

## **Pre-Requisites To Determining the Need To Prepare an EA**

CEQ regulations require EAs to take no longer than one year to complete from beginning to issuance of the Final EA or FONSI. The CEQ regulations therefore effectively require a documented date of an Agency's decision to prepare an EA. For the FAA Office of Airports, Southwest Region, the following applies to make that decision.

- The decision is a discrete step in the EA process and must be documented to the file. The decision must document:
  - Project planning is sufficiently mature to allow meaningful evaluation of the environmental effects,
  - There is sufficient information and analysis (see below) to support a decision that an EA is appropriate, and
  - It is appropriate for the EA to begin (sufficient funds available for the EA and all direct FAA actions).
- Completed Planning
  - Confirm the scope of the LOB/SO's proposed action (e.g., making any necessary determination regarding the FAA's authority under Section 163 of the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2018);
  - Identify any connected actions;
  - Identify any Lead, Cooperating and Participating agencies;
  - Develop a preliminary purpose and need for the project and coordinating the purpose and need statement with any cooperating or participating agencies;
  - Develop a preliminary project description and range of alternatives;
  - Identify potentially significant environmental issues;
  - Conduct screening activities such as desktop and field assessment to identify potentially impacted environmental resources; and
  - Identify potential mitigation strategies for any potentially significant effects.
- Also needed.
  - Identify project points of contact;
  - Develop and coordinating a schedule, including milestones for all environmental reviews and authorizations required for implementation of the action, in consultation with cooperating/participating agencies, as applicable, to ensure agreement with proposed milestone dates and proposed actions (for "complex" EAs);
  - Determine the type and extent of public involvement;
  - Identify community and stakeholders affected; and
  - Determine the extent of additional technical analysis needed.

Once all of the above have been completed, the ADO EPS will issue a dated memo to the file documenting completion of the above and a decision to prepare an EA. The date of the memo effectively starts the EA process and begins the regulatory (one year) timeline.