

WHAT IS AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT?

Environmental Impact Statement

The State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) requires all state and local governments to give appropriate consideration to environmental values in their decision making. These decisions may be related to issuing permits for private projects, constructing public facilities, or adopting regulations, policies or plans. Under SEPA, decision-makers must consider environmental impacts, alternatives and mitigation prior to committing to a particular course of action.

An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is a document prepared during the SEPA review process when there is a potential for significant impacts. An EIS identifies and analyzes probable adverse environmental impacts, reasonable alternatives, and possible mitigation to reduce likely impacts.

Public Participation

The public is encouraged to participate in the EIS process by providing comments during two phases of the EIS: the Public Scoping Comment Period and the Draft EIS Comment Period.

Topics to be Studied

A SEPA EIS evaluates the potential direct and cumulative effects of the proposed action and alternatives on the following resources, as separated into the two categories below:

Natural Environment

- Earth
- Air
- Water
- Plants and Animals
- Energy and Natural Resources



Built Environment

- Environmental Health
- Land and Shoreline Use
- Visual Resources
- Historic and Cultural Preservation
- Transportation
- Public Services and Utilities
- Socioeconomics
- Other Areas of Focus

Specialized studies often emphasized in analysis of wind energy projects:

- Avian/Bat
- Visual
- Noise