

# Environmental Timelines

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Federal Aviation  
Administration



# Objectives

- **Discuss typical and atypical environmental timelines/processes.**
- **Determine appropriate times to begin environmental processing to assure timely project approvals and/or funding.**



# Categorical Exclusions (CEs)

- **Some CEs are automatic.**
  - Planning Studies
  - Maintenance Projects
  - Rehabilitation Projects
- **Some CEs require documentation.**
  - Minor Runway Extensions
  - Minor Apron Expansions
  - Minor Terminal Expansions

# CEs (continued)

- **Attempts at documented CEs the same fiscal year as a project is not recommended.**
- **Documented CEs should be prepared at least 1 fiscal year before project approval and/or funding is anticipated.**

**ISSUES HAPPEN!**

# CEs (continued)

- **The typical documented CE takes 30-60 days.**
  - Prepare letters of solicitation
  - Send out letters of solicitation
  - 30-day agency review/comment period
  - Agencies respond
  - Sponsor forwards letters to FAA
  - FAA prepares CE



# CEs (continued)

- **The atypical documented CE may take months.**
  - Agencies have questions that require additional work
  - Hire specialist (biologist, archeologist, etc...)
  - Specialist does field work (is it season dependent?)
  - Specialist prepares report
  - Coordinate report with agencies
  - Finalize documentation
- **Some CEs turn into EAs!**

# Environmental Assessments (EAs)

- **Typical EAs take 6-12 months to complete (some take longer).**
- **Obviously, attempts at preparing EAs the same fiscal year as a project is not recommended.**
- **Preparation of EAs should begin 2 fiscal years prior to anticipated approval and/or funding of the proposed project.**

# EAs (continued)

- **Why do EAs take so long?**
  - Increased complexity of project
  - Greater potential of environmental impact
  - Increased scrutiny (FAA, other agencies, public)
  - Need to further consider alternatives to the project
  
- **Some EAs turn into EISs!**

# Environmental Impact Statements (EISs)

- **EISs are many times more complex and controversial than EAs.**
- **Preparation of EISs should begin 3 fiscal years prior to anticipated approval and/or funding of the proposed project.**



# Part 150 Studies

- **Part 150 Studies typically take 1-2 years to complete.**
  - Two very complex work products (Noise Exposure Maps & Noise Compatibility Plan)
  - A lot of Public Involvement
  - 180 Day Statutory FAA Review Time
- **Preparation of Part 150 Studies should begin 2-3 fiscal years prior to anticipated approval and/or funding of NCP projects (depending on complexity of NCP).**

# Timeline Review

- **CEs – 1 fiscal year prior to project.**
  - Wrap up FY 2006 project CEs now!
  - Begin FY 2007 project CEs now!
- **EAs – 2 fiscal years prior to project.**
  - Wrap up FY 2006 project EAs now!
  - FY 2007 project EAs should be well underway!
  - Begin FY 2008 project EAs now!

# Timeline Review (Continued)

- **EISs – 3 fiscal years prior to project.**
  - Wrap up FY 2006 project EISs now!
  - FY 2007 & 2008 project EISs should be well underway!
  - Begin FY 2009 project EISs now!
- **Part 150 Studies – 2-3 fiscal years prior to project.**
  - Wrap up FY 2006 NCPs now!
  - FY 2007 NCPs should be well underway!
  - Begin FY 2008 & 2009 NCPs now!

# Questions?

