



TIP 7

NEPA STREAMLINING TIPS

Scoping Checklist

An issue may be eliminated from detailed consideration and analysis if any of the following apply:

- **The issue is too broad or vague for analysis.** For example, if a comment broadly indicates “cultural impacts” are a concern, but does not point to particular factors or specific impacts to communities, then the comment does not provide enough information for analysis.
- **The issue is a “cause” without a specific effect.** Stakeholders sometimes identify “causes” as issues but fail to identify the principal “effects” that the EIS should evaluate in depth. For example, a commenter notes “machinery” is a concern, but does not indicate to which resource the concern is related.
- **The issue is general opposition to a government policy that has already been decided by law, regulation, or decision.** These concerns are non-substantive issues because the decision on the issue is no longer pending.
- **The issue is not relevant to a reasoned choice between proposed action alternatives.** Although an issue may be interesting and pertinent for different reasons, if analysis of the issue is not essential to a reasoned choice among the proposed action alternatives, it need not be analyzed.
- **The issue does not lend itself to analysis.** The issue must be analyzed based on science and/or traditional knowledge to determine what the potential environmental impacts, if any, are and what measures may mitigate those impacts. If the analysis cannot be reasonably performed, then the issue may be eliminated from the analysis of the proposed action.
- **The issue has been adequately analyzed in an applicable NEPA document.** If the earlier NEPA document is current, applicable, and available, it may be tiered from, or the analysis incorporated by reference, to eliminate or reduce the amount of new analysis. The issue need not be re-analyzed, unless significant new information is available or conditions have changed. Cite the applicable NEPA analyses in the EIS or decision file as the reason for tiering or scoping out.
- **The issue has been analyzed multiple times for similar proposed actions and repeatedly found to be not significant.** The issue need not be re-analyzed unless significant new information is available or conditions have changed. Cite the applicable NEPA analyses in the EIS or decisions file as the reason for scoping out.



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- **The issue is deemed non-significant by an experienced NEPA practitioner based on the professional judgment of subject matter experts.** Clearly and briefly explain in the EIS or decision file why it is not substantive.
- **The issue is a subset of an issue already being addressed.** For example, a commenter brings up the issue of noise effects on a particular bird species; however, noise impacts on all bird species is already being analyzed, and the potential effects do not vary substantially among the species being analyzed.

