



# **Environmental Assessment (EA) Outline**

---

*Use this outline to prepare an Environmental Assessment (EA) for projects for which an EA is prepared for Texas Department of Transportation's (TxDOT) approval under TxDOT's rules or under the NEPA Assignment Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Federal Highway Administration.*

---

Cover Sheet

Table of Contents

List of Acronyms

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Project Description

2.1 Existing Facility

2.2 Proposed Facility

2.3 Logical Termini and Independent Utility

2.4 Planning Consistency

3.0 Purpose and Need

3.1 Need

3.2 Supporting Facts and/or Data

3.3 Purpose

4.0 Alternatives

4.1 Build Alternative(s)

4.2 No-Build Alternative

4.3 Preliminary Alternatives Considered but Eliminated from Further Consideration

5.0 Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences

5.1 Right-of-Way Property Acquisition

5.2 Land Use

5.3 Farmlands

5.4 Utility Relocation

5.5 Community Impacts

5.5.1 Community Study Area



- 5.5.2 Displacements
- 5.5.3 Access and Travel Patterns
- 5.5.4 Community Cohesion
- 5.5.5 Limited English Proficiency
- 5.6 Visual/Aesthetic Impacts
- 5.7 Cultural Resources
  - 5.7.1 Archeology
  - 5.7.2 Historic Properties
- 5.8 Protected Lands
- 5.9 Water Resources
  - 5.9.1 Clean Water Act Section 404
  - 5.9.2 Clean Water Act Section 401
  - 5.9.3 Executive Order 11990 Wetlands
  - 5.9.4 Rivers and Harbors Act
  - 5.9.5 Clean Water Act Section 303(d)
  - 5.9.6 Clean Water Act Section 402
  - 5.9.7 Floodplains
  - 5.9.8 Wild and Scenic Rivers
  - 5.9.9 Coastal Barrier Resources
  - 5.9.10 Coastal Zone Management
  - 5.9.11 Edwards Aquifer
  - 5.9.12 International Boundary and Water Commission
  - 5.9.13 Drinking Water Systems
- 5.10 Biological Resources
  - 5.10.1 Impacts to Vegetation
  - 5.10.2 Executive Orders 13112 and 13751 on Invasive Species
  - 5.10.3 Executive Memorandum on Environmentally and Economically Beneficial Landscaping



- 5.10.4 Impacts to Wildlife
- 5.10.5 Migratory Bird Protections
- 5.10.6 Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act
- 5.10.7 Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act of 2007
- 5.10.8 Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation Management Act
- 5.10.9 Marine Mammal Protection Act
- 5.10.10 Threatened, Endangered, and Candidate Species
- 5.11 Air Quality
- 5.12 Hazardous Materials
- 5.13 Traffic Noise
- 5.14 Induced Growth
- 5.15 Cumulative Impacts
- 5.16 Construction Phase Impacts
- 5.17 Greenhouse Gas and Climate Change\*
  - 5.17.1 Statewide On-road GHG\*
  - 5.17.2 Mitigation Measures\*
  - 5.17.3 TxDOT and a Changing Climate\*
- 6.0 Agency Coordination
- 7.0 Public Involvement
- 8.0 Post-Environmental Clearance Activities and Design/Construction Commitments
  - 8.1 Post-Environmental Clearance Activities
  - 8.2 Design/Construction Commitments
  - 8.3 Monitoring and Compliance Plan for Mitigation
- 9.0 Conclusion
- 10.0 References
- 11.0 Names and Qualifications of Persons Preparing the EA or Conducting an Independent Evaluation of the EA
- 12.0 Appendices



Appendix A – Project Location Map

Appendix B – Project Photos

Appendix C – Schematics

Appendix D – Typical Sections

Appendix E – Resource-specific Maps

Appendix F – Resource Agency Coordination

Appendix G – Section 4(f) Documentation (if applicable)

Appendix H – Comment and Response Matrix from the Notice of Availability of Draft EA/Public Hearing or Notice of Availability of Draft EA/Opportunity for Public Hearing

*\* These sections must be included if the public hearing (or deadline for responding to the opportunity for public hearing) will occur on or after August 1, 2021. If the public hearing (or deadline for responding to the opportunity for public hearing) will occur before August 1, 2021, then these sections of the EA may be included at the preparer's discretion.*

## Revision History

The following table shows the revision history for this document.

Revision History	
Effective Date Month, Year	Reason for and Description of Change
February 2025	Version 15 was released. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Removed environmental justice-related instructions in accordance with Executive Order titled “Ending Illegal Discrimination and Restoring Merit-Based Opportunity” (January 21, 2025).</li> </ul>
November 2024	Version 14 was released. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Updated Section 5.10.2, “Executive Order 13112 on Invasive Species” to refer to Executive Order 13112 “as amended by Executive Order 13751 on Safeguarding the Nation From the Impacts of Invasive Species.”</li> </ul>
September 2024	Version 13 was released. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In accordance with CEQ Phase 2 rulemaking, added Section 8.3, “Monitoring and Compliance Plan for Mitigation.”</li> </ul>
April 2024	Version 12 was released. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Added new subheadings under the “Community Impacts” section of the EA (EA Section 5.5) for “Community Study Area and Demographics” (EA Section 5.5.1), “Displacements” (EA Section 5.5.2), “Access and Travel Patterns (EA Section 5.5.3), “Community Cohesion” (EA Section 5.5.4), “Limited English Proficiency” (EA Section 5.5.5), and “Environmental Justice” (EA Section 5.5.6); and add new instructions for each of those subsections.</li> <li>Reduced the “Right-of-Way/Displacements” section of the EA (EA Section 5.1) to be just “Right-of-Way Property Acquisition” (EA Section 5.1) as displacements are better addressed as its own new “Displacements” subheading under the Community Impacts section of the EA (EA Section 5.5.2).</li> <li>Removed the “Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities” section of the EA (EA Section 5.5) as bike/ped impacts are better addressed under a new “Access and Travel Patterns” subheading under the Community Impacts section of the EA (EA Section 5.5.3).</li> <li>Re-numbered Section 5 sub-sections of the EA to reflect above-referenced changes</li> </ul>
September 2023	Version 11 was released.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Removed Appendix E “Plan and Program Excerpts” to conform to changes previously made to the EA Handbook.</li><li>• Revised name of Appendix I to Appendix H, “Comment and Response Matrix from the Notice of Availability of Draft EA/Public Hearing or Notice of Availability of Draft EA/Opportunity for Public Hearing,” to conform to changes previously made to the EA Handbook.</li></ul>
November 2021	Version 10 was released. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Added 2.3, “Logical Termini and Independent Utility”</li><li>• Added 2.4, “Planning Consistency”</li><li>• Removed 5.11.1, “Texas Parks and Wildlife Coordination”</li></ul>
May 2021	Version 9 was released. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Added Section 5.18, “Greenhouse Gas and Climate Change,” and associated subsections.</li></ul>
November 2020	Version 8 was released. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Fixed typo in the title of Section 8.0 (changed “communities” to “commitments”)</li></ul>
September 2020	Version 7 was released. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Added “11.0 Names and Qualifications of Persons Preparing the EA or Conducting an Independent Evaluation of the EA”</li></ul>
March 2020	Version 6 was released. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Added “Cover Sheet”</li><li>• Revised name of Section 5.4 from “Utilities/Emergency Services” to “Utility Relocation.”</li><li>• Removed Subsection 5.6.1, “Environmental Justice.”</li><li>• Removed Subsection 5.6.2, “Limited English Proficiency.”</li><li>• Revised name of Section 5.9 from “DOT Act Sect. 4(f), LWCJ Act Sect. 6(f), and PWC Chapter 26” to “Protected Lands.”</li><li>• Revised name of Section 8.0 from Post-Environmental Clearance Activities and Contractor Communications” to “Post-Environmental Clearance Activities and Design/Construction Commitments.”</li><li>• Revised name of Section 8.2 from “Contractor Communications” to “Design/Construction Commitments.”</li></ul>
January 2019	Version 5 was released. Revised name of Section 5.11.6 to “Migratory Bird Protections.”



	Revised name of Section 8.0 to “Post-Environmental Clearance Activities and Contractor Communications,” and added new Section 8.1, “Post-Environmental Clearance Activities” and new Section 8.2, “Contractor Communications.”
October 2017	Version 4 was released.  Removed 5.10.9 Trinity River Corridor Development Certification from the EA outline
June 2017	Version 3 was released.  Revised Section 5.11, Biological Resources, to break-out various biology-related laws and executive orders into separate subheadings.  Removed Section 5.15, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, in response to the Council on Environmental Quality’s April 5, 2017 withdrawal of its August 1, 2016 final guidance on greenhouse gas emissions and climate change. Re-numbered affected EA sections.
October 2016	Version 2 was released.  Added EA Section 5.10.14, Drinking Water Systems. Also added EA Section 5.15, Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Climate Change, in response to the Council on Environmental Quality’s August 1, 2016 final guidance on greenhouse gas emissions and climate change.
June 2016	Version 1 was released.