

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT GENERIC ANNOTATED OUTLINE FORMAT

© ETCI, INC.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of an annotated outline is to operationalize the CEQ and agency requirements, so everyone knows what his or her role and assignments are throughout the document preparation process.

If an Environmental Assessment is supposed to be 10 to 15 pages long (exclusive of appendices), how long should each section be, in order to include the necessary information yet not become more like an EIS than an EA? This format will help each researcher, analyst, and section writer know

- what specific data or topics to include
- how much to include
- what format (maps, tables, text, etc.) to use
- what their deadline is
- who else is available to help
- what information is still missing (when used to track progress)

If your agency has a specific required format, or particular locations for information in addition to that required by the Council on Environmental Quality, simply customize the format as needed for each project.

**ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
GENERIC ANNOTATED OUTLINE FORMAT**

Outline Elements	# Pages	Responsible Person(s)	Contents / Data Needs
<p>1.0 Purpose and Need</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Purpose and need for the action 2. Specific objectives of the project 3. List of significant issues to be resolved 4. List of other permits etc. required 5. Location map(s) 6. Relationship to other National Environmental Policy Act actions underway by this or other agencies 7. The agency decision to be made 8. Evaluation criteria and weighting 			<p>This section basically outlines the results of scoping for the project, including the specific measurable project objectives, evaluation criteria, list of significant issues (and elimination of insignificant ones), etc.</p> <p>It sets the scene for the descriptions and analyses that follow in Chaps. 2, 3, and 4.</p> <p><i>Current information needs include:</i></p>

Outline Elements	# Pages	Responsible Person(s)	Contents / Data Needs
<p>2.0 Alternatives</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Description of the proposed action(s), including maps as appropriate 2. Description of alternatives considered and eliminated, along with reasons why 3. Description of No Action 4. Description of other reasonable courses of action that will meet the purpose and need and project objectives 5. Description of any reasonable alternatives not within the jurisdiction of the agency 6. Identify the agency preferred alternative (if any) 7. Comparison of environmental impacts of each alternative, including No Action 8. Mitigation measures 			<p>These need to be <u>alternative ways of meeting the objectives stated in the Purpose and Need</u>, not alternative projects.</p> <p><i>Currently information is needed about:</i></p>

Outline Elements	# Pages	Responsible Person(s)	Contents / Data Needs
<p>3.0 Affected Environment</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A brief description of the physical setting for the proposed action 2. Concise descriptions of each component of the environment that will be affected by the project (keyed to issues in Chapter 1 and to impacts in Chapter 4). 3. Maps and graphics as appropriate 			<p><i>Currently, information is needed on baseline conditions (the "existing environment") for the following features:</i></p> <p>*** This section is not <i>required</i> by CEQ for EAs, however, enough information must be provided to make the analysis of impacts (in Chapter 4) meaningful. Often, Chapters 3 and 4 are combined (even in shorter EISs) to enhance clarity and avoid redundancy.</p>

Outline Elements	# Pages	Responsible Person(s)	Contents / Data Needs
<p>4.0 Environmental Consequences</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Direct effects and their significance (including cumulative effects) 2. Indirect effects and their significance (including cumulative effects) 3. Possible conflicts between the proposed action and other agency plans /policies 4. Effects of each alternative, including No Action 5. Energy requirements and conservation potential of alternatives 6. Natural / depletable resource requirements and conservation potential of alternatives 7. Urban quality, historic and cultural resources, and the design of the built environment, including reuse for each alternative 8. Mitigation measures and necessary monitoring 			<p>This section will be completed based on analyses and predictions for each alternative examined in detail, including mitigation measures. A summary will be placed in Chapter 2 as required by 40 CFR 1502.14.</p>