

Environmental Standard Operating Procedures (ESOP)	
National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Documentation	
Environmental Affairs: NEPA Program Manager (760) 830-8190	Revised: 1 October 2023

Subj: NEPA DOCUMENTATION

- Ref:
- (a) 42 USC Chapter 55
 - (b) 40 CFR Parts 1500 to 1508
 - (c) 32 CFR Part 775
 - (d) MCO 5090.2, Volume 12, Environmental Planning and Review
 - (e) USMC NEPA Manual, Version 3.4
 - (f) Commander's Guide to Environmental Management
 - (g) CCO 5090.1J, Environmental Protection
 - (h) CCO 3500.4M, Enclosure 1, Standard Operation Procedures for Range, Training Areas and Airspace (SOP for RTAA), Chapter 2
 - (i) Final Supplemental Environmental Assessment for Ongoing and Future Military Training Activities, Support Operations, and Resource Management.

1. Purpose. This document provides instruction on the NEPA environmental review process at the Marine Air Ground Task Force Training Command (MAGTFTC), Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center, Twentynine Palms, California. Following this process will ensure compliance with references (a) to (h).

Application. This guidance applies to project proponents and action sponsor (reference (g)) proposing major federal actions at the Combat Center and in other cases where MAGTFTC is the action sponsor and lead, joint or cooperating agency. This can include actions occurring outside the Combat Center.

2. Procedures:

The project proponent or action sponsor must submit a Request for Environmental Impact Review (REIR) to Environmental Affairs, for review and approval, before implementing any major federal action (e.g., policy, plan, program, or project) with potential effects to the human environment (natural or physical) (40 CFR §1508.1(q)). Some military training activities do not require a REIR due to existing NEPA coverage per reference (i) ([https://www.29palms.marines.mil/Portals/56/Docs/Environmental%20Affairs/SignedMitigatedFONSIandFinalSEA OngoingTraining.pdf](https://www.29palms.marines.mil/Portals/56/Docs/Environmental%20Affairs/SignedMitigatedFONSIandFinalSEA%20OngoingTraining.pdf)).

a. Submit REIRs electronically using NEPA Process Automation & Management Support Module System (NEPA PAMS): <https://nepapams.usmc.mil/NEPA/default.aspx>

b. REIRs must contain the following minimum information: description of the proposed action (e.g., who, what, when, where how); purpose and need (e.g., why - issue or opportunity); information on any potential ground disturbance (e.g., location and approximate dimensions); and appropriate attachments (e.g., map, image, scope of work, diagrams, etc.).

c. REIRs should be submitted at the earliest time possible (proposal stage), to ensure compliance with NEPA and other environmental requirements and to minimize project delay due to lengthier environmental review requirements. A proposal is ready for environmental review when enough details are known to conduct a meaningful environmental review (e.g., relevant facts to inform potential impacts). Minimum recommended lead times for REIR submission are discussed below.

Subj: NEPA DOCUMENTATION

(1) If a categorical exclusion (CATEX) applies, a Decision Memorandum (DM) would be generated. This process typically takes 1 to 3 months to complete at the Combat Center (low end estimate). This assumes - a no adverse effect determination under National Historic Preservation Act Section 106; no tribal concerns; and no additional Endangered Species Act Section 7 consultation. Otherwise, this process can take longer than 3 months.

(2) If a CATEX does not apply, further analysis is required in an Environmental Assessment (EA) or Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). EAs can take up to 1 year to complete (low end estimate) while EISs typically take more than 1 year. Regulatory consultations would be completed concurrently.

3. MAGTFTC Environmental Review Process:

a. The project proponent or action sponsor completes and submits a REIR to the NEPA Program Manager via NEPA PAMS.

b. The NEPA Program Manager: conducts a completeness review of the REIR in accordance with the above-listed procedures; makes an initial NEPA determination regarding CATEX, EA, EIS; and routes the REIR for subject matter expert (SME) review.

c. After completion of the SME review and regulatory processes (e.g., consultations), the NEPA Program Manager prepares a draft decision document for Deputy Director and Director review and approval. The Director makes the final NEPA determination (CATEX, EA, or EIS).

(1) For CATEXs, the final NEPA determination and environmental requirements are included in a signed DM.

(2) For EAs and EISs, the final NEPA determination would be communicated to the project proponent or action sponsor. A DM would not be generated.

d. After the completion of the environmental review process, the project proponent or action sponsor should take one of the actions listed below.

(1) For DMs, the project proponent or action sponsor "acknowledges" the scope of the proposed action and environmental requirements that apply to the action via NEPA PAMS.

(2) For EAs or EISs, the project proponent or action sponsor would work with the Environmental Affairs office and NEPA Program Manager to initiate and complete the appropriate NEPA process and documentation. The project proponent or action sponsor is responsible to fund the NEPA process.

4. Post Environmental Review. After the completion of the environmental review process, project proponents and action sponsors have a duty to ensure NEPA compliance for ongoing actions (continuing duty) and projects (until completed) and are responsible for implementing and tracking mitigation and monitoring (see references (b) and (c)).

Subj: NEPA DOCUMENTATION

a. The project proponent or action sponsor would work with the NEPA Program Manager to revalidate or amend any DM, EA or EIS to ensure compliance with current environmental requirements and provide any updated NEPA document to the relevant personnel overseeing and implementing the proposed action (e.g., contracting officers, contractor, etc.). For example, NEPA may require supplementation of EAs and EISs, amendment or re-validation of REIRs and DMs (CATEXs), or subsequent analyses in a new EA or EIS.

6. Limitations on Actions. Proposed actions should not be implemented prior to completing MAGTFTC's Environmental Review Process. This includes issuing contracts for project implementation or awarding funds that commit the agency to a certain course of action. For more information, see 40 CFR §1506.1(a) to (c).

7. Documentation and Record Keeping

a. Per Marine Corps Order 5090.2, Volume 12, the project proponent and/or action sponsor will maintain all NEPA documentation for at least 10 years.

b. NEPA PAMs should be used as the main document repository for all proposed actions and associated documentation, but the project proponent and/or action sponsor should keep local copies of important documents.

c. For EAs and EISs, the action sponsor is responsible for implementing and tracking mitigation and monitoring commitments, if made in the NEPA decision document (e.g., Finding of No Significant Impact or Record of Decision). The action sponsor shall provide status updates to the NEPA Program Manager for Headquarters' annual reporting.

8. Emergency Response Procedures. Please report emergencies as soon as possible. Emergency response actions may require compliance with NEPA (see references (b) and (c)) and other applicable environmental laws. Notify the Environmental Affairs Director at (760) 830-5675, Deputy Director at (760) 830-7688, or the NEPA Program Manager at (760) 830-8191. Refer to the spill response procedures listed in the Abatement (ABA) ESOP.

9. Inspection and Corrective Action

a. Project proponents and action sponsors are responsible for ensuring NEPA compliance for their proposed actions in accordance with the NEPA documentation and self-reporting for non-compliance.

b. Project proponents and action sponsors that fail to ensure NEPA compliance may result in reporting and internal investigations as NEPA violations may lead to violation of other applicable environmental laws, some with civil and criminal penalties.

c. Environmental Affairs compliance staff may recommend corrective action for observed instances of NEPA non-compliance, per the attached NEPA Documentation ESOP Inspection Checklist, but the responsibility for ensuring NEPA compliance lies with the project proponent and/or action sponsor.

10. More Information. Please contact the NEPA Program Manager for topics not adequately addressed in this ESOP and to gain access to NEPA PAMs.

Subj: NEPA DOCUMENTATION

NEPA Documentation ESOP Inspection Checklist	
Date:	Time:
Unit:	Work Center:
Inspector's Name:	Signature:

Inspection Items	Yes	No	Comments
1. Does the unit or department have a person assigned to submit REIRs (e.g., ECC) and does that person currently have access to NEPA PAMs?			
2. Has project proponent or action sponsor submitted a REIR for all proposed actions and complied with the environmental requirements listed in the approval documents (e.g., Decision Memo)? Note: recommend spot check an environmental requirement in decision memo and request evidence of compliance.			
3. For offices with recurring actions decision memos (e.g., PWD and MCCS), do the shops implementing projects have a copy of the current NEPA decision memo and have the employees complied with the listed environmental requirements? Note: recommend spot check an environmental requirement of decision memo and request evidence of compliance.			
4. Has the project proponent or action sponsor maintained a project record for their NEPA documentation and maintained the file for at least 10 years?			