

§ 520.2

actions significantly affecting the quality of the human environment.

§ 520.2 Policy.

The agency will strive to carry out the full intent and purpose of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 and related orders and statutes, and take positive steps to avoid any action which could adversely affect the quality of the human environment.

§ 520.3 Definitions.

(a) *Environmental assessment* is a written analysis describing the environmental impact of a proposed or ongoing agency action, submitted to the agency either by its grantees or contractors, or by any person outside the agency as part of any program or project proposal within the scope of activities listed in § 520.4(b).

(b) *Environmental review* is a formal evaluation undertaken by the agency, culminating in a brief document (the environmental review report), to determine whether a proposed or ongoing NHTSA action may have a significant impact on the environment. The review document will be included in the proposed or ongoing agency action, and either support a negative declaration or recommend the preparation of a draft environmental impact statement.

(c) *Draft environmental impact statement* (DEIS) means a preliminary statement on the environmental impact of a proposed or ongoing NHTSA action which is circulated for comment and review within and outside NHTSA.

(d) *Final environmental impact statement* (FEIS) means a detailed statement which, pursuant to section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act, identifies and analyzes the anticipated environmental impact of a proposed or ongoing NHTSA action.

(e) *Negative declaration* means a statement prepared subsequent to an environmental review, which states that a proposed or ongoing NHTSA action will have no significant environmental impact and therefore does not require a draft or final environmental impact statement.

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§ 520.4 Applicability.

(a) *Scope.* This part applies to all elements of NHTSA, including the Regional Offices.

(b) *Actions covered.* Except as provided in paragraph (e) of this section, this part applies to the following agency actions and such actions and proposals as may be sponsored jointly with another agency:

(1) New and continuing programs and projects; budget proposals; legislative proposals by the agency; requests for appropriations; reports on legislation initiated elsewhere where the agency has primary responsibility for the subject matter involved; and any renewals or reapprovals of the foregoing;

(2) Research, development, and demonstration projects; formal approvals of work plans; and associated contracts;

(3) Rulemaking and regulatory actions, including Notices of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM); requests for procurement (RFP); requests for grants (Annual Work Programs); and contracts;

(4) All grants, loans or other financial assistance for use in State and Community projects;

(5) Annual State Highway Safety Work Programs;

(6) Construction; leases; purchases; operation of Federal facilities; and

(7) Any other activity, project, or action likely to have a significant effect on the environment.

(c) *Continuing actions.* This part applies to any action enumerated in paragraph (b) of this section, even though such actions arise from a project or program initiated prior to enactment of the National Environmental Policy Act on January 1, 1970.

(d) *Environmental assessments.* Within the scope of activities listed in § 520.4(b), any person outside the agency submitting a program or project proposal may be requested to prepare an environmental assessment of such proposed action to be included in his submission to the agency.

(e) *Exceptions.* (1) Assistance in the form of general revenue sharing funds, distributed under the State and Local Fiscal Assistance Act of 1972, 31 U.S.C. 1221, with no control by the NHTSA over the subsequent use of such funds;

- (2) Personnel actions;
 - (3) Administrative procurements (e.g., general supplies) and contracts for personal services;
 - (4) Legislative proposals originating in another agency and relating to matters not within NHTSA's primary areas of responsibility;
 - (5) Project amendments (e.g., increases in costs) which have no environmental significance; and
 - (6) Minor agency actions that are determined by the official responsible for the actions to be of such limited scope that they clearly will not have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment.
- (f) *Consolidation of statements.* Proposed actions (and alternatives thereto) having substantially similar environmental impacts may be covered by a single environmental review and environmental impact statement or negative declaration.

§ 520.5 Guidelines for identifying major actions significantly affecting the environment.

(a) *General guidelines.* The phrase, "major Federal actions significantly affecting the quality of the human environment," as used in this part, shall be construed with a view to the overall, cumulative impact of the actions, other Federal projects or actions in the area, and any further contemplated or anticipated actions. Therefore, an environmental impact statement should be prepared in any of the following situations:

- (1) Proposed actions which are localized in their impact but which have a potential for significantly affecting the environment;
- (2) Any proposed action which is likely to be controversial on environmental grounds;
- (3) Any proposed action which has unclear but potentially significant environmental consequences.

(b) *Specific guidelines.* While a precise definition of environmental significance that is valid in all contexts is not possible, any of the following actions should ordinarily be considered as significantly affecting the quality of the human environment:

- (1) Any matter falling under section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act (49 U.S.C. 1653(f)) and section 138 of Federal-aid highway legislation (23 U.S.C. 138), requiring the use of any publicly owned land from a park, recreation area, or wildlife and waterfowl refuge of national, State, or local significance as determined by the Federal, State, or local officials having jurisdiction thereof, or any land from an historic site of national, State, or local significance;

(2) Any matter falling under section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (16 U.S.C. 470(f)), requiring consideration of the effect of the proposed action on any building included in the National Register of Historic Preservation and reasonable opportunity for the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation to comment on such action;

(3) Any action that is likely to affect the preservation and enhancement of sites of historical, architectural, or archaeological significance;

(4) Any action that is likely to be highly controversial regarding relocation housing;

(5) Any action that (i) divides or disrupts an established community, disrupts orderly, planned development, or is inconsistent with plans or goals that have been adopted by the community in which the project is located; or (ii) causes significantly increased congestion;

(6) Any action that (i) involves inconsistency with any Federal, State, or local law or administrative determination relating to the environment; (ii) has a significantly detrimental impact on air or water quality or on ambient noise levels for adjoining areas; (iii) involves a possibility of contamination of a public water supply system; or (iv) affects ground water, flooding, erosion, or sedimentation;

(7) Any action that may directly or indirectly result in a significant increase in noise levels, either within a motor vehicle's closed environment or upon nearby areas;

(8) Any action that may directly or indirectly result in a significant increase in the energy or fuel necessary to operate a motor vehicle, including but not limited to the following: (i) Actions which may directly or indirectly result in a significant increase in the