

## 6.0 ENVIRONMENTAL

The analysis of potential environmental impacts as a result of airport development projects is a crucial part of the master planning process. Early consideration of potential impacts can allow for more accurate project budgets and schedules. This Master Plan integrated the evaluation of environmental impacts throughout each chapter, specifically looking at the potential impacts future development projects may have on existing environmental resources. Through the environmental analysis completed as part of this Master Plan, potential environmental impacts were recognized and taken into consideration when determining preferred alternatives.

In this review for EGE, key environmental issues associated with the preferred development alternatives were identified and analyzed in the Inventory and Alternative chapters. As EGE precedes with the recommended development alternatives, additional environmental analysis may be required for each project. The following sections describe the various levels of environmental analysis required by the FAA with the anticipated level of review detailed in **Table 6-1**.

### 6.1 NEPA REQUIREMENTS

Federal agencies are required per the National Environmental Policy Act<sup>77</sup> to integrate the NEPA process into their planning projects. The early integration of NEPA in project planning and development can potentially avoid future delays and conflicts due to environmental factors. This review process in a master plan can help identify future environmental review analysis levels, required permits, and other federal, state and local review process requirements.

There are three levels of NEPA review depending on the scope and potential environmental impacts of the proposed action. These include categorical exclusions (CATEX), environmental assessments (EA), and environmental impact statements (EIS).

Projects that require a CATEX level of analysis are applicable when the FAA has found from past experience with similar actions that they would not individually or combined with other actions create a significant effect on the environment and therefore do not require an EA or EIS. The FAA has prepared a list of actions that are typically categorically excluded which is used as a “quick” reference to determine if actions may be categorically excluded<sup>78</sup>. The CATEX is the most basic level of NEPA analysis and is typically achieved through the completion of a CATEX Checklist. In addition to the list of typically categorically excluded projects, the FAA has also developed a list of extraordinary circumstances, that if found applicable to an action, may require further analysis than that required in a CATEX. In this case, the action may move to an EA. An EA is required for:

- Actions that are not categorically excluded;

<sup>77</sup> U.S. Code, 1969, *The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969*, Public Law 91-190, 42 USC §§ 4321-4347

<sup>78</sup> Federal Aviation Administration, Order 1050.1E, *Environmental Impacts: Policies and Procedure*, Section 307 through 312

- Actions that are normally categorically excluded but involved extraordinary circumstances;
- Actions that do not typically require an EIS;
- Actions that do not create significant environmental impacts;
- Actions that may create significant impacts, but the impacts can be mitigated.

The FAA also has a list of actions that typically require an EA<sup>79</sup>. At the completion and approval of an EA, the FAA may issue a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI), which documents the FAA's determination that the action does not create potentially significant environmental impacts. The final step in an EA is the Record of Decision (ROD) which states the FAA's formal decision to implement the proposed action. If the EA does not result in a FONSI/ROD, the action moves to the highest level of NEPA analysis, an EIS.

An EIS must be prepared if the EA indicates the proposed action's environmental impacts would be greater than the allowable significance threshold and that mitigation would not reduce the impacts below that threshold. An EIS provides analysis and documentation of the significant impacts expected to result from the proposed action. As created for the CATEX and EA, the FAA has a list of actions that typically require an EIS<sup>80</sup>. At the completion of an EIS, the FAA will prepare a ROD stating the FAA's decision on the action.

Both the EA and the EIS are valid for three years after the completion of the draft. If the draft has not been submitted to the approving official within three years of the draft's completion date, a re-evaluation of the draft will be completed by the FAA to determine if the draft is still valid.

## 6.2 ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS FOR PROPOSED PROJECTS

The environmental analysis for the purpose of this Airport Master Plan is not completed to the level of detail required for an EA or EIS. Rather it is intended to provide an overview of the level of environmental analysis that is anticipated for each development project. For the purpose of this Master Plan, the significant preferred airport development projects were evaluated to determine the potential level of environmental review needed per the requirements set forth in FAA Orders 1050.1E<sup>81</sup> and 5050.4B<sup>82</sup>. Table 6-1 summarizes the potential level of environmental analysis required for each proposed project.

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<sup>79</sup> Federal Aviation Administration, Order 1050.1E, *Environmental Impacts: Policies and Procedure*, Section 401

<sup>80</sup> Federal Aviation Administration, Order 1050.1E, *Environmental Impacts: Policies and Procedure*, Section 501

<sup>81</sup> Federal Aviation Administration, Order 1050.1E, *Environmental Impacts: Policies and Procedure*

<sup>82</sup> Federal Aviation Administration, Order 5050.4B, *National Environmental Policy Act: Implementation Instruction for Airport Actions*



TABLE 6-1 – SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW FOR PROPOSED PROJECTS

<b>Project</b>	<b>Environmental Analysis</b>
North Side General Aviation Hangar Development	CATEX
Access Roadways and Parking	CATEX
North Side Parallel Taxiway	CATEX
South Side Development Area	CATEX
Holding Bay/Bypass Taxiway for Runway 25	CATEX
Runway 7/25 Extension	EA

Source: Jviation, Inc.