

Impacts

All projects will have environmental impacts. All construction projects will have adverse environmental impacts. For example, a project built on undisturbed ground has an adverse impact on the natural state of the land. Whether this adverse impact is good or bad is subject to individual viewpoints and bias. The Owner of the proposed building will see it as a good thing. The neighbor who enjoyed the view of the trees which are now gone may disagree.

Any analysis of environmental impacts should not be subjective (personal judgment). This is difficult and to some degree not 100 percent possible all the time. Rural Development (RD) must present the impacts base on the data collected within the report.

Impact analysis is based on other peoples work. For example, it is relative easy to determine if a site is in or outside a floodplain, just check the FEMA flood maps. We may all agree on this, but the validity of this depends on the accuracy of the map. An onsite survey by a professional may dispute and change the maps contour lines.

Fortunately, most of RD projects are small with limited or no long lasting environmental impacts. Many projects that do present impacts can be mitigated to a level of acceptance by the regulatory Agency. A few projects may have to be rejected due to the environmental impacts or elevated to a higher review beyond a Class II environmental.

The environmental report should identify any significant impacts. RD staff should devote time and effort in documenting, consulting, and mitigating those impacts based on the severity of the impact, expert concerns, and public concerns.

Impacts can:

Be direct -----	Trees cut done on site.
Be indirect -----	Runoff in nearby stream.
Be cumulative -----	Added traffic to congested area.
Be construction related -----	Construction noise.
Be facility operation related -----	Air pollutants from factory.
Be beyond the property's boundary -----	Smells from chemical plant.
Be immediate -----	Conversion of farmland.
Be over large expanse of time -----	Change the pattern of the urban growth.
Be viewed differently by the local population. -	Street closures.
Be mitigated -----	Protection of a historical building.
Be missed -----	Former use of asbestos in construction.

The environmental report analysis of impacts should be project specific, detailed to the level of potential impact, based on facts and consultation with experts, and reasonable. These items will be different for each project. Be practical. Don't analyze the universe. Use your best professional judgment.