

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)/ Minnesota Environmental Policy Act (MEPA)

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) [42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.] was signed into law on January 1, 1970. The Act establishes national environmental policy and goals for the protection, maintenance, and enhancement of the environment, and it provides a process for implementing these goals within the federal agencies. NEPA requires federal agencies to integrate environmental values into their decision making processes by considering the environmental impacts of their proposed actions and reasonable alternatives to those actions.

The Minnesota Environmental Quality Board (EQB) plays a vital role in Minnesota’s environment and development. The board develops policy, creates long-range plans and reviews proposed projects that would significantly influence Minnesota’s environment. The EQB writes the rules for conducting environmental reviews. The EQB’s environmental review duties are directed by Minnesota Environmental Policy Act Laws 1973, Chapter 412 (MEPA) Minnesota Statutes 116D.04.

A DEIS documents the potential social, economic, environmental and transportation impacts and presents options for avoiding, minimizing or mitigating those impacts.

“Avoid, Minimize, Mitigate, Enhance”

- Adverse (negative) impacts should be avoided.
- If adverse impacts can’t be avoided, they should be *minimized*.
- Unavoidable adverse impacts should be *mitigated*.



NEPA Process for an EIS

Draft EIS (DEIS)

- Scoping Process
- Evaluate all reasonable alternatives
- Document potential Impacts & mitigation for unavoidable adverse impacts

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Circulation of DEIS

- 45-day public comment period

Final EIS (FEIS)

- Developed in conjunction with Preliminary Engineering
- Confirm Locally Preferred Alternative
- Describe mitigation measures

Record of Decision



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