county) to ensure compatibility with local codes, zoning and/or other concerns of the governing body.

A map of the site must be provided. Two helpful maps are a Topo Map which can be found on the MN DNR’s MnTopo site: <http://dnr.state.mn.us/maps/mntopo/index.html> and a project specific site plan which outlines all project components. The MnTopo map will also provide any the location of any nearby Federal or State owned landed which should be noted in the report.

1. **Historic Preservation**

All projects involving a ground disturbance or an alteration to an existing building over 50 years old will require consultation with the MN State Historic Preservation Office or a Tribal Historical Preservation Officer (if locating project within reservation boundary). Applicants are authorized to begin consultation with SHPO/THPO – use the attached letter to initiate consultation. SHPO will respond in 30 days with a letter, please include letter as attached. Narrative in this section should describe consultation efforts and results of those efforts.

1. **Threatened and Endangered Species/Biological Resource**

Applicants should go to the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) Midwest Region’s Section 7 Technical Assistance Website: <http://www.fws.gov/midwest/Endangered/section7/s7process/index.html> Follow the step-by-step instructions until the end of the process. Most projects will be built in previously developed areas so can use this to come to a “No Effect” Determination. Include narrative discussion of the steps and FWS print out.

1. **Wetlands**

The report must document whether wetlands are present on or near project sites. A wetland delineation is NOT required unless wetland areas are suspected to be present. The National Wetland Inventory <http://www.fws.gov/wetlands/Data/Mapper.html> and hydric soil maps <http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/WebSoilSurvey.aspx> can provide an indication of wetland presence. Additionally, each county and some cities have designated individuals <http://www.bwsr.state.mn.us/partners/directories/WCA_Dir.pdf> that may be able to assist with a determination. If a wetland is determined to be likely present, a wetland delineation will be required. Include a narrative description of the steps to identify wetland areas and relevant maps and correspondence.

1. **Floodplains**

The report will document whether the project activities are located in a floodplain. A FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Map should be obtained covering the property along with a FEMA form 086-0-32. The form, map (with site marked) and narrative should be found in this section.

1. **Important Farmland**

The report must document the conversion of agricultural land defined as important farmland to non-agriculture uses. The Agency will coordinate with the Natural Resource Conversation Service (NRCS) to determine the level of importance and need for determining alternative site.

1. **Environmental Risk Management**

The report should document the effect of hazardous materials and wastes that may be released or generated by the proposed facility. In addition, the condition of the property will also need to be evaluated.

If real estate will be used as collateral, either a Transaction Screen Process (Total Project Cost <$100,000) or a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment will need to be completed. Discuss the options with your local loan specialist.