ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

[ER–FRL–5490–7]

Environmental Impact Statements and Regulations; Availability of EPA Comments

Availability of EPA comments prepared March 16, 1998 through March 20, 1998 pursuant to the Environmental Review Process (ERP), under Section 309 of the Clean Air Act and Section 102(2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act as amended. Requests for copies of EPA comments can be directed to the office of Federal Activities at (202) 564–7167.

Summary of Rating Definitions Environmental Impact of the Action LO—Lack of Objections

The EPA review has not identified any potential environmental impacts requiring substantive changes to the proposal. The review may have disclosed opportunities for application of mitigation measures that could be accomplished with no more than minor changes to the proposal.

EC—Environmental Concerns

The EPA review has identified environmental impacts that should be avoided in order to fully protect the environment. Corrective measures may require changes to the preferred alternative or application of mitigation measures that can reduce the environmental impact. EPA would like to work with the lead agency to reduce these impacts.

EO—Environmental Objections

The EPA review has identified significant environmental impacts that must be avoided in order to provide adequate protection for the environment. Corrective measures may require substantial changes to the preferred alternative or consideration of some other project alternative (including the no action alternative or a new alternative). EPA intends to work with the lead agency to reduce these impacts.

EU—Environmentally Unsatisfactory

The EPA review has identified adverse environmental impacts that are of sufficient magnitude that they are unsatisfactory from the standpoint of public health or welfare or environmental quality. EPA intends to work with the lead agency to reduce these impacts. If the potentially unsatisfactory impacts are not corrected at the final EIS stage, this proposal will be recommended for referral to the CEQ.

Adequacy of the Impact Statement

Category 1—Adequate

EPA believes the draft EIS adequately sets forth the environmental impact(s) of the preferred alternative and those of the alternatives reasonably available to the project or action. No further analysis or data collection is necessary, but the reviewer may suggest the addition of clarifying language or information.

Category 2—Insufficient Information

The draft EIS does not contain sufficient information for EPA to fully assess environmental impacts that should be avoided in order to fully protect the environmment, or the EPA reviewer has identified new reasonably available alternatives that are within the spectrum of alternatives analyzed in the draft EIS, which could reduce the environmental impacts of the action. The identified additional information, data, analyses, or discussion should be included in the final EIS.

Category 3—Inadequate

EPA does not believe that the draft EIS adequately assesses potentially significant environmental impacts of the action, or the EPA reviewer has identified new, reasonably available alternatives that are outside of the spectrum of alternatives analyzed in the draft EIS, which should be analyzed in order to reduce the potentially significant environmental impacts. EPA believes that the identified additional information, data, analyses, or discussions are of such a magnitude that they should have full public review at a draft stage. EPA does not believe that the draft EIS is adequate for the purposes of the NEPA and/or Section 309 review, and thus should be formally revised and made available for public comment in a supplemental or revised draft EIS.

On the basis of the potential significant impacts involved, this proposal could be a candidate for referral to the CEQ.

Draft EISs

ERP No. D–FTA–E40774–FL Rating EC2, Central Florida Light Rail Transit System Transportation Improvement to the North/South Corridor Project, Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) and Minimum Operable Segment (MOS), Orange and Seminole Counties, FL.

Summary: EPA conceptually concurs with the selection of a light rail system because of the expected air quality benefits. EPA concerns, however, include environmental justice impacts associated with Alternative 3, neighborhood travel disruptions, potential impact to historic districts, and some urban wetland impacts.

ERP No. D–NSF–A81164–00 Rating EC2, Amundsen-Scott South Pole Station, Proposal to Modernize through Reconstruction and Replacement of Key Facilities, Antarctica.

Summary: EPA believes that since monitoring of ambient air quality at the station is not feasible, the EIS should identify measures to be carried out on a periodic basis to ensure that air emissions from sources at the station continue to be in line with the emission factors as specified for such equipment. EPA also, identified a number of points which should be clarified in the EIS to better inform the final decision regarding the proposed action.

Final EISs

ERP No. F–FHW–D40284–PA, US 202 Section 700 Corridor, Improvements, from PA 63 in Montgomeryville to the PA–611 Bypass in Doylestown Township, COE Section 404 Permit and Right-of-Way, Montgomery and Bucks Counties, PA.

Summary: EPA continued to express concerns that the proposed 8 mile highway will negatively impact water quality of the Neshaminy Creek, a tributary to the Delaware River. EPA does not oppose issuance of a Section 404 permit for the project provided all appropriate measures are taken to mitigate adverse impacts to water quality, wetlands and terrestrial ecosystems.

Regulations

ERP No. PR–AFS–A65164–00, 36 CFR Part 212 Administration of the Forest Development Transportation System: Management Regulations Revision and Temporary Suspension of Road Construction in Roadless Areas; Proposed Rules.

Summary: EPA supports the Forest Service's effort to revise its existing transportation policy and an 18 month road moratorium in designated roadless areas. EPA believes this is a good start to protecting the environmental and cultural values associated with the roadless and low-density roaded areas as well as the other Forest Service lands. EPA expects to work closely with the Forest Service as it develops its rules to ensure that adverse impacts to water quality are avoided or mitigated.

Dated: April 7, 1998.

Ken Mittelholtz,

Environmental Protection Specialist Office of Federal Activities.

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