

Miscellaneous

Transportation

Most Agency projects do not adversely impact the current transportation systems. The infrastructure can usually easily accommodate the extra traffic generated first by the construction and then by the operation of the facility. If this is applicable, note it in the Environmental Report (ER).

Items to address that could potentially impact transportation include the following project examples. A busy hospital, a trucking warehouse project, and a large factory each accessed by an undersized county road may require new streets or improvements (turn lane). Some projects may temporarily close a street during the construction or permanently close a street for the facility. A new traffic light or stop sign may be required for safety.

Any major permanent change to the current roadway may require a public meeting to address local citizen's concerns. There could also be secondary environmental impacts because of the required upgrades in the transportation infrastructure.

Less common, but potentially possible for Agency projects include; impacts to the railroad system. A new school may require a new nearby railroad crossing warning for addition safety or a factory may require a new rail access line. If the site is located in the landing path of an airport and the facility has a tall site element, then the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) should be contacted for comment. A project with a heliport pad (clinic, law enforcement) should also consult with the FAA.

Noise

In the past, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) coordinated all federal noise control activities through its Office of Noise Abatement and Control. In 1982, noise control issues were transferred to the local and state governments. The Noise Control Act of 1972 and the Quiet Community Act of 1978 remain in effect, but unfunded.

Most funded projects will not have any noise issues to address during construction or facility operation because the noise levels are acceptable. This should be noted in the Environmental Report (ER) if applicable.

If the proposed project site is adjacent to a site which is sensitive to the noise level of the construction or operation of the facility, then the ER should address the noise issue in more depth. For an example, a project being built adjacent to an established residential neighborhood may require additional review. The homeowners may voice some concerns about loud construction noise at night. This could require a public meeting to address concerns or perhaps a mitigation measure requiring the contractor only to work during daylight hours.

Another possible noise impact example could include a funded factory which produces a high noise level during the fabrication process which disturbs migratory birds. If there is an adjacent endangered bird species breeding ground, then the Owner may have to supply a study to address the issue. The science involved with a noise study is beyond the scope the Agency can provide. There could be noise mitigation measures which would be acceptable to the Owner and the US Fish and Wildlife Service.

Energy

Energy impacts for funded projects are only in the initial stages of development. The issue will become more important and better defined as fuel costs increase. There are current discussions and early attempts to tie project funding to low energy use and sustainable projects. Look for future incorporation of concepts as energy credits, green design, and carbon foot print.

For now, the focus should be on what is known about the particular proposed project site. The Environmental Report (ER) should address if the energy needs of the project can be accommodated by the existing infrastructure. The current energy available in most areas will support Agency projects. Note this in the ER if applicable. Try to identify the specific utility company.

If utility upgrades are needed to support the new facility or new energy transmission line work is required, then note this in the ER. There could be secondary environmental impacts due to these.

Projects that are using sustainable ideas as solar panels, wind electrical generation, and high thermal building construction should be documented. For systems they have battery back-up, explain the recycling of the used batteries. Note any back-up generators and fuel storage on site and any required permitting for these.