

# UNLOCKING NEPA

**T**ransformation, the restationing of Soldiers and realignment or closure means changes to the infrastructure of Army installations. Many buildings, roads and ranges will come and go as the Army transforms into a 21st-century force. The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) was enacted to help government decision makers navigate the issues involved in any activity significantly affecting the environment. Using the NEPA process, leaders gain the knowledge to unlock long-term sustainability to support Soldier training and protect the environment.

**EARLY PLANNING**

Take advantage of NEPA guidance early. Timely integration prevents disruption in the decision-making process and avoids costly delays. This allows the decision maker to assess and minimize environmental impacts in the location and design decisions for a range.

**PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**

Soliciting input from agencies, organizations and individuals provides open exchange and results in local assistance and better issue identification.

**ISSUE IDENTIFICATION**

Examining the proposal for aspects likely to affect the environment is the key step in the NEPA process. Include input from the public and other interested parties. Determine the scope, importance and likelihood of each effect. Proper identification helps minimize impacts and capture conservation opportunities.

**NEPA ANALYSIS**

Carefully choose the right level of documentation based on scope of the action, resources affected and intensity of impact. A Record of Environmental Consideration documents use of Categorical Exclusion. An Environmental Assessment considers whether impacts are significant. If so, an Environmental Impact Statement is required.

**APPROVAL CHANNELS**

Make sure all who need to see, sign off and approve the project have done so.



**NEPA Resources:**

- The Army Environmental Reporting Online portal features the Army NEPA repository, with examples of Environmental Assessments, Environmental Impact Statements, Records of Decision and other documents. Army staff and contractors involved in the environment can call (410) 436-1244 for an account.
- Visit the USAEC NEPA page at <http://aec.army.mil/usaec/nepa/index.html>.
- Contact the Army Environmental Hotline at 1-800-872-3845.

**How long does it take? Target Timeline for Environmental Impact Statement approval**

