

Part 610 – National Environmental Compliance Handbook

Subpart H – Exhibits

610.122 “Affected Area” Planning Worksheet

National Environmental Compliance Handbook

The Affected Resource Area (ARA) is a geographic area or areas within which a project, activity, program, or practice may cause changes in the character or use of a resource. The concept of identifying the ARA is to be used when scoping all special environmental concerns in general and then applied to each alternative as they are developed.

The ARA is defined by the temporal and geographic scale of the project. The ARA must include areas directly or indirectly impacted. **Affects may be delayed in time or even displaced in space.** For example, an ARA for a pipeline could include the pipeline trench AND the construction right-of-way, staging areas, access roads, utility lines, and erosion/water quality concerns downstream in an adjacent water course/wetland.

Project: _____ Prepared by: _____

Alternative(s): _____ Date: _____

The below list is NOT all inclusive but should be used to help stimulate the thought process in identifying the APE and red flag issues. **Be aware of onsite and offsite effects and both short term construction and irreversible or irremediable commitments of resources.** "√" if any aspects relate to the project during construction, establishment, or maintenance of project.

- Change to a structure, spillway, access road, etc.: _____
- Excavations or fill - width and depth: _____
- Borrow areas and other sources of fill material: _____
- Grading and contouring: _____
- Disposal sites or waste areas: _____
- New or upgraded access or haul roads: _____
- Staging, storage, and stockpile areas: _____
- Drainage diversions: _____
- Subsurface impacts - including lateral effects: _____
- Vibration impacts (archaeological sites with structural remains): _____
- Water Quality - stream, gully erosion: _____
 - sediment deposition: _____
 - turbidity: _____
- Increased visitation/use impacts to ground (erosion) or vegetation (habitats): _____
- Increased visitation of collectors (artifacts, vegetation, rocks): _____
- Visual, atmospheric or audible elements: _____
- Wetland impacted up or downstream (hydrologically, in adjacent upland areas, during construction): _____
- Flood damage, streambank erosion: _____
- Change in level of permanent pool: _____
- Change in level of inundation of flood pool or when filled at capacity/spillway flood stage: _____
- Change in duration of inundation, drawdown, or flooding for the previous 2 items: _____
- Change in flow depth, duration, or hydrograph downstream: _____
- Plant concerns: invasive/noxious weeds: _____
- Shoreline/streambed/wildlife corridors impacted: _____
- Wildlife/natural habitat: _____
- Habitat fragmentation (aquatic or terrestrial): _____
- Mineral & energy resources/rights: _____
- Contaminants: _____

Secondary area effects must also be included in project review: _____

- Development of new roads, trails, recreation etc.: _____
- Re-routing traffic, field access or landuse patterns during or after construction: _____
- Other: _____

As you proceed with scoping and develop alternatives, you need to create ARA maps that identify physical boundaries and potential general effects for each alternative so that the special environmental concerns can be addressed and potential impacts avoided, minimized, or mitigated. Maps to include for the ARA packet: topographic, aerial, as built (existing structures/disturbance), planned footprint and areas impacted. Use the checklist above to help identify those areas. Distinguish between above and below ground effects.