



# ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

## National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

Requires that everything possible be done to protect and enhance the man-made and natural environment. A complete study of all reasonable alternates (including measures to avoid and minimize impacts) must be prepared, and the results must be made available to public officials and citizens before decisions are made.

## Cultural Environment

### Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act

Requires that agencies take into account the effects of a project on properties that are included in or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

- **Historic Structures**
- **Archaeological Sites**

## Natural Environment

### Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, Nontidal Wetlands Protection Act

Regulates dredge and fill of Waters of the United States. Guidelines published by the Environmental Protection Agency for evaluating alternates require that the Corps of Engineers evaluate the proposed project for environmental impacts (including historic and rare/threatened/endangered species impacts) and select the least environmentally damaging practicable alternatives.

- **Geology/Groundwater Resources**
- **Soils**
- **Surface Water**
- **Floodplains**
- **Wetlands**
- **Aquatic Life**
- **Plant Life**
- **Wildlife**



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## Socioeconomic Environment

### **Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act**

Requires that special effort be made to preserve publicly owned public parks and recreation areas, wildlife/waterfowl refuges and historical sites. No project that requires land from these resources may be approved unless 1) there is no feasible and prudent alternative to the use of the land and 2) the action includes all possible planning to minimize harm to the property resulting from such use.

### **Clean Air Act and Clean Air Act Amendments**

An air quality analysis must be performed to determine if there are violations of the State or National Ambient Air Quality Standards for pollutants. Also, a conformity analysis must be done to make sure the Transportation Improvement Plan conforms to the State Implementation Plan.

### **Farmland Protection Policy Act**

Requires that federal programs minimize conversion of farmland to non-agricultural uses (does not apply to farmland that is zoned or committed (planned) for urban development).

### **Economic Growth, Resource Protection, and Planning Act**

Each transportation alternate must be evaluated by the Maryland Department of Planning to determine if it is consistent with this act. The act has several goals: to concentrate development in suitable areas to make sure that transportation, water, sewer, schools, etc. are adequate

to support the growth; to protect sensitive areas (steep slopes, habitat for endangered species, streams and buffers, 100-year floodplains, etc.); to direct growth in rural areas to existing population centers; to provide stewardship of the Chesapeake Bay; and to conserve resources.

### **Neighborhood Conservation and Smart Growth Initiatives**

Limits most state infrastructure funding and economic development, housing and other program monies to locally designated Priority Funding Areas. Directs state resources to revitalize older, developed areas, preserve resources and open space, and discourage suburban sprawl.

### **Executive Order 12898 (Environmental Justice)**

Requires that agencies identify and address disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects on minority and low-income populations.

- **Demographics**
- **Community Facilities**
- **Economic Setting and Land Use**
- **Air Quality**
- **Noise/Vibration**