



Outline for Environmental Narrative

Class 1 Environmental Review

Attached you will find a checklist form (FmHA 1940-20) including instructions for a required narrative in order to request an environmental review from USDA. The purpose of this narrative is to provide USDA with enough background information to complete their review of the project and its impact to the area. Generally, the major concerns of the review are such items as 1) Is the project in a flood plain? 2) Are there impacts to surrounding land use, existing farmland, wetlands, or historical sites, and 3) Are there negative impacts to other businesses or persons as a result of the proposed project. Its best to provide as much information as practical. You should know that USDA could require additional information and/or a public meeting to discuss the project.

To help you through the writing of this narrative, IADG has organized this outline of topics to consider when completing the checklist and writing the required narrative. The narrative itself does not have to be lengthy. After reviewing the following bullet points, just describe your project. If you have questions, please call Bruce Nuzum at IADG 515.223.4817 or the USDA contact person as indicated in the application package provided by IADG.

Checklist Form

Item

1. **Has an Environmental Impact Statement been completed? Yes/No** Usually REDL&G projects have **not** had an environmental impact analysis done. A no answer is fine, you just need to describe the project with a narrative.
2. **Have you sent a project description to State Historical Preservation Office? Yes/No** If you have previously provided information to SHPO please indicate here. Most times, information needs to be sent to SHPO. USDA will do that as part of their review unless you have previously done so.
3. **Are any of the following land uses affected? Yes/No** For each of the 32 items on the remainder of this page, check a “yes” or “no” relating to whether or not the surrounding land use is affected by the project. It is common to answer “no” for most of the items.
4. **Now Sign and Date the Form.**

Narrative

Complete instructions for the narrative and all 17 topics are included in the pages after the checklist form. The good news is that a Class 1 review requires that you respond to only items 1, 2, 13, 15, 16, 17 plus any of the items that are checked “yes” on the checklist form that aren’t covered by these 6 topics.

Please keep in mind that you don’t have to write a novel. Just enough detail to explain the topic.

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Narrative Outline

- Start with a quick summary of your project. Is it a business expansion? A new community facility? A renovation project? Just hit the highlights so USDA knows what is proposed. Now you're ready to address the required topics.
1. **Primary Beneficiaries:** Describe who will benefit from the project. Your description should include both direct and indirect benefits. Possible beneficiaries:
 - New employees to be hired as a result of a business expansion/location? How many new jobs?
 - Retained employees that will keep their job as a result of the expansion happening at the existing location? How many jobs will be retained?
 - Will other businesses expand as a result? Suppliers, Distributions, etc.
 - What about the indirect benefit to the local economy of these new/expanded jobs and businesses?
 - If the project is a new community facility, who will benefit and why? Local residents? New or expanded services for the community?
 - Will it help retain the workforce? Attract new residents? Assist the efforts of the local community development organizations?
 2. **Area Description:** Describe and identify the project site.
 - Give the address and legal description of the project.
 - Give the name of the community and the population.
 - What is the present use of the land? Is it part of an industrial park? A redevelopment site?
 - What street or highway serves the site?
 - Describe the topography of the site. Flat? Rolling?
 - Is the necessary infrastructure to the site? If not, where is it coming from and when will it be constructed?
 - Does zoning match the intended use?
 - What is the land surrounding the project used for?

As instructed under item 2C, be sure to include the flood plain and topography maps. If you have trouble locating the maps, contact USDA for assistance.

13. **Public Reaction:** Describe the efforts to inform the public about the project and any resulting public reaction, comments, or any objections to the project. You are trying to show USDA that this is a community project and is supported by the citizens of the area. USDA realizes that there is always someone who is not going to be supportive of the project. They are more concerned with the public's opportunity to comment and item 15, "are there any actual damages that need to be mitigated?"
 - Did you hold informational or public meetings? As part of a city council or other public meeting? (If so, attach a copy of the public notice.)
 - Were there public meetings to raise equity or donations to support the project?
 - Newspaper coverage or printed notices?
 - Who is objecting and why?

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15. Mitigation Measures Describe any measures you have taken to avoid or mitigate the negative comments raised in item 13.

- Have you changed the project due to legitimate concerns?
- Are there any requirements from planning & zoning or other governmental bodies?
- Are there damages that need to be compensated?

16. Permits Describe any permits needed for the project.

- Building permit?
- DNR permit?
- EPA?
- ??

17. Other Federal Actions: What other Federal programs or actions are involved in the project?

- Other funding sources? Loans/Grants/Loan Guarantees
- Special regulations?