

To help people understand the study and its work, a glossary of terms is provided that explains commonly used terms and acronyms.

Alternative:

An option that attempts to meet the objectives of the study as outlined in the purpose and need statement.

Cooperating Agency:

An agency that has jurisdiction by law or special expertise with respect to any environmental impact involved in a proposal (or a reasonable alternative). Thus, a “cooperating agency” typically has some responsibility for the study’s analysis, specifically as it relates to the agency’s jurisdiction or area of expertise.

Environmental Analysis (EA):

A systematic process for considering environmental factors in resource management projects.

Environmental Impact Statement (EIS):

A NEPA compliance document used to evaluate a range of alternatives when solving a problem that has a significant effect on the human environment. The EIS is actually more than a document; it is a formal analysis process that has a mandated public comment period. An EIS covers purpose and need, alternatives, existing conditions, environmental consequences, a preferred alternative, and consultation and coordination.

Feasibility:

A determination that something can be done to resolve an issue.

Federal Railroad Administration (FRA):

Created by the Department of Transportation Act of 1966, the FRA promotes safe and environmentally sound rail transportation.

Impact:

An economic, social, environmental or other consequence that can be reasonably foreseen as a result of implementing an alternative.

NEPA:

National Environmental Policy Act. This act requires analysis, public comment, and reporting for environmental impacts associated with federal actions.

Record of Decision (ROD):

A NEPA compliance document that states the formal decision made in an EIS. A ROD also describes the environmental factors considered, the preferred plan, and the alternatives assessed in the EIS process.

Scoping:

A process that determines the issues to be addressed in scope of an EIS so that preparation of the document can be effectively managed. The scoping process identifies public and agency

concerns; clearly defines the environmental issues and alternatives being examined in the EIS; identifies related issues which originate from separate legislation, regulation or Executive Order; and establishes state and local agency requirements that must be addressed.

Stakeholders:

Groups and individuals who have specific interests in the EIS, its resources and/or the issues it seeks to address. Also, those who will be affected directly by the EIS' recommendation.