



# Short Environmental Assessment Form (SEAF) Workbook

## Environmental Assessment Form Guidance Documents

The Short Environmental Assessment Form is designed specifically for [Unlisted Actions](#). It has three parts. The first part (Part 1) is filled out by the applicant or project sponsor. Part 2 and Part 3 are filled out by the [lead agency](#).

Part 1 provides details that will help the lead agency understand the location, size, type, and characteristics of the proposed project. Part 1 can be completed using existing information; either from the applicant's knowledge of the site and proposed activity, or by exploring the information and maps available through the links in this guide. **New or additional studies should not be needed to complete Part 1.**

The lead agency should also review the information provided by the applicant on Part 1 for basic accuracy and completeness. Sometimes, the lead agency is also the project sponsor and there are not other agencies involved. An example of this is when a municipality adopts a local law. In such circumstances, the lead agency would also be required to complete the Part 1 as the project sponsor.

Part 2 is used to help the lead agency identify potential impacts that may result from the project. In order to do this, the lead agency may ask the applicant for clarification of information provided in Part 1, or request additional information.

Part 3 is used by the lead agency to determine if the potential adverse impacts identified in Part 2 are [significant](#) or not. Part 3 is also used to help the reviewing agency identify whether the applicant has addressed the potential adverse impacts as part of the project design.

## When to Use the Short Environmental Assessment Form

The Short Environmental Assessment Form (SEAF) is used when a state or local agency has determined that a SEQRA review is necessary, and they have identified the project as being an Unlisted Action. Note that a SEAF cannot be used to evaluate a [Type I Action](#).

There are many different kinds of projects classified as an Unlisted Action. Some are small and uncomplicated, and the SEAF provides enough information for that assessment. The SEAF is designed to be used for those smaller Unlisted Actions where there is less need for documentation and analysis

because of the type, size or location of the proposed activity. Other Unlisted Actions can be larger; more complicated, and may fall just under the [Type I criteria](#) (link leaves DEC website.) In that case, the agency should strongly consider using the FEAF so that additional information can be obtained and used in the environmental review.

For more information on how to decide what type of action a project is and what form to use, see the [SEQR Handbook](#).

## Coordinated Review and the Short Form

Unlisted actions do not always require a coordinated review. Some State and non-state agencies, however, may have their own SEQR requirements for coordinated review. As an example, the NYS Department of Health requires a coordinated review for realty subdivision approvals, even if otherwise classified as an Unlisted Action. Local reviewing agencies or boards should contact and work with other agencies to assure that the need for a coordinated review is addressed.

## How to Complete and Use the Short Environmental Assessment Form

The introductory pages to [Part 1](#), [Part 2](#), and [Part 3](#) of the SEAF provide additional information and instructions on how to fill out the form. When you view these introductory pages, the navigation panel on the left will expand, showing links to the individual questions within that section.

## Part 1 - Project Information (SEAF)

### Short Environmental Assessment Form (SEAF)

#### Part 1 - Project Information

The applicant or project sponsor is responsible for the completion of Part 1. Responses become part of the application for approval or funding, are subject to public review, and may be subject to further verification. Complete Part 1 based on information currently available. If additional research or investigation would be needed to fully respond to any item, please answer as thoroughly as possible based on current information.

Complete all items in Part 1. You may also provide any additional information which you believe will be needed by or useful to the lead agency; attach additional pages as necessary to supplement any item.

## How to Complete and Use the Short Environmental Assessment Form

### The Applicant

- Read over all questions in Part I and gather all current information available on both the proposed project and its location. Having this information on hand will help you complete the questions.

- Use the SEAF workbook to help you find background information, definitions, illustrations, maps, and other data that can be used to help answer each question. In addition to sources of information identified by the workbook, use other existing information that may be available locally. Good sources of information include: site plans or subdivision plats that have been completed on the parcel or nearby parcels, local comprehensive or strategic plans, and other application materials already submitted to the lead agency. Many municipalities have completed open space or environmental inventories or plans, and these can be excellent sources of local information. If the municipality has an appointed conservation advisory council (CAC), consider contacting them for additional information on local environmental resources.
- Offer as much detail as possible to answer each question thoroughly. This will make the SEQR process more efficient by providing the lead agency with the necessary information.
- Sign Part I. Remember that responses to questions in Part I become part of your application for approval or funding, and therefore are subject to both verification and public review.

### **The Lead Agency**

- It is the lead agency's role to review the information provided by the applicant in Part 1, and ensure it is complete and accurate enough to make a reasonable decision.
- Review any maps and other documentation submitted with the application to cross-check and verify the information supplied in the SEAF. Verification can also be done by using the links provided in this workbook for each question.
- A visit to the project site can be very helpful to familiarize the lead agency with characteristics about the location, neighborhood, and project

# Project and Sponsor Information

## Project and Sponsor Information Short Environmental Assessment Form (SEAF)

Name of Action or Project:

Project Location (describe and attach a location map):

Brief Description of Proposed Action:

Name of Applicant or Sponsor:

Telephone:

E-mail:

Address:

City/PO:

State:

Zip Code:

This section provides basic information about the applicant and the action. The purpose is to provide a common description of the project for easy communication between the various involved agencies, the public, and the applicant.

### Name of Action or Project

Insert the common name or title of the project. Examples include:

- "Spaulding Subdivision"
- "Pine Hills Office Park"
- "Acme Plaza"
- "Adoption of Local Law #2 of 2012 (Telecommunication Towers)"

### Project Location

Describe the location of the project. Include the actual address of the project site and add the county it is in. If the site does not have a street address, you can describe the location of the site using identifiable features found nearby (such as "200 feet south of the intersection of Maple Street and Main Street").

If required by the local municipality, also include the tax parcel identification number(s). Tax parcel ID numbers can be found on the official tax map of the community, and can be viewed at the local tax assessor's office.



(Image from the [NYS Department of Taxation and Finance](#))

Attach a map showing the location of the project. This map should be of sufficient size so the reviewing agency knows where the parcel is. This map can be from a [tax map](#), a [topographic map](#), an image from [Google maps](#), or [Bing maps](#), or another similar online mapping program. The map should show the project site boundaries at a scale large enough to display the relevant information about the site. A scale of one inch equals 24,000 feet is generally adequate. A small project site may need a more detailed map at a scale of one inch equals 40 or 100 feet. Select the scale that provides the reviewing agency with a good overview of the project site and the immediate surrounding area.

If the project requires subdivision, site plan, or special use permit approvals, a more detailed map will likely be required as part of the permit and review process. Check with the town, village or city clerk, building inspector, or code enforcement officer for information on permit and mapping requirements. The

location map may be required as part of a more detailed site map, and the municipality may have other requirements that need to be incorporated into the location map.

## Brief Description of Proposed Action

Describe and identify the major elements of the project including:

- The type of activity - such as: residential subdivision, commercial or industrial site plan or special use application, erection of a sign, adoption of a local law, adoption of a local plan, or land acquisition.
- Whether the project is a new structure, a modification of an existing structure or facility, or an expansion.
- The number of residential units planned, the square footage of the structure, the height of the structure, the number and size of lots being subdivided, the number of floors, the number of structures.
- If residential, whether the project includes attached, detached, condominium, townhouse, or single family units.
- For adoption or amendment of a plan, local law or ordinance, describe the basic elements of the law, ordinance, or plan.

## Examples

- **Description of a residential subdivision:** "Subdivision of a vacant 20-acre parcel into four five-acre parcels. Each parcel will have 150 feet of road frontage. Four new two-story, single family homes will be built, each approximately 2000 square feet in size. Driveway access will be provided for all sites off of Maple Street. Individual wells and septic systems will be built for each house."
- **Description of a commercial project:** "Site plan approval for a 10,000 square foot structure for retail space will be built along with a 25-car parking lot, and two access drives (one off Maple Street, and the other off Downey Street). The area is zoned commercial. An exterior lighted, freestanding eight foot high, 24 square foot size sign will be placed outside the Maple Street right of way in a landscaped base. Lighting and landscaping within the parking lot and around the new building will be provided for. Cross-access into the neighboring parking lot will be provided. A fenced in dumpster area will be sited."
- **Description of adoption of a local law:** "Adoption of a local law regulating placement of telecommunication towers within the city. The law regulates tower height, setbacks, co-location, inspections and maintenance, and removal. It also includes tower application submittal requirements and review procedures."

## Name of Applicant/Sponsor

Provide the name of the applicant or the project sponsor, and accurate contact information so the agency can efficiently communicate with the applicant.

# Q. 1, Short EAF (Part 1) Legislative Actions

## Short Environmental Assessment Form Workbook

Does the proposed action only involve the legislative adoption of a plan, local law, ordinance, administrative rule, or regulation?

If Yes, attach a narrative description of the intent of the proposed action and the environmental resources that may be affected in the municipality and proceed to Part 2.

If no, continue to question 2.

### Background Information

#### What are Legislative Actions?

Adoption of local laws, ordinances, regulations, administrative rules, and plans are common legislative actions taken by the State or local municipalities. All are considered discretionary actions and therefore, all require an environmental review prior to their adoption according to SEQR. Because legislative actions frequently affect large portions of, or even the entire municipality, it is difficult to answer many of the location-specific questions in Part 1 of the SEAF.

Board of Appeals approval of a use variance or some area variances is considered an administrative action and would not result in a 'yes' for this question (setbacks and lot line adjustments are Type II actions and do not require SEQR). Please note that some legislative actions are automatic Type I actions and therefore the SEAF would not be the appropriate form to use for the environmental review. In particular, adoption of a county, village, city, or town comprehensive plan, adoption of a zoning law or amendment of a zoning law that affects more than 25 acres are legislative actions, but are defined in SEQR as Type I actions so the FEAF is required. Please use the FEAF for that type of legislative action. If the project only involves a legislative action and no other components, say "yes" to this question.

### Answering the Question

#### If Your Answer to Question 1 is "Yes"

If the answer to Question 1 is "yes", you can skip questions 2 through 20 and instead provide the information needed to complete Part 2 and 3 of the SEAF by including a brief narrative that describes the proposed legislative action. This narrative should briefly describe the intent of the proposed legislative action and the environmental features that may be affected by adoption of it. You should include this narrative as an additional sheet attached to the SEAF.

#### Here is one example of a narrative for a legislative action:

"The Village is adopting an amendment to its existing B-1 commercial business district. The amendment extends the existing district by adding ten new parcels of land, shown on the attached map. The purpose

of this extension is to provide additional business opportunities along Main Street. The additional parcels range from ½ acre to five acres in size and all have road frontage on Main Street. These parcels are currently vacant and not developed. The parcels are a mix of grass and shrubs, and Walnut Creek runs along one side of the proposed extension. In addition to the extension of the B-1 District, the amendment also includes a new development standard that: requires a 50 foot stream setback for any parking lot or structure from the creek, requires natural vegetation to be protected within that 50 foot stream corridor, and requires the Planning Board to ensure stormwater planning protects water quality in the creek."

## Q. 2, Short EAF (Part 1) Agency Approvals

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Does the proposed action require a permit, approval or funding from any other governmental Agency?  
If Yes, list agency(s) name and permit or approval:

#### Background Information

This question asks the applicant or project sponsor to identify all the different agencies that have a role in permitting, approving or funding their project. Identification of all agencies that must approve of, or fund a project is very important because it will:

- Help make the approval process more efficient and consistent.
- Help the lead agency determine if a [coordinated review](#) will be required, and if so, which agencies need to be contacted to establish a lead agency.
- Help ensure that applicants do not miss any important steps in the review and approval process.
- Help the lead agency understand all the public funding commitments possible or needed for the project.

Many unlisted actions will need approvals such as subdivision, site plan or special use permits from the local municipality. NYS and County Departments of Transportation may require road access and design approval before a new road or driveway is built.



## Answering the Question

If **you know** what other approvals, permits or funding your project will need, check the 'yes' box and then list the names of each in the space provided.

If **you do not know** what other approvals, permits or funding your project will need, this information may be found out by contacting one of the following:

- Local building inspector or zoning enforcement officer
- Local town, village or city municipal office, and/or
- Local planning board or zoning board of appeals chair, clerk, or secretary

## Q. 3, Short EAF (Part 1) Size of Project Short Environmental Assessment Form Workbook

a. Total acreage of the site of the proposed action?

\_\_\_\_\_ acres

b. Total acreage to be physically disturbed?

\_\_\_\_\_ acres

c. Total acreage (project site and any contiguous properties) owned or controlled by the applicant or project sponsor?

\_\_\_\_\_ acres

## Background Information

This question helps reviewers understand the extent or scale of a project. The lead agency can use this question to determine what percentage of the total parcel is to be disturbed. Disturbed lands include those that are to be graded, cleared, or built upon. Project's that are large in scale, or that will cause physical disturbance to a large percentage of the parcel may have more potential for adverse environmental impacts.

Disclosing the amount of acreage owned or under the control of the project sponsor is also important because it can help the lead agency determine if there is potential that the project could be part of a larger plan or a future proposed action. If the project is part of a larger plan or future project, then the lead agency may need to expand their evaluation to prevent a segmented environmental review of the project. See [SEQR Handbook](#) for more discussion on [project segmentation](#).

## Answering the Question

Applicants can find the total acreage of the site from a survey of the parcel, if one is required, or from the real property tax map. The real property tax map can be obtained from the local town, village, or city tax

assessor's office. If a survey of the parcel has been prepared, the acreage of the proposed physical disturbance should be shown. If no survey has been completed, the applicant should estimate the amount of land to be disturbed.

### Examples for estimating area

- One acre = 43,560 square feet
- One acre is an area *about* 210 feet by 210 feet
- One mile = 5,280 feet
- The area of a football field, including the end-zones, is about 1.3 acres
- A quarter mile long driveway with a 25 foot wide construction width (which may include grading the road bed, drainage, and installing utilities) will disturb an area of more than three-fourths of an acre.



Figure 2: Site Development Example

## Q. 4, Short EAF (Part 1) Land Uses

### Short Environmental Assessment Form Workbook

Check all land uses that occur on, adjoining, and near the proposed action.

- Urban
- Rural (non-agriculture)
- Industrial
- Commercial
- Residential (suburban)
- Forest
- Agriculture
- Aquatic
- Parkland
- Other (specify): \_\_\_\_\_

### Background Information

This question provides information to help the reviewing agency understand if the proposed action is consistent with the surrounding area. Actions that are in conflict with the current uses in, or character of, the existing community or surrounding lands may have more potential for an adverse environmental impact.

The terms "on" and "adjoining" used in this question are relatively easy to interpret. "On" means physically within the boundaries of the proposed project, and "adjoining" means directly next to and contiguous with the proposed project site. However, the term "near" will mean different things depending on the setting and type of action being considered. For example, when evaluating a six-lot subdivision in a suburban residential district "near" might include a radius of 1,000 feet. However, a neighborhood business in an urban setting might include areas within 500 feet. Or, a retail farm stand in a rural setting might include an area up to 2,500 feet (one half mile) from the proposed project site. Some communities may have "near"

defined in local laws or ordinances and in those cases, that should guide what "near" is in the context of the project. In other places where "near" is not defined, use 500 feet as a minimum distance in urban settings, 1000 feet in suburban neighborhoods, and 2,500 feet in rural areas. However, applicants should use their local understanding of the on-the-ground conditions, and use their best estimation of what nearby or adjacent uses are. Remember, the goal of the EAF is to identify potential adverse impacts, so the term "near" should be interpreted in a way that helps identify land uses that might be impacted by the proposed project.

## Answering the Question

Applicants should use their knowledge of the area and check off all land uses that occur on, adjoining, or near the project site. Local land use maps showing this information may be available from the local town, village, city, or county planning or municipal clerk offices. Some communities may also have comprehensive plans that include helpful maps showing this information. Check with the municipal clerk to find out if any land use maps of the area exist. Online mapping sites, such as [Google](#) or [Bing](#) may be helpful when looking at nearby or adjacent lands. The downloadable program [Google Earth](#) includes a measuring tool that can be used to estimate lengths and areas.

## Q. 5, Short EAF (Part 1) Zoning / Planning Short Environmental Assessment Form Workbook

- Is the proposed action,
- a permitted use under the zoning regulations?
  - consistent with the adopted comprehensive plan?

### Background Information

This question helps the reviewing agency determine how well the project fits in with current or future plans for the area. Understanding whether or not a proposed activity is permitted under current zoning or if it is consistent with a municipality's [comprehensive plan](#) provides a context for determining if the activity is compatible with the community's plans for development. Activities that are consistent are much less likely to result in impacts to community [character](#) or to the environment.

For example, a subdivision of a ten-acre lot into ten new lots in an urban area zoned for quarter-acre residential development would be allowed and consistent with the municipal regulations. However, a subdivision of a ten-acre lot into ten new quarter-acre lots in a rural area zoned for three-acre lots would not be consistent with the zoning regulations.

### How to tell if your project is consistent with an adopted comprehensive plan

Some comprehensive plans include a future land use concept map or text description that details what the community wants for each area in the municipality. In that case, you can compare your proposed project to the future planned uses and determine if they are similar. For example, a comprehensive plan that proposes a retail business zoning district in the location where you are proposing a retail establishment would most likely be consistent.

Other comprehensive plans are more general and do not include a future land use map or they make broad statements about the kind of development desired in the future. In that case, you should review the plan's vision, goals, and recommendations to determine if your project appears to be consistent with them. For example, a proposed project to develop a retail establishment on a side street at the edge of a village that has a comprehensive plan generally describing the community's wishes to concentrate all retail development on their main street, and maintain other areas of the village for single-family residential development would most likely not be consistent.

For help in determining if the municipality has zoning or a comprehensive plan, check their website, or contact the code enforcement officer (or building inspector), municipal clerk, or planning board clerk. Local resources are the best to contact to help you determine if your project is consistent with the local zoning or plan. You may also refer to the list of resources identified in the [FEAF workbook](#). (Link to be inserted here when the FEAF is done)

### Answering this Question

#### a. A permitted use under the zoning regulations?

**Answer no** if the activity is not allowed under the current zoning.

**Answer yes** if the activity you are proposing is permitted under current zoning.

**Answer yes** if the activity is a use that is subject to a special use permit.

**Answer N/A** if the municipality has not adopted a zoning law or ordinance.

#### b. Consistent with the adopted comprehensive plan?

**Answer no** if the activity is not consistent with the municipal comprehensive plan.

**Answer yes** if the activity is consistent with the comprehensive plan.

**Answer N/A** if the municipality does not have a comprehensive plan.

## Q. 6, Short EAF (Part 1) Community Character Short Environmental Assessment Form Workbook

Is the proposed action consistent with the predominant character of the existing built or natural landscape?

## Background Information

Many times 'community character' is interpreted to refer only to the visual or aesthetic features of an area, but it is much broader than that. Community **character** is a term that is used to describe the many different features of a community including population, physical, and natural resources, cultural history, landscape features, design and architecture of buildings, events, and public spaces. Community character is frequently an important aspect of a community that it wishes to maintain. Sometimes, a community desires to improve or enhance its community character. These goals are often described in a comprehensive plan. A proposed activity that is consistent with existing community character, or that can help enhance community character is much less likely to have adverse environmental impacts.

This question is similar to [Question 4](#) in that it explores consistency of the proposed project with existing land uses and landscapes. But, your answer to this question should consider other aspects of community character as well. Review your answer to Question 4 as it will influence the answer to Question 6.

The following may help you answer this question:

- Will the proposed activity introduce a different land use in or near the project site?
- Will the proposed activity have architectural features and site design that is visually consistent with other buildings and structures in the area?
- Will the proposed activity introduce a different level or kind of activity in the area that is very different from what currently exists?

## Answering this Question

Use information that is at hand and readily available to answer this question. Your understanding of the site, the lands around the site, and the community will inform your answer to this question.

A project that is not consistent does not necessarily mean that the project will have an adverse environmental impact. This will be one consideration among many to be evaluated by the reviewing agency in Part 2.

**Answer yes** if the project is consistent with the community character.

**Answer no** if the project is not consistent.

# Q. 7, Short EAF (Part 1) Critical Environmental Area

## Short Environmental Assessment Form Workbook

Is the site of the proposed action located in, or does it adjoin, a State listed Critical Environmental Area?  
If Yes, identify:

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### Background Information

**Critical Environmental Areas** (CEA's) are specific locations in a town, village, city, county, or the State that have this special designation because they have one or more of the following unique characteristics:

- Are a benefit or threat to human health;
- Have an important or unique natural setting (e.g., fish and wildlife habitat, forest and vegetation, open space and areas of important aesthetic or scenic quality);
- Hold important agricultural, social, cultural, historic, archaeological, recreational, or educational values; or
- Have an inherent ecological, geological or hydrological sensitivity that may be adversely affected by any change.

Local governments can identify and designate specific areas within their boundaries as CEA's according to [617.14 \(g\)](#) (link leaves DEC website.) State agencies may also designate geographic areas they own, manage, or regulate. Once an area is designated as a CEA, the reviewing agency must consider the potential impact of any Type I or Unlisted Action on the environmental characteristics of that CEA as part of the determination of significance.

An example of a Critical Environmental Area is from [Warren County](#). The Town of Queensbury has designated a CEA for the [Glen Lake and Surrounding Area](#) (PDF, 257 KB) to recognize the significance of the lake and surrounding ponds and wetlands.

### Answering the Question

All CEA's designated through the SEQR process (617.14 (g)) are identified and filed with New York State. The [DEC CEA webpage](#) provides information about, and links to, maps of the CEA's in the State.

The answer to this question will be automatically inserted on the pdf generated by the EAF Mapper and a report generated. This resource is buffered, so if the project site falls within the boundaries of a CEA or is very close to it, the EAF Mapper will check "yes" on the SEAF Part I pdf and fill in the CEA name, the designating agency, date of listing, and the CEA's purpose. A "yes" answer should be followed up with a check of the [DEC CEA webpage](#) to identify the CEA, its boundaries and its true proximity to the listed

CEA property. If there is no CEA located within the project boundaries, the EAF Mapper will check "no" on the form. If the applicant or project sponsor believes the answer filled out by the EAF Mapper is incorrect, supplemental information should be provided that explains that discrepancy. CEAs are often a work in progress, so it is advisable to check with your local government to see if any CEAs are being developed or proposed.

If the EAF Mapper is not used, the DEC CEA webpage can be accessed to evaluate answers to this question. If the webpage list indicates a CEA exists in the general project area, but no map is provided, contact the CEA sponsor or the local municipality to see if a more accurate location is on file.

**Answer yes** if the project site is within or adjoining a CEA. Identify the name of the CEA.

**Answer no** if the project site is not within or adjoining a CEA.

## Q. 8, Short EAF (Part 1) Traffic / Transportation

### Short Environmental Assessment Form Workbook

- a. Will the proposed action result in a substantial increase in traffic above present levels?
- b. Are public transportation service(s) available at or near the site of the proposed action?
- c. Are any pedestrian accommodations or bicycle routes available on or near site of the proposed action?

### Background Information

Understanding the demands new development places on a community's street and road network is an important part of evaluating the overall impacts of that development. New development can generate or change traffic. For example, enough traffic may be generated by a new land use to create congestion, to change community character, or to require the community to invest in additional roads. Traffic congestion itself results in a number of problems, including economic costs due to delayed travel times, air pollution, and collisions. As one roadway becomes congested, drivers might use other roadways not necessarily intended or designed for through-traffic.

### Answering the Question

#### a. Will the proposed action result in a substantial increase in traffic above present levels?

A formal traffic study should not be needed to answer this question. Instead of a traffic study, use the table below (Table 1) to determine if your project is likely to have significant increases in traffic. This table uses the number of **new vehicle trips** made during peak traffic hours (weekday early morning, and late afternoon based on hours of adjacent street traffic except shopping center based on Saturday peak hour.) to help you determine if a substantial increase in traffic is likely to occur as a result of your proposed



activity. This table assumes that a project generating fewer than 100 peak hour vehicle trips per day will not result in any **significant** increases in traffic. Note that even projects that do not result in a significant traffic increase may still negatively impact traffic in the area. This will be further evaluated in Part 2 of the SEAF.

1. In the table below, match your project as closely as possible to the LAND USES identified in the table.
2. Look at column 2 (THRESHOLDS). If your proposed project is less than this number of units or square feet, then it will generate less than 100 peak hour trips.
3. If your project is below the threshold shown in column two, your project will not result in a substantial increase to traffic and you should check 'no'.

If your project is at or exceeds the threshold in column 2, then your project should be considered to result in a substantial increase in traffic and you should answer 'yes'. In this case, a traffic capacity analysis may be needed to fully evaluate potential traffic capacity impacts.

Table 1 is offered as a suggested way to understand traffic increases and illustrates the traffic that is typically generated by certain projects. This table uses the number of new vehicle trips made during peak traffic hours (early morning and late afternoon) to help you determine if a substantial increase in traffic is likely to occur as a result of your proposed activity. This table assumes that a project generating fewer than 100 peak hour vehicle trips per day will not result in any significant increases in traffic.

If the proposed land use is not included in this table and traffic generation rates are needed, the calculation of trip generation figures may require consultation with a professional in transportation analysis.

Table 1 is meant to be used as a guide, if the referenced ITE guide, or other definitive traffic information, is not available. Take note that the numbers in Table 1 may be revised over time as new editions of the guide are published. Again, however, in the absence of other information or more recent studies, Table 1 should be thought of as a useful guide.

<b>Table 1:</b>	
<b>Land Use</b>	<b>Greater than or equal to 100 Peak Hour Trip Thresholds</b>
Single Family Home	95 residential dwelling units
Apartment (renter occupied)	150 residential dwelling units
Condominium/Townhouse (owner occupied)	190 residential dwelling units
Mobile Home Park	170 residential dwelling units

Shopping Center	6,000 square feet (gross floor area)
Fast Food Restaurant with Drive-in	3,000 square feet (gross floor area)
Gas Station with Convenience Store (Fueling Positions)	7 fueling positions
Bank with Drive-in	3,000 square feet (gross floor area)
General Office	67,000 square feet (gross floor area)
Medical/Dental Office	31,000 square feet (gross floor area)
Research and Development Facility	73,000 square feet (gross floor area)
Light Industrial/Warehousing	180,000 square feet (gross floor area)
Manufacturing Plant	149,000 square feet (gross floor area)
Park-and-Ride Lot with Bus Service	170 parking spaces
Hotel/Motel	250 rooms

From: Michael Spack, Nov. 3, 2010 "Review of ITE's New Recommended Practice - Transportation Impact Analysis for Site Development" and Institute of Transportation Engineers "Transportation Impact Analyses for Site Development", Washington D.C., 2010.

For land use and floor area definitions or other uses refer to Institute of Transportation Engineers Trip Generation 9th edition Washington D.C., 2012.

In addition to the ITE trip generation data, other sources of information may also be helpful for assessing traffic/transportation impacts. For example, in New York City, land uses are significantly better detailed and related traffic impacts are actually based on studies, actual surveys, and established zones within the City.

**b. Are public transportation service(s) available at or near the site of the proposed action?**

Questions 8b and 8c both use the term "near". Since the focus of these questions is on pedestrian access to public and alternative modes of transportation, "near" in this case should be defined to mean "within walking distance", which is typically about one-half mile.

**Answer no** if there are no bus or rail services available at or near the project site.

**Answer yes** if bus or rail service is available at or near the project site. If the project can take advantage of existing public transportation services, you may want to add a note explaining how.

**c. Are any pedestrian accommodations or bicycle routes (including signed shared roadways) available on or near site of the proposed action?**

**Answer no** if there are no pedestrian accommodations or bicycle routes available at or near the project site.

**Answer yes** if pedestrian accommodations or bicycle routes are available at or near the project site. If the project can add to or link to existing pedestrian accommodations or bicycle routes (trails, paths, sidewalks, or bike lanes), you may want to add a note explaining how.

## Q. 9, Short EAF (Part 1) State Energy Code Short Environmental Assessment Form Workbook

Does the proposed action meet or exceed the state energy code requirements?  
If the proposed action will exceed requirements, describe design features and technologies:

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### Background Information

In NYS, the following must comply with the [Energy Conservation Construction Code](#) (Energy Code):

- All new residential and commercial buildings
- All additions to residential and commercial buildings and mechanical subsystems.
  - Subsystems are things like a furnace or boiler, as part of HVAC (heating, ventilation, and air conditioning), electrical systems such as lighting, or water systems.
- All substantial alterations to a building or building subsystem
  - A substantial alteration is where 50 percent or more of a building or building subsystem is replaced.

Any proposed action or project that falls outside of these three bullet points is not required to comply with the Energy Code.

The Energy Code requires minimum standards for energy-efficiency in commercial and residential buildings to reduce fuel needs, lower operating costs, reduce dependence on imported energy sources, and reduce emissions and pollutants.

Exceeding the requirements of the State Energy Code or including renewable energy into the project design could make your proposed project more environmentally compatible, reduce greenhouse gases, and be more consistent with the municipality's environmental goals. This is especially the case if your municipality has adopted the [Climate Smart Communities Pledge](#).

The question also asks if the proposed action will exceed requirements, and if so, to describe design features and technologies. The NY Energy Star Homes Program, the ICC/NAHB [Green Building Standard](#), and the US Green Building Council's [Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design](#) (LEED) all use enhanced design and technology to reduce energy use. These links may be helpful in describing any additional features included in the proposed project.

### Answering the Question

This question will very rarely be answered no. If the proposed project requires a building permit, it will most likely also be required to meet the State Energy Code.

Identifying the extent to which a proposed project meets or exceeds minimum Energy Code requirements will help the lead agency evaluate the level of impact an action might have on the environment. The local municipality's code enforcement officer should be contacted to determine if your proposed project will require a building permit, and compliance with the Energy Code.

**Answer no** only in those rare circumstances where a proposed project will not meet the State Energy Code requirements.

**Answer yes** if the proposed project will meet or exceed the State Energy Code requirements. If the proposed project requires a building permit, then it will need to meet the State Energy Code and therefore, you should answer yes. If the proposed project exceeds the State Energy Code requirements, this is an opportunity to describe how it does so, and what technologies are proposed to be used.

### Other Useful Links

- NYS Code Enforcement Administration - [Energy FAQs](#)
- [Energy Conservation Construction Code of NYS](#)
- [The NY Energy Star Homes Program](#) is administered by the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA)
- Other examples of national programs are the [ICC/NAHB Green Building Standard](#), and
- The US Green Building Council's [Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design](#) (LEED)

## Q. 10, Short EAF (Part 1) Water Supply

### Short Environmental Assessment Form Workbook

Will the proposed action connect to an existing public/private water supply?

If No, describe method for providing potable water:

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### Background Information

New York State's waters are an important natural resource used for industry, agriculture, power supply, mining, domestic consumption, recreation, and for fish and wildlife species. Managing the use of this resource is important for the State's economic growth, and the health of its citizens and the environment.

Water is not an inexhaustible resource, and any proposed action that will impact a water supply needs to be evaluated.

All public water supplies (systems) in NYS are regulated through the NYS Department of Health [Drinking Water Protection Program](#). The Department of Health defines a [public water system](#) as: "...any entity which provides water to the public for human consumption through pipes or other constructed conveyances. In New York, any system with at least five service connections or that regularly serves an average of at least 25 people daily for at least 60 days out of the year is considered a public water system." For the purposes of SEQR, a [private water supply](#) is defined as a water supply that falls outside of the Department of Health's definition of a public water system.

Some unlisted projects will not need a water supply. For those that do, you will need to know if you are going to connect to an existing public or private water supply, or develop a new supply. Private water supplies may come from a dug or drilled well, or a surface water body such as a lake.

If water is required for the project but there is no existing supply, you will generally describe the method to be used for supplying potable water. If you do not know if a public or private water supply exists in the area, contact the local municipality, the local building inspector or the Department of Health

## Answering the Question

### Part 1 (of this question):

**Answer no** if the proposed project will not connect to an existing public or private water supply.

**Answer no** if the proposed project will have no need to connect to any water supply.

**Answer yes** if the proposed project will connect to an existing public or private water supply.

### Part 2 (of this question):

**If your answer in part 1 of this question is no**, but the proposed activity will require a water supply then describe the method proposed for supplying that water. If a new drilled well will be used to supply water, state that here.

**If your answer in part 1 of this question is no**, and the proposed activity will not require a water supply then simply state that the project does not require a water supply here.

## Other Useful Links

- [Individual Water Supply Wells](#) - Fact Sheet #2

# Q. 11, Short EAF (Part 1) Wastewater Treatment

## Short Environmental Assessment Form (SEAF)

Will the proposed action connect to existing wastewater utilities?

If No, describe method for providing wastewater treatment:

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### Background Information

Wastewater treatment is the process of removing physical, chemical, and biological contaminants from sewage. It is essentially a way to speed up the natural purification processes to return the treated water back to the environment with as little impact as possible. Wastewater treatment facilities range from private septic systems to public sewage treatment facilities.

Some unlisted projects will not need to include a wastewater utility. For those that do, you will need to know if you are going to connect to an existing public or private system.

If wastewater treatment is required for the project but there is no existing facility to connect to, you will need to generally describe the method to be used for treating wastewater. If you do not know if a public or private wastewater system exists in the area, contact the local municipality, the building inspector, or the Department of Health.

### Answering the Question

#### Part 1 (of this question)

**Answer no** if the proposed project will not connect to an existing wastewater utility.

**Answer no** if the proposed project will have no need to connect to any wastewater utility.

**Answer yes** if the proposed project will connect to an existing wastewater utility.

#### Part 2 (of this question)

**If your answer in part 1 of this question is no**, but will require wastewater treatment, then describe the method proposed for treating the wastewater produced by the proposed project, such as construction of an on-site septic system.

**If your answer in part 1 of this question is no**, and will not require any wastewater treatment: Simply state that the project does not require a wastewater treatment facility here.

## Q. 12, Short EAF (Part 1) History & Archeology Environmental Assessment Form (SEAF)



- a. Does the site contain a structure that is listed on either the State or National Register of Historic Places?
- b. Is the proposed action located in an archeological sensitive area?

## Background Information

The National Park Service's [National Register of Historic Places](#)\* is a national program designed to identify, evaluate, and protect America's historic and archeological resources. The National Register is the official Federal list of districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects significant in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture. Listing in the National Register of Historic Places provides formal recognition of a property's historical, architectural, or archeological significance based on national standards used by every state.

The State Register of Historic Places is the official list of districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects, significant in the history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture of New York. The same eligibility criteria are used for both the State and National Registers. The [State Historic Preservation Office](#)\* (SHPO) helps communities identify, evaluate, preserve, and revitalize these resources. The State register website may have more up-to-date information than the National register site, but both may be useful to provide information for this question.

In addition to our rich multi-ethnic (American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Black or African American, Hispanic or Latino, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, and White) history and built environment, NYS also has a long prehistory of over 10,000 years of Native American occupation. These [archeological resources](#)\* are usually not as evident as more recent structures and sites, but they are important resources to preserve, and they are very susceptible to development as they usually lie less than a foot or so below the surface of the ground.

## Answering the Question

### **a. Does the site contain a structure that is listed on either the State or National Register of Historic Places?**

The answer to this question will be automatically inserted on the PDF generated by the EAF Mapper. If a listed resource does exist within the boundaries of the project site, or within 500' of the project site, the EAF Mapper will check "yes" on a PDF of the SEAF.

For this question, if the EAF Mapper answers "yes" to this question, the applicant should further investigate historic resources in the area by using the OPRHP web pages described below, If the applicant or project sponsor believes the answer filled out by the EAF Mapper is incorrect, supplemental information should be provided to the reviewing agency that explains that discrepancy. The EAF Mapper

will not include National Register proposals that have not yet been approved by the State Historic Review Board. If there are no listed State or Federal historic resources located in the project boundary or within 500' of it, the EAF Mapper will check "no" on the form for you. A "no" response does not require further verification unless other, substantive, information is known to exist.

If the EAF Mapper is not used to answer this question, applicants can also use the [National Register Information System](#)\* (NRIS). You can search by state, county, or city. The NRIS is arranged by the historic name of the property. If you know the address of the property, but not the historic name, you will have to look at each listing in the county or city.

To find out if a specific property listed on the National Register of Historic Places is located in the vicinity of a property, you can use the Geographic Information System for Archeology and National Register tool on OPRHP's web site (link provided in section "b" of this question).

Because historic names or addresses are needed for the NRIS, locating listed properties in the vicinity of a project may be more cumbersome on this site than the GIS Mapping Tool at OPRHP.

To find out if a property is listed on the State Register, use the OPRHP [Cultural Resource Information System \(CRIS\)](#)\* Mapping tool.

**Answer no** if the proposed project site does not contain any structures listed on the State or National Register of Historic Places.

**Answer yes** if the proposed project site contains a structure listed on the State or National Register of Historic Places. If you answer yes, this may mean the project would be classified as a Type I action. Check Part 617 regulations to determine if the project would be a Type I.

### **b. Is the proposed action located in an archeological sensitive area?**

The answer to this question will be automatically inserted on the pdf generated by the EAF Mapper. The sensitivity of an area for archeological sites is not buffered in the EAF Mapper. If the project site does contain sensitive archaeological resources within its boundaries, the EAF Mapper will check "yes" on a PDF of the SEAF. Sensitivity for archaeological sites usually covers large areas. Therefore, if the EAF Mapper returns a 'yes' for the project site, then applicants should consider having further evaluation or a site specific study of the project area conducted.

If the applicant or project sponsor believes the answer filled out by the EAF Mapper is incorrect, supplemental information should be provided to the reviewing agency that explains that discrepancy. If there are no known sensitive archaeological resources on the project site, the EAF Mapper will check "no" on the form for you.



If the EAF Mapper is not used to answer this question, the OPRHP's [Cultural Resource Information System \(CRIS\) Online-Tool\\*](#) can be used to identify areas within NYS that contain [archeologically sensitive\\*](#) features.

**Answer no** if the proposed project is not located in an archeological sensitive area.

**Answer yes** if the proposed project is located in an archeological sensitive area. If you answer yes, this may mean that the project would be classified as a Type I action. Check Part 617 regulations to determine if the project would be a Type I.

### Other Useful Links

[OPRHP SHPO Online-Tool\\*](#)

## Q. 13, Short EAF (Part 1) Waterbodies & Wetlands

### Short Environmental Assessment Form (SEAF)



- a. Does any portion of the site of the proposed action, or lands adjoining the proposed action, contain wetlands or other waterbodies regulated by a federal, State or local agency?
- b. Would the proposed action physically alter, or encroach into, any existing wetland or waterbody?  
If Yes, identify the wetland or waterbody and extent of alterations in square feet or acres:

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### Background Information



**Wetlands**, streams, lakes, and reservoirs, are all examples of waterbodies that may be regulated by a federal, state, or local agency. Some local communities may have their own wetland regulations. Certain streams, and lakes also are regulated.

Wetlands are known by many names such as swamps, marshes, bogs, and wet meadows. One thing all have in common is that they are areas saturated by surface or ground water. Wetlands also support distinctive vegetation that is adapted for life in wet soil conditions. Standing water is only one clue that a wetland may be present. Many wetlands only have visible water during certain seasons of the year, but are still considered wetlands. In New York State, two main types of wetlands are found: tidal wetlands around Long Island, New York City, and up the Hudson River all the way to Troy Dam; and freshwater wetlands found along rivers and lake floodplains and in low lying areas across the State.

A typical tidal wetland is the salt marsh which is found in the near-shore areas all around Long Island, the lower Hudson River, and along the entire Atlantic coast of the United States. These areas are dominated by grasses and other marsh plants which are adapted to the rise and fall of the tide and the salty water it brings. The blades of marsh grass provide a hiding place for many juvenile fish and habitat for many other animals as well. The grass blades become a vital part of the food chain when they break off and decay, providing food for other animals and adding nutrients to the marine environment. Tidal wetlands in New York State are found on the Hudson River from the Troy Dam south to the southern tip of Staten Island, and along the entire shoreline of Long Island, including the shorelines of Gardiners Island, Shelter Island, and Fishers Island. Wetlands serve many important roles in the environment. These include providing:

- Natural habitat for many species of plants and animals. Wetlands are one of the most productive habitats for feeding, nesting, spawning, resting and cover for fish and wildlife.
- Flood and storm water control by absorbing, storing and slowing down the movement of rain and snow melt that acts to minimize flooding.
- Surface and groundwater protection by absorbing pollutants and contributing water to streams and rivers.
- Erosion Control by slowing water velocity and filtering sediments, protecting streams, lakes, reservoirs and navigational channels. Wetlands also buffer shorelines and agricultural soils from water erosion.
- Water Pollution Treatment by filtering out natural and many manmade pollutants.
- Public enjoyment as areas for recreation, open space, education and research.

### **Answering the Question**

**a. Does any portion of the site of the proposed action, or lands adjoining the proposed action, contain wetlands or other waterbodies regulated by a federal, State or local agency?**

The answer to this question will be automatically inserted on the PDF generated by the EAF Mapper

The EAF Mapper evaluates DEC regulated freshwater wetlands, NWI (federal) wetlands, APA wetlands, NHD waterbodies, tidal wetlands, DEC priority waterbody inventory, and protected streams. The EAF Mapper will not provide information on any local regulations that may affect the project site. In addition, information on federal wetlands and waterbodies are known to be incomplete. Applicants should check with the appropriate municipality to determine if any local regulations apply, and consult with the US Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) regarding federally regulated wetlands and waterbodies that may be of concern.

For this question, the EAF Mapper is a screening tool that informs that a wetland or waterbody is close to or within the project site. If the EAF Mapper has indicated the presence of regulated wetlands or waterbodies, applicants should verify the reported waterbodies on the project site. Names for wetlands and water bodies will not be returned on the form by the EAF Mapper, State wetlands will be coded with a wetland identifier such as "S-5. State protected streams and rivers will be answered with a number such as 876-1, rather than a name. If a code such as this is returned, it implies that the name of the water body can be found in regulation at 6 NYCRR Chapter X (Parts 800-941). In this example, the 876 identifies part of Chapter X where the stream name is located (Part 876 is the Mohawk River Drainage Basin). The hyphenated numbers (i.e., 876-1) indicates the Item number of the water body within that basin. The item number can be used to look up the water body name, class and standard by going to Table 1 (Classification and Standards), in the appropriate subpart of Chapter X. Table 1 is usually located in subsection 4 of the Part. If the applicant or project sponsor believes the answer filled out by the EAF Mapper is incorrect, supplemental information should be provided to the reviewing agency that explains that discrepancy.

If a wetland or waterbody regulated by either the State or federal government does exist within the boundaries of the project site, or within 500' of the project site, the EAF Mapper will check "yes" on the PDF of the SEAF. If 'yes' is returned for Question 13a, then the EAF Mapper should also have filled in the name of the wetland or waterbody. If the EAF Mapper does not find a name, the return value in an answer block will read "State wetland" or "Federal wetland". Note again that information on federal wetlands are known to be incomplete so consultation with the ACOE is necessary. Also, note that Question 13b, and a description of the extent of alteration of a wetland or waterbody, will **NOT** be filled in by the EAF Mapper. If the answer is "yes", applicants must still complete all parts of Question 13.

If there are no State or federal regulated wetlands or waterbodies located within the project boundary or within 500' of it, the EAF Mapper will check "no" on the form for you. If information exists that there are waterbodies on the project site that are regulated locally, or by the ACOE that did not appear in the EAF Mapper return, then supplemental information should be attached to the EAF to identify this. Further information on wetlands and waterbodies can be found in the Environmental Resource Mapper site (see below).

If the EAF Mapper is not used to answer this question, applicants can use DEC's [Environmental Resource Mapper](#) to look for wetlands, protected streams, and other regulated waterbodies that may be contained within your proposed project site.

**To use the Environmental Resource Mapper:**

- Go to the [Environmental Resource Mapper](#) and click on the "Enter Environmental Resource Mapper" link. DEC will be providing additional links to this data in the future.

The map will show whether or not there are any DEC regulated wetlands, streams, or other waterbodies on your proposed project site. The Environmental Resource Mapper does NOT include APA regulated wetlands within the Adirondack Park.

For areas within the Adirondack Park, use the [Adirondack Regional Geographic Information System \(ARGIS\)](#) map application.

The map will show whether or not there are any APA regulated wetlands on your proposed project site.

To find out if there are any mapped wetlands on your proposed project site that are outside of any NYS agency jurisdiction, you can use the use the [National Wetlands Inventory Wetlands Mapper](#). Federal wetland information is incomplete so the ACOE should also be consulted to see if there are concerns for unmapped wetlands.

In addition to these online mapping sites, your local municipal office should have paper copies of the DEC and APA regulatory maps. They may also have local plans, studies, or natural resource inventories that include mapped wetlands and locally designated wetlands.

Lastly, you can also look at the site itself for any standing water or obviously wet areas that have unique vegetation growing on them. Most of the mapping systems described here are done at a scale that does not include wetlands smaller than about 1/4 acre. The fact that they are not mapped does not mean they are not an important resource deserving protection.

**Answer no** if you do not find any wetlands or other regulated waterbodies on your proposed project site.

**Answer yes** if you find any wetlands or other regulated waterbodies on your proposed project site using the resources listed above, even if your project will not physically encroach into the wetland.

**b. Would the proposed action physically alter, or encroach into, any existing wetland or waterbody?**

**Answer no** if your proposed project will not physically alter or encroach into any wetland or regulated waterbody.

**Answer yes** if your proposed project will physically alter or encroach into any of the wetlands, wetland buffer areas, regulated streams, or other regulated waterbodies identified in part a of this question.

## Other Useful Links

The NYS [Freshwater Wetlands Act \(PDF 130 KB\)](#)

Environmental Conservation Law, Article 25, [Tidal Wetlands Act](#)

APA [Freshwater Wetlands Flyer](#)

The [U.S. Army Corps of Engineers \(ACOE\)](#)

The [National Wetlands Inventory](#)

## Q. 14, Short EAF (Part 1) Habitat Types

### Short Environmental Assessment Form Workbook



Identify the typical habitat types that occur on, or are likely to be found on the project site.

Check all that apply:

- Shoreline
- Wetland
- Forest
- Urban
- Agricultural/grasslands
- Suburban
- Early mid-successional

### Background Information

A [habitat](#) is a place where a species gets what they need to survive: food, water, cover, and a place to raise young or grow. Different living things have different needs for food, water, and cover, so each kind of animal or plant has a specific kind of habitat. Habitats can be classified into many types - each with a distinct character influenced by the climate, topography of the land, and soils. New York State has a diversity of [habitat types](#) ranging from the coastal habitat along the Long Island Sound shoreline, to the alpine habitat at the top of an Adirondack peak. Some habitat types are very common and resilient, while others are rare and very sensitive to change.

This question explores the general habitat types found on a proposed project site. The information will help the reviewing agency determine whether an adverse change to the natural resources could occur as a result of the proposed activity.

The habitat types included in the question can be described as follows:

### Shoreline



Shorelines are the fringe areas (both developed and undeveloped) along the edge of a stream, lake, river, pond, or ocean. These areas connect the shallow aquatic portion of the waterbody with adjacent upland. Shorelines provide important environmental functions, such as regulating water quality (including temperature, clarity, nutrients, and contaminants) and sustaining critical habitat for a variety of aquatic and terrestrial organisms (including invertebrates, fish, amphibians, reptiles, shorebirds and waterfowl, and mammals). Shorelines are also important recreational areas. Some shorelines are developed but will still probably have on-shore or off-shore habitats that are very important. When answering this question, be sure to include both natural and already developed shorelines.

### Wetland

See [Question 13](#) for additional information on wetlands.

### Forest



A forest is an area that is covered with mature trees. There are many different kinds of forests in New York, each dominated by one or more tree species. Forests range from boreal forests found at the highest elevations in the Adirondack and Catskill mountains, to northern hardwood forests found in upstate New York, and to pine barren forests found on Long Island. If the location or part of the location of the proposed activity is dominated by full grown, mature trees on it, it would be considered a forest.

### Urban



An urban habitat is found in cities. Dominated by man-made structures, urban habitats include parks, urban open spaces, lawns, and tree-lined streets. Buildings are an important part of an urban habitat especially bridges. Many urban areas have rivers, streams, and lakes within them. These are very important parts of an urban habitat, especially when trees and other plants grow along the shores, certain plants and wildlife species can thrive in an urban habitat where vegetation or appropriate structures for nesting can be found.

### **Agricultural/Grasslands**



This habitat type is dominated by open fields. These can be farm fields that are plowed and cultivated for crops or pasture, or naturally growing grasses, sedges, and wildflowers with little to no shrubs and trees. Orchards and vineyards may also be considered as a type of agricultural land. Common grassland habitats are pastures and fallow fields, hayfields, wet meadows, airports, or even capped landfills.

### **Suburban**

A suburban habitat is found in residential or residential/commercial areas outside of cities. They are also found in hamlets and villages. They are areas having a combination of parks, grassy lawns, non-native and native shrubs, and trees. Some suburbs have many trees and patches of forested areas, while others have virtually no trees. Most suburbs have sidewalks, roads, buildings, parking lots, and houses that are a dominant feature of the habitat. Some suburban habitats also can have wetlands, streams, shorelines, or pieces of other habitats included.

### **Early to mid-successional**



These are agricultural and grassland habitats that occur on sites that have been cleared and plowed (for farming or development), and then abandoned. After abandonment, a variety of grasses and small herbaceous plants grow, followed after a few years by shrubs and small trees. These are habitats that are in a transition from a grassland to a forest. Common plant species found in successional habitats include goldenrods, a variety of grasses, asters, ragweed, Queen Anne's lace, dogwoods, sumac, and red cedar. These are relatively short-lived habitats and after about 15 years, eventually mature into a forest.

### Answering the Question

You do not need to hire a biologist to answer this question. A visit to the site and information provided in this section of the Workbook is sufficient to answer this question. Use the descriptions provided above to help you decide what the predominant habitat types of the proposed project site are. It is very likely that more than one habitat type will occur at the site. Check all boxes that apply.

Some other sources of information to help you determine what the habitat types are:

- Contact the municipal clerk to find out if a land cover or habitat map has been created for the area. Sometimes these are part of a community's comprehensive plan, open space plan, or conservation plan.
- See what land cover is on the site by using [Google Maps](#), or [Bing Maps](#).

### Other Useful Links

- EPA's [NEPAssist mapping tool](#)
- [Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy \(CWCS\) Plan](#):
- [Tidal Wetlands](#)
- [Freshwater Wetlands](#)
- [Ecological Communities of New York State](#)
- [Natural Heritage Community Guides](#)
- [Shoreline Protection Guide \(PDF\)](#) and [Shoreline Protection Webpage](#)
- [New York Nature Explorer](#)



# Q. 15, Short EAF (Part 1) Endangered / Threatened Species

## Short Environmental Assessment Form Workbook



Does the site of the proposed action contain any species of animal, or associated habitats, listed by the State or Federal government as threatened or endangered?

### Background Information

Threatened and endangered species are protected by both State and federal laws. These species, along with the habitats that support them are considered sensitive resources. This question asks the applicant to identify whether any threatened or endangered species (animals) and their associated habitats are present on the project site.

### Answering the Question

The answer to this question will be automatically inserted on the pdf generated by the EAF Mapper. If endangered or threatened species or their associated habitats are known to be within the boundaries of the project site, the EAF Mapper will check "yes" on a PDF of the SEAF. If 'yes' is returned for Question 15, then applicants should investigate further, guided by the instructions below, to identify what species are known to be present. If the applicant or project sponsor believes the answer filled out by the EAF Mapper is incorrect, supplemental information should be provided to the reviewing agency that explains that discrepancy.

If there are no known endangered or threatened species or associated habitats located within the project boundary, the EAF Mapper will check "no" on the form for you.

If the EAF Mapper is not used to answer this question, it does not mean that answering the question requires completion of a site-specific wildlife or plant inventory. There are many sources of already available information that you can easily access to find out whether any threatened or endangered species and their habitats are found on your project site. In order to answer this question, you will need to access the DEC website to get this information. The following links will be helpful sources of information:

The [Environmental Resource Mapper](#) and the [New York Nature Explorer](#) are online mapping tools that identify general locations where rare animals, rare plants, and significant natural communities (such as forests, wetlands, and other habitat types) are already documented in New York. If this tool indicates that a plant or animal species occurs on your proposed project site, you should seek additional information from other sources listed below to confirm that these are threatened or endangered species.

You may also find that information on endangered and threatened species has already been collected for the municipality. Contact the town/city/village clerk to find out if a local comprehensive plan, open space plan, or wildlife and plant inventory has already developed for the area. Often, these documents include lists or maps that will be helpful to you in answering this question.

Some communities also have Conservation Advisory Councils. These local environmental advisory groups, made up of volunteer members from the community, often have already completed local inventories of plant and animal species. They may be a helpful source of information and maps.

Once you have checked with DEC information sources and local information held at the municipality, you can answer the question.

### Answering the Question

**Answer no** if your search finds that there are no threatened or endangered species, or their associated habitats occurring on the project site. Again note that new site specific inventories of plants and animals should not be necessary.

**Answer yes** if your search finds that threatened or endangered species or their associated habitats are known to occur on the project site. Again, note that new site specific inventories of plants and animals are not expected, but additional follow-up consultation with the DEC should be done.

### Other Useful Links

For a list of animals listed by the State as endangered or threatened, go to the [State Threatened and Endangered Species List](#) page. You can also find a [list of endangered and threatened fishes](#) on DEC's website.

For other information on endangered species, go to the [Endangered Species Unit](#) page.

For information on the New York Natural Heritage Program and a list of plants listed by the State as endangered or threatened, go to the [NY Natural Heritage](#) page or the [Biodiversity and Species Conservation](#) Page.

Information on federal endangered species, go to the [United States Fish and Wildlife Service](#) page. You may also find additional information at the [Region 5 Office of the US Fish and Wildlife Service](#).

NYS's [Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy](#) (CWCS) Plan may also have information on threatened and endangered species.

## Q. 16, Short EAF (Part 1) 100 Year Flood Plain

# Environmental Assessment Form Workbook



Is the project site located in the 100 year flood plain?

## Background Information

Floodplains are low-lying lands next to rivers and streams. When left in a natural state, floodplain systems store and dissipate floods without adverse impacts on humans, buildings, roads, and other infrastructure. Natural floodplains add to our quality of life by providing open space, habitat for wildlife, fertile land for agriculture, and opportunities for fishing, hiking, and biking.

Floodplains can be viewed as a type of natural infrastructure that can provide a safety zone between people and the damaging waters of a flood. But more and more buildings, roads, and parking lots are being built where forests and meadows used to be which decreases the land's natural ability to store and absorb water. Coupled with changing weather patterns, this construction can make floods more severe and increase everyone's chance of being flooded.

A 100-year floodplain is the area that would be inundated by the 100-year flood, better thought of as an area that has a one percent or greater chance of experiencing a flood in any single year. The 100-year floodplain is called a Special Flood Hazard Area and is shown on federal flood maps, known as Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM). On the FIRM, these areas are shaded and labeled with the letter "A" or "V" sometimes followed by a number or letter.

## Answering the Question

The answer to this question will be automatically inserted on the PDF generated by the EAF Mapper.

If the project site is located in a 100-year floodplain, the EAF Mapper will check "yes" on a pdf of the SEAF. If mapping coverage is available and the project site is not located in the 100-year floodplain, the EAF Mapper will check "no" on the form.

Note that there is only partial coverage of 100-year flood mapping in New York State. If the project site is located in an area where there is no or partial coverage, then the EAF Mapper will check neither 'yes' nor 'no' and instead will add a message in the report found on the last page of the SEAF Part 1 pdf that says 'insufficient data to answer this question.' If this response is received (neither a "yes" nor a "no"), the applicant should contact the municipality in which the project is located for any additional information on floodplain mapping in the area.

If the applicant or project sponsor believes the answer filled out by the EAF Mapper is incorrect, supplemental information should be provided to the reviewing agency that explains that discrepancy.

If the EAF Mapper is not used, you can also view flood maps and other NFIP products through the [FEMA Map Service Center](#).(link leaves DEC's website) Links on this page will allow you to view the [National Flood Hazard Layer](#) (link leaves DEC's website) using the online map viewer. You can also view scanned versions of FIRMs by using the search box in the upper left side of the page.

Your local town, village, or city hall should have copies of these flood maps. EPAs [NEPAssit mapping tool](#) (link leaves DEC's website) may also help you find floodplain information.



Figure 3: Flood Insurance Rate Map (click the map to see a PDF version (485 KB))

**Answer no** if there is no portion of the proposed project site within a 100 year flood plain.

**Answer yes** if there is any portion of the proposed project site within a 100 year flood plain.

### Other Useful Links

The [National Flood Insurance Program](#) (link leaves DEC's website)

[DEC - Floodplain Management](#)

## Q. 17, Short EAF (Part 1) Storm Water Discharge Environmental Assessment Form Workbook

Will the proposed action create storm water discharge, either from point or non-point sources?

If Yes,

a. Will storm water discharges flow to adjacent properties? \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ YES

b. Will storm water discharges be directed to established conveyance systems (runoff and storm drains)?  
\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ YES

If Yes, briefly describe:

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## Background Information

**Stormwater** runoff comes from rain and snowmelt that flows over land or constructed surfaces such as paved streets, sidewalks, parking lots, and rooftops, and that does not seep into the ground. When this happens, the water picks up and moves chemicals, nutrients, sediments or other pollutants and debris along with it. If this stormwater runoff is not slowed and captured before it flows into reservoirs, water supplies, lakes, rivers, and wetlands, or it flows over on-site wastewater treatment system locations, it can negatively impact water quality or water treatment and supply systems.

For additional information see also the [Stormwater and Urban Stormwater Runoff Facts](#).

Pollution transported by stormwater degrades the quality of drinking water, and damages fisheries and habitats of plants and animals that depend on clean water for survival. Pollutants carried by stormwater can also affect recreational uses of water bodies by making them unsafe for wading, swimming, boating, and fishing.

This question explores what, if any, type of stormwater discharge will occur as a result of your proposed activity. A project may create stormwater runoff that is discharged at a specific location such as a ditch, pipe, or channel ([point sources](#)). Or, a project may result in stormwater that comes from many diffuse sources ([nonpoint sources](#)).

## Answering the Question

Go to the [Stormwater Interactive Map](#) for more information related to the New York State Stormwater General Permit program. This interactive map will help you locate your project site in relation to stormwater related requirements and regulated areas such as regulated MS4 areas, and Watershed Improvement Strategy Areas. This information may also be helpful to you to answer Question 2 of the Short Environmental Assessment Form

**Will the proposed action create storm water discharge, either from point or non-point sources?**

**Answer no** if your proposed project does not include any land grading, land clearing, construction, or expansion of current uses that will result in stormwater runoff. Actions such as placement of a sign are examples of actions that would not result in any stormwater discharge.

**Answer yes** if the proposed project includes land grading, land clearing, construction activities, or expansion of a current land use that will result in stormwater runoff. Some stormwater discharge will likely occur from any of these activities. If your answer is yes, then answer parts a and b of this question. If your answer is yes, then it is very likely that either part a or b, and possibly both, will also be yes. Part a and b will both be no only if 100% of the stormwater will be handled and remain onsite.

**a. Will storm water discharges flow to adjacent properties?**

**Answer no** if stormwater will not flow to adjacent properties

**Answer yes** if the stormwater generated from the proposed activity is likely to flow onto adjacent properties due to the slope of the land, or through constructed drainage systems.

**b. Will storm water discharges be directed to established conveyance systems (runoff and storm drains)?**

**Answer no** if stormwater generated from the proposed activity will not be connected into an existing stormwater drainage system.

**Answer yes** if the stormwater generated from the proposed activity will be managed by connecting into an existing stormwater drainage system. These include storm drains.

If your proposed activity is directing stormwater runoff into an existing system, describe what that system is. An example of this would be "All water from roof gutters and parking lot drainage will be moved to an existing storm drain located at the southeastern corner of the parcel. This storm drain is part of the municipal stormwater system already existing along East Street."

**Other Useful Links**

- NYS DEC's [Stormwater](#) page
- NYS DEC's [Construction Stormwater Toolbox](#) page

## Q. 18, Short EAF (Part 1) Impoundments

### Short Environmental Assessment Form Workbook

Does the proposed action include construction or other activities that result in the impoundment of water or other liquids (e.g. retention pond, waste lagoon, dam)?

If Yes, explain purpose and size:

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## Background Information

This question explores whether the proposed project includes any activities that will result in the impoundment of liquids. Impoundments can include recreational ponds, retention ponds built to control stormwater runoff, waste lagoons, or dams. Liquids stored behind a dam or in an impoundment represents potential energy which can create a hazard to life and property located downstream of the dam. Construction of impoundments can also adversely impact natural resources, negatively impact water supplies, or create breeding locations for disease carrying mosquitoes. Clearing, grading, and excavation of an impoundment will remove vegetation, can disrupt wildlife habitats, and can impact the natural flow of water. These are topics that the reviewing agency will need to explore in Part 2 when determining what impacts may occur and how significant they might be. In answering this question, the applicant may also identify permits that would be required or construction standards that will need to be followed for a proposed impoundment.

## Answering the Question

**Answer no** if no impoundment will be constructed as part of your project.

**Answer yes** if some kind of impoundment will be constructed as part of your project, and describe the purpose and size. For example, "A stormwater retention pond will be constructed to control water runoff from the project and will be  $\frac{1}{4}$  acre in size."

## For More Information

In order to construct a pond or impoundment properly, technical assistance is necessary for the siting and design. If an impoundment is being created by constructing a dam, you will need to hire a licensed professional engineer. Some assistance may be available on a limited basis through the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service, the county Soil and Water Conservation Service, and the county Cornell Cooperative Extension offices. Please contact them for more information and for the names of consultants in your area that can help with the design and siting of a pond or impoundment.

Depending on the type of impoundment, a permit may be required. You may require a Dam Safety Permit, a Stream Protection Permit, a Freshwater Wetland Permit, a Mined Land Reclamation Permit or other approvals. To determine if a proposed impoundment site contains a protected resource or construction involves activities that will require a permit from the NYSDEC, contact the Regional Permit Administrator responsible for the area in which the pond or impoundment is to be located.

## Other Useful Links

- [Guidelines for Design of Dams \(PDF, 139 KB\)](#)
- [Dam Safety](#)
- [Constructing Recreational and Farm Ponds](#)
- [Pond Brochure \(Creating a Pond\) \(PDF, 105 KB\)](#)

# Q. 19, Short EAF (Part 1) Previous Solid Waste Disposal

## Environmental Assessment Form Workbook

Has the site of the proposed action or an adjoining property been the location of an active or closed solid waste management facility?

If Yes, describe:

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## Background Information

Solid Wastes are managed in solid waste management facilities. There are many different kinds of solid waste management facilities in New York. They range from construction and demolition processing facilities to solid waste landfills. Some are closed and not used any more, while others are still active.

Solid waste management facilities, whether closed or active, can discharge pollution (e.g., leachate), especially older landfills constructed before present day more protective construction practices were in place. Leachate can pollute groundwater which in turn, can negatively impact water supplies. Other pollution includes air pollution from decomposing solid waste that can contribute to greenhouse gases and flammable gases that cause safety concerns.

All solid waste management facilities are regulated through 6NYCRR Part 360. The general operational requirements for all solid waste management facilities are contained in the Part 360 regulations, Subpart 360-1. Solid Waste Management facilities are permitted, registered, and controlled at the regional basis.

## Answering the Question

You may be able to answer this question based on your own knowledge of the site and its history. Each [DEC Region](#) has staff that are responsible for permitting, facility inspection, and assessment of facility compliance. You can contact them for information on solid waste management facilities.



There are also many [resources on the DEC website](#) where you can find information about types and locations of active solid waste management sites in New York.

**Answer no** if the project site or adjoining property has not been the location of an active or closed solid waste management facility.

**Answer yes** if the project site or adjoining property is the location of an active or closed solid waste management facility.

Using the information from the DEC website, describe what type of solid waste facility was (or is) on the site, how large an area it covered, when it was opened, if and when it was closed, and other general information about the site.

### Other Useful Links

You can find more information on waste management on DEC's [Chemical and Pollution Control/Waste Management](#) page.

## Q. 20, Short EAF (Part 1) Previous Hazardous Waste Disposal

### Short Environmental Assessment Form Workbook



Has the site of the proposed action or an adjoining property been the subject of remediation (ongoing or completed) for hazardous waste?

If Yes, describe:

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### Background Information

Hazardous waste is a waste with properties that make it potentially dangerous or harmful to human health or the environment. There are many different kinds of hazardous wastes. Hazardous wastes can be liquids, solids, or contained gases. They can be the by-products of manufacturing processes, discarded used materials, or discarded unused commercial products such as cleaning fluids (solvents) or pesticides. If a site has been part of a remediation (clean-up) in the past, or presently, then there is a higher likelihood of significant adverse environmental impacts resulting from development of that site.

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation [Division of Environmental Remediation](#) is in charge of all hazardous waste management programs, including remediation. Their web pages include

definitions, regulations, databases, and other information about hazardous waste. See the additional links at the bottom of this page for further information.

## Answering the Question

The answer to this question will be automatically inserted on the pdf generated by the EAF Mapper. If the project site or lands within 2,000 feet of the project site are or have been part of hazardous waste remediation, the EAF Mapper will check "yes" on a pdf of the SEAF. If the site or lands within 2,000 feet have not been part of a remediation, the EAF mapper will check 'no'. The applicant should follow up on an answer of "yes" by consulting the data bases identified below in this section. It is obviously very important to understand whether or not hazardous waste has ever been a part of the environment in which a project is proposed. If the applicant or project sponsor believes the answer filled out by the EAF Mapper is incorrect, supplemental information should be provided to the reviewing agency that explains that discrepancy.

If the EAF Mapper is not used to answer this question, you may also be able to answer it based on your own knowledge of the site and its history.

If additional information is needed, applicants can do a search of the DEC's [environmental site remediation database](#). This database contains records of the sites which have been remediated or are being managed under a remedial program (e.g., State Superfund, or Brownfield Cleanup). All sites listed on the "Registry of Inactive Hazardous Waste Disposal Sites in New York State" are included in this database. You can search this database by zip code or by exact address.

You can also get information by searching maps using the [DEC Environmental Navigator](#) (Environmental Facilities).

**Answer no** if the project site or adjoining property has not been the subject of an ongoing or completed hazardous waste remediation.

**Answer yes** if the project site or adjoining property is the subject of an ongoing or completed hazardous waste remediation. Using the information from the DEC website, describe what type of hazardous waste was (or is) on the site, how large an area it covered, when it was remediated, or other general information about the site. This information can be found from the [Environmental Site Remedial Database Search Results](#) page, by clicking on the "site code".

**Please note:** The Hudson River is in remediation. The site's name is The Hudson River PCB Sediments. The Site Code is 546031. The site is also a State Superfund Program with a classification of 2. This site includes the nearly 200 mile stretch of the Hudson River that extends from Hudson Falls in Washington County to the Battery in New York City. Dredging has been completed in 2015, however habitat reconstruction is ongoing. Because the EAF Mapper uses a 2000 foot buffer zone for remediation and

hazardous waste sites, the EAF Mapper will display a positive hit or a "YES" return value on your application for sites within 2000 feet of the shore or banks of the Hudson River from Hudson Falls to New York City's Battery and reference the above Site Code. If other remediation sites are within 2000 feet of your project, additional site codes will be displayed.

The [environmental site remediation database](#) offers detailed information regarding the Hudson River and remediation. When using the search, at the top of the search page, enter code 546031 and you will receive a return value of the Hudson River PCB Sediments in detail.

## Signature - Short EAF (Part 1)

### Applicant/Sponsor Signature

I AFFIRM THAT THE INFORMATION PROVIDED ABOVE IS TRUE AND ACCURATE TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE

Applicant/sponsor name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

When you (the applicant) have completed filling out Part 1, sign and date the form in the box at the end of Part 1.

This form becomes part of the application for approval of your project, and is subject to public review.

The lead agency will then take over filling out [Part 2](#) and [Part 3](#) of the SEAF.

**End of Part One**

## Part 2 - Impact Assessment (SEAF)

### Short Environmental Assessment Form (SEAF)

The Lead Agency is responsible for completion of Part 2.

Answer all of the following questions in Part 2 using the information contained in Part 1 and other materials submitted by the project sponsor or otherwise available to the reviewer. When answering the questions the reviewer should be guided by the concept "Have my responses been reasonable considering the scale and context of the proposed action?"

Lead agencies are reminded to be aware that some agencies may have requirements that a project review be coordinated.

### Introduction

The purpose of Part 2 is to use the information from Part 1 to identify potential adverse impacts that need further consideration by the reviewing agency. The questions included in Part 2 are designed to help the reviewing agency identify what, if any, impacts may occur as a result of the project. Part 2 is also used to decide whether those impacts will have no impact or a small impact, or a moderate to large impact.

Nothing in this workbook, particularly the guidance offered in Part 2 and 3, is found in regulation. While the EAF's need to be completed according to Part 617 regulations, interpretation on the size or significance of an impact is at the discretion of the reviewing agency.

Completing Part 2 will help identify any topics that need to be discussed further in Part 3. Taken together, Part 2 and Part 3 will help the reviewing agency determine if a negative declaration is appropriate, and if not, formulate a list or 'scope' of environmental topics that will need to be addressed further in an environmental impact statement.

## Importance of Scale and Context

When you have determined that a potential impact may occur, you will also need to decide if that impact will be small or moderate to large. This decision should be based on the magnitude of the potential impact. Magnitude is not just the physical size of the project in feet or acres. Magnitude considers the scale, context and severity of a project.

### Scale

Scale refers to both the size and the intensity of the project. The scale of a project can be measured several ways. It includes the overall size of the project site, the number of buildings or structures proposed, the size of the parking lot, or the height and other dimensions of buildings. It also refers to features that measure the intensity of the project such as the amount of traffic that will be generated, or the amount of land to be cleared and graded.

### Context

Context refers to the conditions on the project site and its relation to adjacent parcels, the neighborhood, and the community as a whole. Similar projects in different settings may have very different environmental impacts. For example: construction of a commercial building that is 10,000 square feet in size in a community that is already developed, has public water, sewer and storm drains, and is on a lot that has already been cleared will have very different impacts than the same sized and scaled project built in a rural, undeveloped community, with no public infrastructure, and little other development nearby. In this example, the scale is similar but the context is very different.

### Measuring Impacts

An impact is measured by its magnitude. The magnitude of an impact depends on the overall size, setting, and severity of the impact. A project that will disturb a few hundred square feet of land might be considered small in area, but if it destroys 100% of a rare species habitat, the severity of that impact would be considered large. Likewise, the construction of a warehouse in an established industrial district might be large in area, but the severity of the impact might be considered quite small, or even non-existent.

The magnitude of an impact should be determined based, as much as possible, on the facts provided in Part 1, and on the scale and context of the project. A proposed action could have no impact on the environment, or an impact could be small, or moderate to large. Part 2 asks reviewing agencies to identify if an impact will occur, and if so, what size that impact will be.

- **No Impact:** No impact will occur if the proposed action is consistent with the community's adopted plan and zoning, does not cause a change in the intensity of land use in the area, does not change the quality of the existing community or its character, does not change or impact any environmental resource or infrastructure, or create a hazard to human health as identified in Part 1.

- **Small Impact:** These are impacts that are minor in magnitude and that have small or limited effects on environmental resources. Small impacts may also occur when an impact is limited to a small area. Small impacts are usually isolated, of minimal size, intermittent or short in duration (days to weeks), and do not affect rare or unusual species, habitats, or other resources. Small impacts include those that would generally be considered negligible and minor. These are often impacts from activities or resources that are not regulated or protected by any local, State or national agency.
- **Moderate Impact:** These are impacts that are moderate in magnitude and that have more impact on environmental resources. Moderate impacts can also occur when the impact affects a larger part of the parcel or even a small area extending just beyond the parcel. Moderate environmental impacts may be either isolated (only in one location), or of regional concern. They generally are longer lasting (moderate in duration in weeks or several months), are largely reversible and can be readily addressed through mitigation measures or project changes. The resources affected often have broader local or regional concern and often are activities or resources that are regulated or protected by some local, State, or national agency.
- **Large Impact:** These are impacts that are severe in magnitude or cover larger areas in the neighborhood or community. The environmental impacts anticipated could be irreversible, challenging to mitigate, of wide regional scale, or of long duration. A large impact may also be unlikely to occur, but if it does, would be very damaging to the environment. The resources affected often have broader local or regional concern and often are activities or resources that are regulated or protected by some local, State, or national agency.

These descriptions of no impact, or small, moderate, and large impacts are not always cut and dry however. An impact to a very small area that is home to a rare species would generally be considered a large impact because it could severely impact that rare species. And a project that affects many acres may not affect any resources. When evaluating whether a proposed action has an impact, and if so, how large it is, the reviewing agency must consider the size, scale, magnitude, and resources in and around the location together.

## Instructions for the Reviewing (Lead) Agency

It is the lead agency's responsibility to answer all Part 2 questions, 1 through 11.

You should use information submitted by the applicant or project sponsor in Part 1 to answer these. The lead agency can request clarification or expansion of information submitted in Part 1 if it is needed to answer the questions in Part 2. However, new information that is requested should come from currently existing, or readily available sources. It is not intended that exhaustive new studies be required to complete Part 2.

You may find it helpful to follow these steps to complete the Part 2 questions:

- Review answers to Part 1, questions 1 through 20. This will help you become familiar with the project area. If you feel there is missing or incorrect information, you can request clarification or additional information from the project sponsor/applicant.
- Using the workbook web pages as a guide, work through answering questions 1 through 11. Each question page includes references to pertinent Part 1 questions, and a process for deciding if there is any impact, and if so, what the magnitude of that impact might be.
- Fill in the Part 2 table on the SEAF.
  - Check 'No or small impact may occur' if you determine that there will be no impact or only a small impact to that resource.
  - Check 'Moderate to large impact may occur' if you determine there may be a moderate to large impact to that resource

Each of the Part 2 questions explores a different environmental topic. These topics, in general are:

**Question 1:** Conflicts with existing plans or zoning

**Question 2:** Change in use or intensity

**Question 3:** Impact on community character

**Question 4:** Impact on critical environmental areas

**Question 5:** Impact on traffic, transportation, or pedestrian opportunities

**Question 6:** Impact on Energy

**Question 7:** Impact on water or wastewater supplies or systems

**Question 8:** Impact on historic, archaeological, architectural, or aesthetic resources

**Question 9:** Impact on natural resources

**Question 10:** Impact on erosion, flooding or drainage

**Question 11:** Impact on human health

## **Moving on to Part 3**

When the Part 2 table is complete, proceed to Part 3.

- If you checked "No or small impact may occur" for **all** eleven questions in Part 2, then you are only required to check the second box at the bottom of Part 3, fill out the lead agency information, date, and sign the form. However, you may use Part 3 to explain any measures or design elements that have been included by the project sponsor to avoid or reduce impacts, and to explain your rationale for determining that the impact will not occur or will be small.
- If you checked "Moderate to large impact may occur" for any question in Part 2, then each of these will need additional evaluation in Part 3. Part 3 will help the reviewing agency decide if the impacts identified are significant and whether or not to require an environmental impact statement.

## **Q. 1, Short EAF (Part 2) Zoning Regulations**

# Short Environmental Assessment Form Workbook

Will the proposed action create a material conflict with an adopted land use plan or zoning regulations?

## Background

A comprehensive plan identifies the goals, objectives, principles, guidelines, policies, standards, and strategies for the growth and development of the community. It is not a law in itself, but New York State statutes require that all land use laws in a municipality be consistent with a comprehensive plan. There are other plans that have land use components as well. These include open space plans, economic development plans, local waterfront revitalization plans, agriculture and farmland protection plans, stream management plans, or main street plans.

Some plans are general in nature and do not make specific recommendations for individual locations in a community. Others are very specific and text or maps exist indicating exactly what is planned for a particular location. In order to answer this Part 2 question, the reviewing agency should become familiar with what, if any plans exist, and what the vision, goals, recommendation, and mapped land use plans may be included.

Zoning is one land use technique used to help implement a municipality's comprehensive plan. It is a locally adopted law that regulates the types of land use, the density of land use, and the size and siting of structures. When a municipality has a comprehensive plan, zoning and other land use laws must be adopted in accordance with that plan. Some communities have a comprehensive plan, but no zoning. Note that in municipalities where there is little or no advanced planning, using SEQR as a substitute for community planning is not appropriate. Lead agencies should not use the environmental assessment form as a place to make up for lack of plans or regulations.

## Applicable Part 1 Information

Some of the Part 1 questions that should be specifically reviewed when answering this question are:

- [Question 1](#)
- [Question 4](#)
- [Question 5](#)

## Analysis

In order to decide if impacts will occur, the reviewing agency should look at the available information and ask:

- Does the community have an adopted comprehensive plan, land use plan, or master plan?
  - Pay special attention to the vision, goals and maps that may be included.



- How do the vision and goals described in these plans compare with various elements of the proposed project?
- Does the community have an adopted open space plan, economic development plan, local waterfront revitalization plan, agriculture and farmland protection plan, stream management plan, or main street plan?
- Do any elements of the proposed project conflict the vision, goals, and strategies outlined in any of these adopted plans?
- Does the community have an adopted zoning law?
  - Check the zoning map, use schedule, and bulk/dimension information and compare to see if the project is consistent with those requirements.
- Will the proposed project require an area variance, and if so, how large?
- Will the proposed project require a use variance?
- Will the proposed project require a change in the zoning law?

### **Will there be an impact?**

Sometimes a community has neither a comprehensive plan nor zoning. Others have an adopted plan, but no zoning, while still others have both.

If there are no adopted land use plans, zoning, or other land use regulations in the community, there is nothing for the project to be consistent with. In that case, check the "No or Small Impact may occur" box for this question and move on to [Question 2](#).

When an adopted plan and zoning, or some combination exists, the proposed project needs to be evaluated to see if it is consistent with them. If zoning exists, an action would be considered consistent if it is a permitted use or a specially permitted use, and meets all zoning requirements for that use and district. When a comprehensive plan exists, an action would be considered consistent if it is not in conflict with the stated vision, goals, recommendations or land use concept map. In that case, check the "No or Small Impact may occur" box for this question and move on to [Question 2](#).

However, if a project requires a zoning change or an area or use variance, or is in conflict with the stated vision, goals, recommendations, or land use concept map of a comprehensive plan, then the proposed action is inconsistent, and the reviewing agency will need to evaluate whether this inconsistency is small or moderate to large. There may be instances where the proposed action is consistent with a plan and not zoning, or vice versa. In that case, some impact may occur and the reviewing agency should evaluate whether this is a small or moderate to large impact.

### **If there is an impact, how big will it be?**

If there will be an impact, the reviewing agency must then evaluate the magnitude of that impact. This will depend on the overall scale and context of the proposed project as described in the [Introduction to Part 2](#). The reviewing agency should [be reasonable](#) when conducting this review.

### **Small Impact**

A small impact could occur if a minor area variance is required because the lot size, building height, or setback requirements cannot be met.

### **Moderate to Large Impact**

If a use variance is required, or the project needs one or more area variances because it cannot meet the required dimensions (for example, the project cannot meet any of the dimension requirements), then it is more likely the project is less consistent with local plans and laws, and a moderate or large impact could occur.

A moderate to large impact could occur if the proposed action is largely or totally incompatible with the land use plans or zoning in the community. Check "moderate to large impacts may occur" on the Part 2 table for this question if any of the following circumstances exist. It is likely that one or more moderate to large impacts could occur under one or more of these circumstances:

- A use variance is required.
- Significant area variances are required (for example, none of the lot, height, or setback requirements are met)
- No zoning exists, but the proposed action introduces a use into an area that is in conflict with what the community plan establishes for that area.

### **Recording your decision**

If you have determined that there are no impacts, or that only a small impact may occur, no further analysis of this topic is needed. Simply check the box under "No, or small impact may occur" next to the question and move on to [Question 2](#). You may choose to include an explanation in Part 3 as to why you decided there were no, or only small impacts, but you are not required to do so.

If you have determined that one or more moderate to large impacts may occur, then additional analysis of this impact will be required in Part 3. You should note what the impacts are, and the reasoning that lead to your decision before moving on to Question 2.

### **Examples**

#### **Proposed Action:**

Construction of a 12,000 square foot building to be used as an antique car repair facility.

#### **Scenario 1**

- The proposed project is in a community that has no comprehensive plan or zoning.

**Then:** The action would not be in conflict and therefore, the reviewing agency would check "no or small impact may occur".

### **Scenario 2**

- The proposed project is in a community that has a comprehensive plan, but no zoning.
- The comprehensive plan is general, but establishes the need for small scale businesses to be encouraged throughout town.

**Then:** The action would not be in conflict and therefore, the reviewing agency would check "no or small impact may occur".

### **Scenario 3**

- The proposed project is in a community that has both a comprehensive plan and zoning.
- The comprehensive plan includes, and the zoning district allows for commercial structures, and specifically allows auto repair facilities.
- However, in order to fit on the parcel, the building is proposed to be 15 feet closer to the property line than called for in the zoning.

**Then:** Because there is a proposed setback that does not meet the zoning requirements, a small area variance would be required, this could potentially be a small impact.

### **Scenario 4**

- The proposed project is in a community that has both a comprehensive plan and zoning.
- The zoning district allows commercial structures, but does not allow any car repair facilities.

**Then:** The action would be in conflict because it is a use that is not an allowed use and a use variance would be required. This could be a moderate to large impact.

## **Q. 2, Short EAF (Part 2) Land Use**

### **Short Environmental Assessment Form Workbook**

Will the proposed action result in a change in the use or intensity of use of land?

### **Background**

This question asks the lead agency to review two related but different aspects of the proposed action: a change in the use of the land, and a change in the intensity of the use of the land. A change in land use could, but does not always result in a change in intensity.

An example of when a change in the use of land would occur is when an agricultural field is converted to an office park or a housing development. A change in intensity of land use could occur when the number of employees in an office building changes, traffic increases, an apartment building is expanded to accommodate more housing units than previously existed, or a municipal park is converted to another municipal use - such as a town hall. A change in intensity is highly influenced by the local context. Some changes in intensity will have very little impact, while a change in intensity in other places could be very significant.

Changes in use and intensity of use usually have some impact on the environment. These impacts could be experienced during construction when the land is cleared and graded, or they may be experienced when the project is complete, and new residents begin using the municipal water supply. The following sections offer guidance on how to identify and evaluate these potential adverse impacts.

### **Applicable Part 1 Information**

Some of the Part 1 questions that should be specifically reviewed when answering this question are:

- [Question 3](#)
- [Question 4](#)
- [Question 6](#)
- [Question 8](#)
- [Question 10](#)
- [Question 11](#)
- [Question 14](#)
- [Question 17](#)
- [Question 18](#)

### **Analysis**

In order to decide if impacts will occur, the reviewing agency should look at the available information and ask:

- Are there similar land uses in the surrounding area, or will the project introduce a new land use that does not currently exist?
- Are there proposed changes to existing buildings?
- Will the existing road system be able to handle the increase in traffic, or the type of vehicles the project will need to accommodate?
- Will there be a higher level of noise or light generated?
- Does the project involve selling or changing public parkland to a different use?

- If so, the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation's [Handbook on the Alienation and Conversion of Municipal Parkland](#) should be consulted.
- Other topics explored in the SEAF are related to changes in land use or intensity of land use. Be sure to also review information on any new transportation systems that may be proposed, new or expanded public services such as public water supplies or waste water treatment facilities, changes in stormwater discharges or the need for new stormwater management facilities, or changes in habitats or land cover types. All of these may occur when there is a change in land use or intensity of land use.

### **Will there be an impact?**

Most proposed actions will result in some change in land use or intensity of land use. There are probably very few that will result in no change at all. One example might be the transfer of ownership of an existing open space property between a municipality and a not-for-profit organization. If the plan is for the land to remain as an open space parcel with the same level of use, there will be no change in its use or intensity of use, and therefore, no impact. Another example might be the subdivision of a commercial property that already has multiple buildings on it. If the plan is for the number of buildings to remain the same, and the use of those buildings will not change, then there will be no impact.

If there is any change proposed to the existing land use, then there may be an impact, and this impact must be evaluated as to its size. If the proposed action is for the land use to remain the same, but to increase the size of the use, or the level of activity of the use, then there will be a change, and the impact must be evaluated.

### **If there is an impact, how big will it be?**

If there will be an impact, the reviewing agency must then evaluate the magnitude of that impact. This will depend on the overall scale and context of the proposed project as described in the [Introduction to Part 2](#). The reviewing agency should [be reasonable](#) when conducting this review.

#### **Small Impact**

If the change in land use is consistent in size with the surrounding development patterns, does not introduce a new land use to the area, create a need for new transportation, water, or wastewater infrastructure, eliminate any important habitat types, and handle all stormwater runoff onsite or with existing infrastructure, there may only be a small impact.

#### **Moderate to Large Impact**

If the scale of the proposed land use is significantly different from surrounding land uses, it may have a moderate to large impact.

### **Recording your decision**

If you have determined that there are no impacts, or that only a small impact may occur, no further analysis of this topic is needed. Simply check the box under "No, or small impact may occur" next to the question and move on to [Question 3](#). You may choose to include an explanation in Part 3 as to why you decided there were no, or only small impacts, but you are not required to do so.

If you have determined that one or more moderate to large impacts may occur, then additional analysis of this impact will be required in Part 3. You should note what the impacts are, and the reasoning that lead to your decision before moving on to Question 3.

## Examples

**Scenario 1:** A six unit subdivision in an already suburbanized area

- Parcel sizes are consistent with the surrounding developed parcels
- The existing water and sewer infrastructure can handle the additional load
- Stormwater runoff will tie in with existing stormwater management facilities

**Then:** The proposed action will change the use of the subdivided parcel, but will not change the intensity of use of the neighborhood as a whole. There will likely be a small impact on the intensity of land use.

**Scenario 2:** A commercial use will remain the same type, but increase the number of employees by 25 percent

- It is located in an urban area
- There is access to public transportation
- Water supply, and sewer service will be provided through existing municipal infrastructure

**Then:** The proposed action will increase the intensity of land use, but the impact will be small.

**Scenario 3:** A commercial use will remain the same type, but increase the number of employees by 25 percent

- It is located in a rural area
- along a local road that will have difficulty handling the anticipated additional commuter and delivery truck traffic without substantial improvements
- depends on a drilled well for water supply and an onsite septic system for wastewater disposal

**Then:** The proposed action will increase the intensity of land use, and may result in a moderate to large impact

## Q. 3, Short EAF (Part 2) Community Character Short Environmental Assessment Form Workbook

## Will the proposed action impair the character or quality of the existing community?

### Background

Many people define their community's character in very general terms: suburban, rural, urban, quiet, safe, scenic, or friendly are terms often used. Others describe community character only in terms of visual features. Community character is broader than this however.

Community character is defined by all the man-made and natural features of the area. It includes the visual character of a town, village, or city, and its visual landscape; but also includes the buildings and structures and their uses, natural environment, activities, town services, and local policies that are in place. Development can cause changes in several community characteristics including intensity of land use, housing, public services, aesthetic quality, and the balance between residential and commercial uses.

### Applicable Part 1 Information

Some of the Part 1 questions that should be specifically reviewed when answering this question are:

- [Question 6](#) (primary information provided for this topic)
- [Question 1](#)
- [Question 3](#)
- [Question 4](#)
- [Question 5](#)

### Analysis

In order to decide if impacts will occur, the reviewing agency should look at the available information and ask:

- Will there be a change to the visual or architectural character of the broader landscape or streetscape, or will it introduce a different sized structure than currently exists?
- Does it create a change in the nature and intensity of land uses in the area? (See your answer to Part 2 Question 2 for this)
- Will there be a change in the nature of housing in the area, such as changing a single family neighborhood into a multi-family one, or change the affordability of housing?
- Does it create the need for more public services such as parks, recreation facilities, police, or fire protection?

### Will there be an impact?

Most proposed actions will result in some change in community character. There are probably few that will result in no change at all. Examples of actions that may not affect community character include passage

of a local law that is not related to land use, or other discretionary actions that require SEQR but that do not result in building or development.

If, after evaluation of the above questions, you find that the proposed action will not affect visual character, intensity of land use, housing, or public services in any way, then there will be no impact to community character.

If a proposed project is going to change the character or quality of the community by impacting visual character, intensity of land use, housing, or public services, then there could be an impact to community character. In this case the impact must be evaluated as to size.

### **If there is an impact, how big will it be?**

If there will be an impact, the reviewing agency must then evaluate the magnitude of that impact. This will depend on the overall scale and context of the proposed project as described in the [Introduction to Part 2](#). The reviewing agency should **be reasonable** when conducting this review.

#### **Small Impact**

The following may result in small impacts:

- The visual character of the area is changed in a minor way but is generally consistent in the design, placement, size, intensity and architecture of the neighborhood or community.
- Demand on public services can be handled by existing resources.
- The balance between retail commercial uses and residential uses does not change in a significant way.

#### **Moderate to Large Impact**

The following may result in a moderate to large impacts:

- If the proposed project moderately or significantly changes the visual character of the area.
- If it introduces a project that is of a larger scale than currently exists.
- Demands on public services or housing will result in the need to extend existing services.

If the proposed project moderately or significantly changes the visual character of the area or if it introduces a project that is of a larger scale than currently exists, a moderate to large impact could occur. Similarly, projects that do place additional demands on public services, housing, or other characteristics, could also have moderate to large impacts.

### **Recording your decision**

If you have determined that there are no impacts, or that only a small impact may occur, no further analysis of this topic is needed. Simply check the box under "No, or small impact may occur" next to the question and move on to [Question 4](#). You may choose to include an explanation in Part 3 as to why you decided there were no, or only small impacts, but you are not required to do so.



If you have determined that one or more moderate to large impacts may occur, then additional analysis of this impact will be required in Part 3. You should note what the impacts are, and the reasoning that lead to your decision before moving on to Question 4.

## Examples

**Scenario 1:** Adoption of zoning change that adds new permitted commercial uses in an existing 15 acre business district.

- Located in an urban area
- The existing water, sewer infrastructure and stormwater management facilities can handle the additional load
- There is access to public transportation within a quarter-mile of the site and the road network is adequate to handle additional traffic in the district
- The district is already built out, and the change in zoning is to allow additional uses of existing buildings

**Then:** The proposed action will not change the streetscape, will not demand more in public services, and will not change the intensity or nature of the district. There is not likely to be any impact on community character as the result of this action.

**Scenario 2:** Construction of a 55,000 square foot big-box style grocery store

- It is located at the edge of a village on a state highway
- It is adjacent to a locally designated historic district
- It is proposed on a former agricultural field and the site is located within a scenic overlay district
- There are no public water, sewer, or infrastructure facilities to this location

**Then:** The proposed action will significantly change the landscape from agriculture to commercial, the views of a valuable scenic resource will be changed, the historic character of the area could be impacted, and there will be a demand for extension of public services. Therefore, there is likely to be large impacts to community character as a result of this action.

**Scenario 3:** Construction of a water tower as part of a new residential subdivision.

- It is proposed to be placed on a lot near existing residences in a suburban subdivision
- The topography is hilly and open, with few trees
- There are no other tall structures in the area and it will be visible from a majority of the houses in the subdivision

**Then:** The proposed action will not demand any public services, nor result in the need for additional housing. However, the proposed water tower will be highly visible in the neighborhood and residents are

concerned about this. Therefore, there is likely to be moderate to large impacts to community character as a result of this action.

## Q. 4, Short EAF (Part 2) Critical Environmental Area

### Short Environmental Assessment Form Workbook

Will the proposed action have an impact on the environmental characteristics that caused the establishment of a Critical Environmental Area?

#### Background

**Critical Environmental Areas** (CEA's) are specific locations identified by local governments or the State. They are designated as such due to their unique characteristics which can include: a benefit or threat to human health; an important or unique natural setting (e.g., fish and wildlife habitat, forest and vegetation, open space and areas of important aesthetic or scenic quality); important agricultural, social, cultural, historic, archaeological, recreational, or educational values; or an inherent ecological, geological, or hydrological sensitivity that may be adversely affected by any change.

It is important to know both the unique characteristics that resulted in the designation of the CEA, and the possible impacts to that feature. Wherever these two might overlap, there is the potential for some impact. The wide variety of reasons for forming a CEA makes it difficult to apply a one-size-fits-all approach to evaluating potential adverse impacts.

If the CEA is an archeological site whose boundaries have been documented as being within the limits of a single parcel, and the proposed project is located on an adjacent parcel, there will be no disturbance of the CEA, and therefore probably result in no impact at all. If the CEA is a municipal water supply, and the aquifer or watershed extends over many acres of surrounding land, a proposed project may have an impact, even though it is not adjacent to the CEA

#### Applicable Part 1 Information

Some of the Part 1 questions that should be specifically reviewed when answering this question are:

- [Question 7](#) (primary information provided for this topic)
- [Question 4](#)
- [Question 12](#)
- [Question 13](#)
- [Question 14](#)
- [Question 15](#)

## Analysis

In order to decide if impacts will occur, the reviewing agency should look at the available information and ask:

- Is there a CEA located on the proposed project site?
- Are there any CEAs in the surrounding area?
- If there is a CEA, for what purpose was it established?
- Do any of the reasons for the CEAs establishment extend outside the CEA boundaries?
  - If the CEA is a water supply, how extensive is the aquifer?
  - If the CEA is a wetland, where does the water come from?
  - If the CEA is a landfill, is there a groundwater connection?
  - If the CEA is a wildlife corridor, what larger habitats does it connect?
- Could there be a negative impact to the CEA, even though the CEA may not be within the proposed project boundaries?

### Will there be an impact?

If there is no CEA within the proposed project boundaries, and off-site impacts will not extend into or affect a nearby CEA, there will be no impact. The reviewing agency can check the "No, or small impact may occur" box next to this question on the form.

If, however, the proposed project does contain a CEA, or a nearby CEA could possibly be affected by the proposed project, you must then determine how large an impact there might be.

### If there is an impact, how big will it be?

If there will be an impact, the reviewing agency must then evaluate the magnitude of that impact. This will depend on the overall scale and context of the proposed project as described in the [Introduction to Part 2](#). The reviewing agency should [be reasonable](#) when conducting this review.

#### Small Impact

A proposed project may be entirely or partially within a CEA. Likewise, a CEA might be entirely contained within, or partially overlap a proposed project's boundaries.

If there is very little conflict between the reasons for a CEA's designation, and the proposed projects goals, there will likely only be a small impact.

#### Moderate to Large Impact

A moderate to large impact could occur if the proposed action is incompatible with the reasons for designating the CEA.

## Recording your decision

If you have determined that there are no impacts, or that only a small impact may occur, no further analysis of this topic is needed. Simply check the box under "No, or small impact may occur" next to the question and move on to [Question 5](#). You may choose to include an explanation in Part 3 as to why you decided there were no, or only small impacts, but you are not required to do so.

If you have determined that one or more moderate to large impacts may occur, then additional analysis of this impact will be required in Part 3. You should note what the impacts are, and the reasoning that lead to your decision before moving on to Question 5.

## Examples

**Scenario 1:** A community college proposes an expansion project that includes an addition to one of its buildings, and additional parking lot space.

- The buildings already exist
- The town has designated its municipal water source as a CEA.
- The CEA boundary is the watershed of the municipal water source.
- Portions of the community college property extend into the watershed
- However, the proposed project is entirely outside of the CEA boundaries.

**Then:** The reviewing agency determines that there will be no impact on the CEA.

**Scenario 2:** A community college proposes an expansion project that includes an addition to one of its existing buildings, and additional parking lot space.

- The town has designated its municipal water source as a CEA.
- The CEA boundary is the watershed of the municipal water source.
- Portions of the proposed project are within the CEA boundaries.
- However, the proposed project is in a remote portion of the CEA, far away from the water supply withdrawal point.
- And, there is a significant forested buffer area between the proposed project and any streams within the CEA.

**Then:** The reviewing agency determines that there will only be a small impact to the CEA.

**Scenario 3:** A developer proposes an eight unit large lot residential development on a hillside in order to take advantage of the views.

- The town has designated the ridge lines and surrounding steep slope areas in the town as a CEA, specifically due to concerns over erosion.

- The proposed development will require re-grading of the terrain to accommodate a new access road.
- Due to the thin soils on the site, the proposed lots will require clearing of large areas to accommodate engineered on-site septic systems.
- The developer proposes clearing trees from the site down slope from each house to take advantage of the views.

**Then:** The reviewing agency determines that there is likely to be a moderate to large impact on the CEA

## Q. 5, Short EAF (Part 2) Traffic & Transportation

### Short Environmental Assessment Form Workbook

Will the proposed action result in an adverse change in the existing level of traffic or affect existing infrastructure for mass transit, biking or walking?

#### Background

Several potential adverse impacts can result when traffic levels increase in a community. More traffic can lead to congestion, which in turn has real economic, environmental, and safety impacts. Traffic congestion is not only annoying to motorists, but can increase economic costs because of extra fuel used, lost productivity, and time wasted. It can also result in higher air pollution emissions, increased traffic accident rates, decreased accessibility to economic centers, and decreased road surface lifetimes.

Like all other topics explored in a SEQR analysis, evaluating the impact of increased traffic levels must be done in terms of the scale and context of the project. Impacts need to be determined through an understanding of the number of new vehicles that will be added as a result of the project, the number of cars already on the road, and the capacity and physical condition of the road.

A proposed action can also increase the demand for public transportation or pedestrian infrastructure. If so, the community may also require additional parking areas, park and ride facilities, or other infrastructure. Proposed actions can also increase the demand for bicycle parking, bike paths or bike lanes. A proposed action may also create the need for more roadway infrastructure than can be maintained.

On the other hand, projects can provide sidewalks, hike or bike paths or trails, or build in park and ride facilities or other infrastructure that serves to promote pedestrian or bicycle movement, which will contribute to healthy communities, decreased reliance on automobiles, and reduce greenhouse gases.

#### Applicable Part 1 Information

Some of the Part 1 questions that should be specifically reviewed when answering this question are:

- [Question 8](#) (primary information provided for this topic)

- [Question 2](#)

## Analysis

In order to decide if impacts will occur, the reviewing agency should look at the available information and ask:

- Will the proposed action result in any change in traffic?
- If there will be new traffic added to the area, how much?
- Do the roads have the capacity to hold the expected level of additional traffic?
- Are there any load restrictions on bridges that will be used for access?
- Are there any safety concerns?
  - Are existing and proposed sight distances adequate?
  - Is there adequate emergency vehicle access?
  - Are there any known or anticipated collision problems?
- Will the proposed action place new or different demands on public transportation?
- Will the proposed action require new public transportation, or expansion of an existing public transportation system?
- Will the proposed action result in added demand for bike or pedestrian infrastructure?
- Does the proposed project include new bicycle or pedestrian infrastructure, or provide for connections to any existing facilities?

## Will there be an impact?

If you determine that the project is such that it will not add vehicles to roads and streets, and there will be no effect on existing facilities for public transportation or pedestrians, then there is not likely to be any impact.

If the proposed project does add traffic and potentially affect public transportation or pedestrian facilities, then there may be an impact, and this impact must be evaluated as to its size.

## If there is an impact, how big will it be?

If there will be an impact, the reviewing agency must then evaluate the magnitude of that impact. This will depend on the overall scale and context of the proposed project as described in the [Introduction to Part 2](#). The reviewing agency should [be reasonable](#) when conducting this review.

## Small Impact

A small impact could occur if:

- The project will add traffic to the area but roads have the capacity to handle that level of traffic

- The project will increase the demand for public transportation, but the existing system has the capacity to handle that increase or a minor upgrade to the system can be created
- The project will increase the demand for sidewalks, bike paths, bike lanes and bike racks, but existing bicycle/pedestrian facilities have the capacity to handle the increase, or the proposed project includes new connections, or expansion of existing infrastructure

### Moderate to Large Impact

Moderate to large impacts may occur if:

- The project adds substantial traffic to the area (determined in Part 1, Question 8)
- The project adds traffic, but not substantial traffic (as defined in Part 1, Question 8) to the area, but due to current conditions, the road does not have the capacity to handle it
- The project will create a demand for public transportation when none currently exists, what exists does not have the capacity to handle it, or the project fails to take advantage of existing capacity, or
- The project will create a demand for pedestrian or bicycle infrastructure when either none currently exists or does not have the capacity to handle it and the project does not include these improvements

### Recording your decision

If you have determined that there are no impacts, or that only a small impact may occur, no further analysis of this topic is needed. Simply check the box under "No, or small impact may occur" next to the question and move on to [Question 6](#). You may choose to include an explanation in Part 3 as to why you decided there were no, or only small impacts, but you are not required to do so.

If you have determined that one or more moderate to large impacts may occur, then additional analysis of this impact will be required in Part 3. You should note what the impacts are, and the reasoning that lead to your decision before moving on to Question 6.

### Examples

**Scenario 1:** Construction of a retail and office complex that is proposed to add a substantial number of additional cars each day (as per Question 8 of Part 1).

- It is located in an urban area
- A public bus system exists and a bus stop exists near the proposed development site
- Sidewalks already exist and the project includes re-construction of new sidewalks to link to existing ones
- Access is to a New York State highway that has been deemed to have adequate capacity for additional traffic

**Then:** The proposed action will not impact traffic, public transportation, bicycling infrastructure, or pedestrian infrastructure. There is not likely to be any impact on traffic and transportation as the result of this action.

**Scenario 2:** Construction of a 50 unit residential complex

- The amount of traffic per day is not deemed to be significant from Part 1
- It is located a half-mile outside of a village on a 20 foot wide rural town road
- There is no public transportation
- There are no sidewalks, bike or hike paths but there are sidewalks in the village and the proposed complex is near the elementary school
- No sidewalks or paths are proposed as part of the development

**Then:** The proposed action is not at a level that would require a traffic impact analysis due to the number of projected units. However, if the road needs widening as a result of the project, the potential impacts of that widening should be analyzed. Further, its location close to the village and the school means that there is a need to connect these new dwellings to the village sidewalks and the school. Because there will be new demands for paths and sidewalks, and because there may have to be an upgrade to the town road, this project may have moderate to large impacts.

**Scenario 3:** Construction of a suburban strip mall.

- In a suburban neighborhood that is serviced by an existing and under-used public transportation system of busses and a nearby park and ride lot
- It is on a vacant lot that has no sidewalks or pedestrian connections nor does it have any sidewalks connecting the lot to the bus stop but sidewalks do exist in other locations nearby
- It is in a neighborhood with young families and lots of children

**Then:** The proposed action will place an additional demand on the public bus system, but adequate capacity exists to handle new riders. However, the issue is that there will be people walking from the bus stop to the new strip mall and no sidewalks exist. However, the project proposal includes the construction of sidewalks to connect the site for walkers to the existing network. Because there is a demand for sidewalks and the project sponsor proposed to add new facilities, the Planning Board deemed this a small impact.

## Q. 6, Short EAF (Part 2) Energy Use & Conservation

### Short Environmental Assessment Form Workbook



Will the proposed action cause an increase in the use of energy and it fails to incorporate reasonably available energy conservation or renewable energy opportunities?

## Background

As explained in [Part 1 Question 9](#), all new residential and commercial building projects, and alterations of more than 50 percent must comply with the [NYS Energy Conservation Construction Code](#) (Energy Code). Going above and beyond the NYS Energy Code requirement might serve to further reduce energy costs and reduce greenhouse gases.

Exceeding the requirements of the state energy code or including renewable energy into the project design could make a proposed project more environmentally compatible, reduce greenhouse gases, and be more consistent with the municipality's environmental goals. This is especially the case if the municipality has adopted the [Climate Smart Communities Pledge](#). To see if your community has adopted the Climate Smart Communities Pledge, you can check the list and map on the DEC website.

There are some nationally recognized performance programs that have stricter criteria than the NYS energy code. One such program is the Energy Star Homes Program, supported by the US Department of Energy. Energy Star Homes are designed to be 30 percent more energy efficient than standard (code compliant) homes. [The NY Energy Star Homes Program](#) Is administered by the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA). Other examples of national programs are the ICC/NAHB [Green Building Standard](#), and the US Green Building Council's [Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design](#) (LEED).

Applicable Part 1 Information

Some of the Part 1 questions that should be specifically reviewed when answering this question are:

### Question 9

If the municipality has adopted the Climate Smart Communities Pledge, the reviewing agency should also be familiar with the contents of the Local Climate Action Plan.

## Analysis

In order to decide if impacts will occur, the reviewing agency should look at the available information and ask:

- Does the proposed project have to comply with the [Energy Conservation Construction Code](#)?
- Does the proposed project incorporate renewable energy into the design and does the proposed project exceed the Energy Code requirements in any way?
- Does the proposed project follow any State or nationally recognized performance programs such as the:

- [NY Energy Star Homes Program](#)
- [ICC/NAHB Green Building Standard](#)
- US Green Building Council's [Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design \(LEED\)](#)

## Will there be an impact?

If the proposed action involves only the legislative adoption of a plan, local law, ordinance, administrative rule, or regulation, there is no direct energy use involved, meets the Energy Code, and therefore, will have no impact on energy.

## If there is an impact, how big will it be?

If there will be an impact, the reviewing agency must then evaluate the magnitude of that impact. This will depend on the overall scale and context of the proposed project as described in the [Introduction to Part 2](#). The reviewing agency should [be reasonable](#) when conducting this review.

### Small Impact

Proposed projects that include land uses similar to those in the surrounding area, and that follow the NYS Energy Code, are likely to have only a small impact. Examples would be:

- Residential development in an already suburbanized area.
- Small commercial uses in a professional office or industrial park
- Uses that are fully compliant with a community's adopted Local Climate Action Plan.

### Moderate to Large Impact

Proposed projects that are much larger in scale than the surrounding land uses, or that are in a remote area with limited energy infrastructure, could have a moderate to large impact. Some examples that might fall into this category are:

- An industrial use on a rural road with electric transmission lines designed for only scattered residential land uses.
- A single commercial use in an industrial park with much higher energy demands than the other uses in the park.

## Recording your decision

If you have determined that there are no impacts, or that only a small impact may occur, no further analysis of this topic is needed. Simply check the box under "No, or small impact may occur" next to the question and move on to [Question 7](#). You may choose to include an explanation in Part 3 as to why you decided there were no, or only small impacts, but you are not required to do so.

If you have determined that one or more moderate to large impacts may occur, then additional analysis of this impact will be required in Part 3. You should note what the impacts are, and the reasoning that lead to your decision before moving on to Question 7.

## Examples

**Scenario 1:** A 5,000 square foot office building employing 20 people is proposed to be built in a village business district.

- The proposed new structure will be required to comply with the NYS Energy Code.
- Most employees will be local residents with an average commute time of ten minutes.

**Then:** The reviewing agency determines that the proposed project will have a small impact.

**Scenario 2:** A business wants to expand its operations by constructing a new 50,000 square foot office building employing 250 people in a city's downtown business district.

- The proposed new structure will be required to comply with the NYS Energy Code.
- Employees will come from a wide area, but the office building is within walking distance (1/2 mile) via existing sidewalks to public transportation (bus service).
- There is a regional bikeway that connects the proposed location with a few surrounding suburban residential areas.
- The proposed new structure will include photovoltaic solar panels on the roof to supplement its electric supply.

**Then:** The reviewing agency determines that the proposed project will have a small impact.

**Scenario 3:** A business with offices in two different urban areas wants to consolidate its operations by building a 50,000 square foot office building employing 250 people in a town that's half way between the two existing locations.

- The proposed new structure will be required to comply with the NYS Energy Code.
- Employees will come from a wide area, essentially the same area as the previous two urban areas.
- There is no public transportation, bicycle facilities, or residences with connecting pedestrian facilities in the area, requiring employees to use their personal vehicles to commute.
- The proposed location will not connect to any existing water supply, and will use a groundwater source to water the lawn and landscaping.
- The proposed location is in a town that has adopted the [Climate Smart Communities Pledge](#), and has a [Local Climate Action Plan](#).

**Then:** The reviewing agency determines that the proposed project will have a moderate to large impact.

# Q. 7, Short EAF (Part 2) Water Supply / Wastewater

## Short Environmental Assessment Form Workbook

Will the proposed action impact existing:

- a. Public/private water supplies?
- b. Public/private wastewater treatment facilities?

### Background

Water is a vital resource, and any proposed action that will require or impact a water supply needs to be thoroughly evaluated. If an action results in overloading the capacity of the water supply system, remedies can be very expensive. If the water supply source is a ground water source, exceeding capacity can have adverse effects on many surrounding land uses that also depend on that source.

Wastewater must also be properly treated and disposed of in order to minimize its impact on the environment. The reviewing agency should be aware too, that while one project may not have an impact on water and wastewater treatment supplies or facilities, many projects together over time may have an impact. This cumulative impact could lead to the need for development or upgrades of public infrastructure.

### Applicable Part 1 Information

Some of the Part 1 questions that should be specifically reviewed when answering this question are:

- [Question 10](#)
- [Question 11](#)

### Analysis

In order to decide if impacts will occur, the reviewing agency should look at the available information and ask:

- Will the proposed project require a supply of water?
  - If yes, will the water be supplied through an existing public or private water supply system?
    - If yes, is the existing water supply capable of handling the proposed project's needs?
    - If no, how will the applicant supply water to the proposed project?
- Will the proposed project require the disposal of wastewater?
  - If yes, will the proposed project connect to existing public or private wastewater treatment facilities?
    - If yes, is there sufficient existing capacity to accommodate the proposed projects needs?

- If no, how does the applicant plan on disposing of wastewater generated by the proposed project

## Will there be an impact?

If the proposed project will not require any water supply or wastewater treatment, then there will be no impact.

If however, there will be a need for either of these, then the impact to any existing water supply or wastewater treatment facility must be evaluated.

## If there is an impact, how big will it be?

If there will be an impact, the reviewing agency must then evaluate the magnitude of that impact. This will depend on the overall scale and context of the proposed project as described in the [Introduction to Part 2](#). The reviewing agency should [be reasonable](#) when conducting this review.

### Small Impact

Proposed projects that will connect to an existing public water supply with adequate capacity, and adequate plans for growth, will likely only have a small impact on the water supply. If the intended water supply is a new ground water well, and there are no known problems with adjacent similar uses using the same ground water supply, there will likely be only a small impact.

### Moderate to Large Impact

If the proposed project will connect to a public water supply that is near full capacity, or the intended ground water source has known limitations, there may be moderate to large impacts. If this is the case, the impacts must be addressed in Part 3.

## Recording your decision

If you have determined that there are no impacts, or that only a small impact may occur, no further analysis of this topic is needed. Simply check the box under "No, or small impact may occur" next to the question and move on to [Question 8](#). You may choose to include an explanation in Part 3 as to why you decided there were no, or only small impacts, but you are not required to do so.

If you have determined that one or more moderate to large impacts may occur, then additional analysis of this impact will be required in Part 3. You should note what the impacts are, and the reasoning that lead to your decision before moving on to Question 8.

## Examples

**Scenario 1:** A Village proposes to purchase five acres of parkland from the local school district.

- The park has outdoor restrooms that are connected to the village water system and sewage treatment system.

- While used by the school district, the park was open to, and used by the public, and usage levels are not expected to change.

**Then:** The reviewing agency determined that there will be no impact to the water supply, or wastewater treatment facility.

**Scenario 2:** A developer proposes a five unit subdivision in a suburban area with no public water supply, or wastewater treatment system.

- The surrounding land uses have no history of water supply problems.
- There are no current or projected high groundwater levels.
- The local health department has approved the location and design of the onsite septic systems proposed for each of the new sites.

**Then:** The reviewing agency determines there will only be a small impact. Be aware that in accordance with NYS Department of Health requirements, this subdivision may need to be treated as a Type 1 Action, or at minimum, require coordinated review.

**Scenario 3:** A developer proposes a 45 unit subdivision on open land adjacent to an existing hamlet.

- The proposed project would connect to the towns existing water supply and wastewater treatment system.
- The town's water supply has enough existing capacity to accommodate up to 400 new residential uses.
- The town's wastewater treatment facilities have enough capacity to handle up to 100 new residential uses.

**Then:** The reviewing agency determined that there will only be a small impact to the public water supply, and public wastewater treatment facility.

**Scenario 4:** A developer proposes a 45 unit subdivision on open land adjacent to an existing hamlet.

- The proposed project would connect to the towns existing water supply and wastewater treatment system.
- The town's water supply has enough existing capacity to accommodate up to 400 new residential units.
- The proposed project will require expansion of the existing sewer district.
- The town's wastewater treatment facilities are running at full capacity.
- The town has agreed to a consent order from DEC that includes upgrades to the wastewater treatment facility in order to bring it into compliance with its SPDES permit.

**Then:** The reviewing agency determined that the proposed project will result in a moderate to large impact to the public wastewater treatment facility.

# Q. 8, Short EAF (Part 2) History & Archeology

## Short Environmental Assessment Form Workbook

Will the proposed action impair the character or quality of important historic, archaeological, architectural or aesthetic resources?

### Background

Historic, archaeological, architectural, and aesthetic resources are very important to many communities. These resources are a component of community character. These resources can be impacted by, for example, demolition, changes to the important architectural features of a building or structure, or introduction of elements that block or change views or streetscapes.

Aesthetic character is tied closely to the kind of architecture in the area. However, other features contribute to the aesthetic character too. These include the streetscape, width and type of road, presence of sidewalks, setbacks and heights of buildings, lighting, and signs. The aesthetic character in some communities is also influenced by nearby land uses, and even the topography of the area. For example, is the project site located near similar land uses or will the proposed project block views to important buildings, hills or mountains in the distance? Take these all into consideration when determining if there will be any impact to important architectural and aesthetic resources.

Some additional sources of information that may help assess impacts to historic resources are the municipality's historian, local historic society, or other knowledge groups such as a landmark agency or committee.

### Applicable Part 1 Information

Some of the Part 1 questions that should be specifically reviewed when answering this question are:

- [Question 12](#) (for historic and archaeological resources)
- [Question 6](#) (for community character information related to architectural and aesthetic resources)
- Also review your decisions made for [Part 2, Question 3](#)

### Analysis

In order to decide if impacts will occur, the reviewing agency should look at the available information and ask:

- Does the proposed project contain, or does it adjoin a structure listed on the national or state register of historic places?
- Is the proposed project located in a national, state, or local historic district?

- Does the community have a local survey, inventory, or list of important historic, architectural, or aesthetic resources, and are there any resources recorded on or near the project site?
- Is the proposed project located in an archeologically sensitive area?
  - If the project site is located in such an area, additional information may need to be collected to see if there are any resources in or near the specific location that may be impacted.
- Are there historic or archaeological resources on the property or nearby?
  - Has an archeological survey been done to confirm if the project site has any such resources?
  - Will the proposed project directly or indirectly affect them? How?
- Is the proposed project located in a scenic overlay district, scenic byway, or scenic area of state significance?
- Is there a specific architectural style that identifies the community or neighborhood? For example, most buildings may be predominantly of colonial architecture, or perhaps all the buildings in the neighborhood are constructed of red brick.
- Will the project block important scenic views, or change the aesthetic character of an area?

### **Will there be an impact?**

There will likely be no impacts if, in reviewing Part 1, you have determined that the proposed project is:

- Not on a site that is listed on the state or National Register of Historic Resources or not on a site that is included in a local historic inventory, if one exists
- Not located in an area having sensitive archaeological features
- Consistent with the architectural and aesthetic character of the area
- Does not block or change scenic or aesthetically important views
- Does not have any impacts on the character or quality of the existing community as determined in [Part 2 Question 3](#)

If the proposed project is on a site that is listed on the State or National Register of Historic Places, is in an archeologically sensitive area, or the reviewing agency has decided that the project is not consistent with the character or quality of the aesthetic character, then there may be an impact, and this impact must be evaluated as to its size.

### **If there is an impact, how big will it be?**

If there will be an impact, the reviewing agency must then evaluate the magnitude of that impact. This will depend on the overall scale and context of the proposed project as described in the [Introduction to Part 2](#). The reviewing agency should [be reasonable](#) when conducting this review.

### **Small Impact**

A small impact could occur if:



- There is no historic or archaeological resource on the site, but you had previously determined in Part 2 Question 3, that there will be a small impact to community character because of concerns over consistency with existing architectural and aesthetic resources.
- There are historic or archaeological resources on the site, but the project design is such that no disturbances or major changes to historic structures will occur. For example, the location where archaeological resources exist will be avoided, or the historic structure on the property will be maintained and restored.
- There are archaeological resources in the vicinity of the project, but a site-specific inventory shows that there are none on the project site.
- Minor disturbances to the resources will occur or minor changes to the aesthetic or scenic quality of the area but these do not destroy the resource or drastically change the character of the area.
- The project includes a locally designated historic site, and historic preservation permits have been issued that are in compliance with the relevant local historic preservation code.

### Moderate to Large Impact

Moderate to large impacts may occur if:

- Historic structures are planned to be demolished or relocated as part of the development plan.
- Historic structures are to be remodeled in a way that destroys or damages its historic value.
- Archeological resources are present on the actual site and will be removed, covered, or built on in a manner which makes it impossible to recover artifacts in the future.
- The project introduces an architectural design that is not consistent with an existing designated historic district and that is not consistent with the long-term vision the community has for its aesthetic character as identified in an adopted comprehensive plan.
- The project changes the character or view of important aesthetic resources.

### Recording your decision

If you have determined that there are no impacts, or that only a small impact may occur, no further analysis of this topic is needed. Simply check the box under "No, or small impact may occur" next to the question and move on to [Question 9](#). You may choose to include an explanation in Part 3 as to why you decided there were no, or only small impacts, but you are not required to do so.

If you have determined that one or more moderate to large impacts may occur, then additional analysis of this impact will be required in Part 3. You should note what the impacts are, and the reasoning that lead to your decision before moving on to Question 9.

### Examples

**Scenario 1:** A lake-side residential condominium is planned

- The area is listed as being archaeologically sensitive due to Native American artifacts
- The project sponsor has provided an archeological survey of the property performed by a trained archaeologist according to SHPO guidelines
- The site has been previously built upon but at a less intense level, and not in the area where artifacts are known to exist
- The project sponsor has adjusted the plans to avoid all potential adverse impacts to the archeological resources described in the survey.

**Then:** The Planning Board has determined that there will be small impacts because the project avoids the identified archeological impacts, and the resources will be preserved

**Scenario 2:** A commercial project is planned on a site that has a historic structure listed on the state and National Historic Register

- There are other structures nearby that are also on the historic register
- The historic structure will be moved, but not demolished
- The architecture of the proposed building is modern, and not consistent with the historic features

**Then:** The Planning Board has determined that there will be moderate to large impacts because of the impact to the historic structure, as well as to the potential impact on the aesthetic character of the area.

**Scenario 3:** A vacant lot located along a village's historic main street is planned to be infilled with a new structure

- There are no structures listed on the State or National Register
- But, all the existing buildings are listed as historic on the local inventory and were built pre 1900
- They are all two story brick buildings
- The new building is consistent in design, setback, height, and architectural style so that it blends in with the existing buildings

**Then:** The Planning Board determines that there will be no impact to the historic, architectural or aesthetic resources of the main street area.

**Scenario 4:** A multi-family dwelling is planned on a vacant parcel that was previously used as a parking lot in a suburban area

- There are no structures on the parcel
- There are no historic resources, districts or artifacts on the parcel or nearby
- The surrounding structures are two-story single and two-family residences
- The new structure will maintain the setbacks, side yards, height, and architectural style of the existing neighborhood

**Then:** The Planning Board determines that there will be no impact to the historic, architectural, archaeological or aesthetic resources of the area.

## Q. 9, Short EAF (Part 2) Natural Resource Impacts

### Short Environmental Assessment Form Workbook

Will the proposed action result in an adverse change to natural resources?

#### Background

Adverse changes on natural resources could be to both the quality and quantity of that resource. This is one topic especially, where context is critical to determine impacts. Changes might be small in size, but could still be large in magnitude, especially if the natural resource is unique and found only in small, isolated locations. Changes may also be small in size, but could also affect the quality of that resource.

Since natural resources on a project site do not typically exist in isolation from the same resources in other locations, it is important to be aware of and evaluate connections between resources on and off the project site. Many natural resources are part of complex ecological systems, so impact evaluation also needs to look at the interaction of resources. For example, wetlands, streams, and groundwater are often part of one system. When you affect one, you may affect the others.

#### Applicable Part 1 Information

Some of the Part 1 questions that should be specifically reviewed when answering this question are:

- [Question 4](#)
- [Question 7](#), and related [Question 4 from Part 2](#)
- [Question 13](#)
- [Question 14](#)
- [Question 15](#)
- [Questions 10, 11, 17, 19, and 20](#) indirectly provide information on groundwater impacts

#### Analysis

Many factors contribute to whether there will be impacts on natural resources, and if so, if they will be small, or moderate to large. Scale and context of the project is crucial to this decision.

While it is not a requirement of the SEAF to compile a comprehensive list of species found on or near the project site, it may be helpful to the reviewing agency to make a list of all the natural resources that may

be on or near the project site. You can develop this list from your own knowledge of the site and from the information you have received from the applicant, including Part 1 of the SEAF.

If the city, town, or village has a [Conservation Advisory Council or Board](#) (CAC or CAB) they can be very helpful in identifying possibly affected natural resources. They may have already compiled an inventory of natural resources, and can help identify interactions between these resources, and potential adverse impacts to them.

In order to decide if impacts will occur, the reviewing agency should look at the available information and ask:

- What natural resources are on the site?
- Are they connected to resources off the site?
- Are there any regulated resources that will be impacted such as wetlands, or streams?
- Does the project require use of groundwater?
- Are there any resources recognized in a critical environmental area?
- Are there any threatened, endangered, or unique habitats or species on the site or that may use the site in some way?
- Will the project result in any air emissions?
- Will any natural vegetation be removed? If so, how much, where and what kind?
- Will there be any fragmentation of important habitat

### **Will there be an impact?**

There is not likely to be any impacts if the proposed project:

- Is not in or adjacent to a Critical Environmental Area (Question 7 and Part 2 Question 4)
- Contains no wetlands or waterbodies (Question 13)
- Contains no animals or associated habitats of species that are listed as threatened or endangered (Question 15)
- Will not change or pollute groundwater sources (Questions 10, 11, 17, 18, and 20)
- Will not result in regulated air emissions (Question 11)
- Does not result in the loss of existing habitat types (Question 14)

If you determine that the project is such that it will not affect natural resources in these ways, then there is not likely to be any impact.

Unless the site is already cleared (such as in a suburb or urban area), many projects that are proposed on a "green" site will disturb at least some natural vegetation. This disturbance and loss of habitat will likely

have some impact. In that case, you should evaluate whether this loss of habitat and natural vegetation is small, or moderate to large.

If the proposed project is likely to have an impact on natural resources, then this impact must be evaluated as to its size.

### **If there is an impact, how big will it be?**

If there will be an impact, the reviewing agency must then evaluate the magnitude of that impact. This will depend on the overall scale and context of the proposed project as described in the [Introduction to Part 2](#). The reviewing agency should be [reasonable](#) when conducting this review.

#### **Small Impact**

A small impact could occur if:

- A small part of the project site is impacted.
- The impact is isolated to the project site, is of minimal size, and does not affect adversely rare or unusual species, habitats, wetlands, waterbodies, or critical environmental areas.
- The impact does not affect any resource that is regulated (such as streams, wetlands, or lakes). For instance, a project site may have state regulated wetlands on it, but the parcel size may be so large that there will be no disturbance of the wetland.
- Air emissions will occur, but they are below the level at which they fall under regulatory control.

In these cases, check "no, or small impact may occur" on the Part 2 table.

#### **Moderate to Large Impact**

Moderate to large impacts may occur if:

- There will be a series of small impacts on more than one natural resource on the site. Projects that have many small impacts should be evaluated to determine if they cumulatively result in moderate to large impacts.
- The impact extends beyond the project site.
- Threatened or endangered plant or animal species, or unique habitats are known to exist on the site.
- There will be an impact to a resource that is of special value to the local community as identified in an open space or land use plan.
- A regulated resource exists on the project site and is going to be impacted. Or, a regulated resource exists on the project site and it also has ecological connections to the same resources off-site and it is going to be impacted. Projects that fragment a particular habitat (such as clearing land from large forest patches) or that sever connections (such as diverting a stream so that it changes a downstream wetland) may also be a moderate to large impact.

- You have already determined from Question 4 of Part 2 that there is likely to be a moderate to large impact on a critical environmental area.
- Groundwater resources could be impacted by pollution, excessive water withdrawal, alterations in flow, or new construction.
- Regulatory air emissions will occur at a level that requires a State Air Emissions Permit.

## Recording your decision

If you have determined that there are no impacts, or that only a small impact may occur, no further analysis of this topic is needed. Simply check the box under "No, or small impact may occur" next to the question and move on to [Question 10](#). You may choose to include an explanation in Part 3 as to why you decided there were no, or only small impacts, but you are not required to do so.

If you have determined that one or more moderate to large impacts may occur, then additional analysis of this impact will be required in Part 3. You should note what the impacts are, and the reasoning that lead to your decision before moving on to Question 10.

## Examples

**Scenario 1:** An applicant seeks a use variance to build a 6,000 square foot non-residential structure on a parcel of land that had recently had a residence demolished and the site was planted to lawn.

- The parcel is at the edge of a developed area.
- It has public water and sewer.
- There are no steep slopes.
- It has no other vegetation or waterbodies.

**Then:** The Zoning Board has determined that there are no natural resources on the site that will be affected by issuing a use variance. Therefore, the ZBA determines that there will be no impact.

**Scenario 2:** A six-lot subdivision is proposed. (Be aware that in accordance with NYS Department of Health requirements, this subdivision may need to be treated as a Type 1 Action, or at minimum, require coordinated review.)

- The parcel of land is part of a larger forested area, 50 acres in size, located in a rural area.
- There are no wetlands, water bodies, endangered or threatened species, or critical environmental areas on or near the project site.
- One and 1/2 acres of forest will be removed to accommodate new homes, driveways, wells and septic systems, and lawns.

**Then:** The Planning Board determines that there will be an impact due to loss of forest habitats and displacement of local wildlife. However, they determine that this will be small in acreage, will not impact

other parcels, does not impact rare, unique or threatened species or impact waterbodies, and therefore decide that this is a small impact.

**Scenario 3:** A commercial use that requires large water withdrawals for a light manufacturing process is proposed.

- The water source is from a well drilled in the same aquifer that serves a public water supply.
- It is adjacent to a regulated stream and wetland complex that has known endangered plants growing there.

**Then:** The Planning Board has identified multiple impacts to natural resources included fisheries, threatened plant species, and water resources. Therefore the Planning Board has determined that this will have moderate to large impacts.

**Scenario 4:** A ten-lot subdivision is proposed.

- The parcel of land contains a regulated stream known for trout spawning
- A wetland five acres in size exists in association with the stream
- The area has the same habitats as a nearby area identified by DEC as being a rare habitat for a wetland plant
- There are slopes in excess of 30 percent on over half of the parcel
- There are areas of shallow soil and exposed bedrock
- In order to access all ten lots, the stream will need to be crossed

**Then:** The Planning Board has identified multiple impacts to natural resources including changes to the stream vegetation and stream bank that could reduce trout spawning habitats, potential adverse impacts to a rare habitat, and impacts of erosion from the steep slopes into the stream. Therefore the Planning Board has determined that this may have moderate to large impacts.

## Q.10, Short EAF (Part 2) Drainage, Runoff & Flooding

### Short Environmental Assessment Form Workbook

Will the proposed action result in an increase in the potential for erosion, flooding or drainage problems?

#### Background

Floodplain systems store and dissipate flood water, add to our quality of life by providing open space, habitat for wildlife, fertile land for agriculture, and opportunities for fishing, hiking, and biking. Floodplains can be viewed as a type of natural infrastructure that can provide a safety zone between people and the damaging waters of a flood. Adverse impacts on floodplains can occur when there is a decrease in the land's natural ability to store and absorb water. When floodplains are paved over or built upon, floods can be more severe, and damaging to both property and natural systems. Flooding can further lead to more erosion and that ultimately can pollute streams, lakes, and wetlands.

**Stormwater runoff** causes erosion. Runoff is greater where there are constructed surfaces such as paved streets, sidewalks, parking lots, and rooftops. As stormwater flows overland, it washes and moves chemicals, nutrients, sediments or other pollutants and debris along with it. If this stormwater runoff is not slowed and captured before it flows into lakes, rivers, and wetlands, it can negatively impact water quality and increase flooding. The impact from stormwater runoff can be a very significant problem in urban and developed areas because that is where there are more impervious surfaces.

Related to flooding and erosion are changes in drainage patterns that can result from land disturbances. Drainage can be directed to stormwater drains, storage, and retention areas designed to slow water and allow sediments to settle out. Or drainage that is not handled properly can cause an increase in erosion, changes in stormwater runoff, flooding, and damage to water quality.

### **Applicable Part 1 Information**

Some of the Part 1 questions that should be specifically reviewed when answering this question are:

- [Question 16](#)
- [Question 17](#)

### **Analysis**

Some projects may be outside of a 100 year floodplain, but still be in an area with known flooding history. Some projects that disturb more than one-acre may be required to have a [stormwater pollution prevention plan](#) (SWPPP) and will need to include engineered or site designed methods to control stormwater.

In order to decide if impacts will occur, the reviewing agency should look at the available information and ask:

- Is any type of land disturbance planned?
- Will there be any increase in stormwater discharge from the site, and if so, how much?
- Is the project site in a 100 year floodplain, or in an area known to have past flooding events?
- If the project is in a 100 year floodplain, will it alter the flow of water or change drainage patterns into the water body?



- Will there be a need for new stormwater retention ponds, or other stormwater management practices? If there are stormwater discharges and no existing conveyance system, what are the plans to address stormwater and erosion from the site?
- If Part 1 indicated that storm water discharges might flow to adjacent properties, where, how much, and what impacts might occur on the adjacent property.
- If Part 1 indicated that there will be storm water discharges conveyed to established systems, is there enough capacity to handle the extra storm water? Do the proposed plans include any upgrades or expansion to that system?
- Is the project going to disturb more than one-acre of land and require a SWPPP and coverage under the stormwater general permit? If it does not disturb more than one acre, but still has some land clearing, does the application include any erosion control and runoff controls?
- Are there any protected water bodies or important surface drinking water supplies nearby that need to be protected from erosion and sedimentation (wetlands, reservoirs, protected streams)?
- Are any stormwater reduction methods included such as minimizing impervious surfaces, using porous materials, or collecting and reusing stormwater?

### **Will there be an impact?**

Projects that require SEQR but that have no land disturbances will not result in any erosion, flooding or drainage issues.

There is not likely to be any impacts if the proposed project:

- Is not in a 100 year floodplain and the location is not in an area subject to flooding in the past; and
- Has no stormwater discharges resulting from paving or construction of other impervious surfaces); or
- Does not involve any land clearing or grading.

If you determine that the project is such that it will not affect flooding, erosion, or drainage in these ways, then there is not likely to be any impact.

Unless the site is already cleared and developed (such as in a suburb or urban area), many projects that are proposed on a "green" site will disturb at least some ground. This disturbance could cause some erosion and runoff, however small. In this case, you should evaluate whether the potential for erosion is small, or moderate to large.

If the proposed project is likely to have an impact on flooding, erosion or drainage, then this impact must be evaluated as to its size.

### **If there is an impact, how big will it be?**

If there will be an impact, the reviewing agency must then evaluate the magnitude of that impact. This will depend on the overall scale and context of the proposed project as described in the [Introduction to Part 2](#). The reviewing agency should [be reasonable](#) when conducting this review.

### **Small Impact**

A small impact could occur if the project will result in one of the following:

- The project is not in a 100 year floodplain, but is in an area that has experienced flooding in the past.
- The project is in a 100 year floodplain, but is a small land disturbance that does not result in a change of floodwaters or drainage to the water body.
- Stormwater discharges will take place but it will not flow to adjacent properties and the project minimizes stormwater through use of porous materials, or collection and reuse of stormwater?
- Stormwater discharges will be conveyed to an existing system and that system has the capacity to handle the volume of water without expansions or extensions.
- The project includes land clearing that disturbs less than one-acre of land and does not require a [SWPPP](#).
- The project includes some paving or other impervious surfaces, but runoff is either controlled with a SWPPP, or covers a small percentage of the parcel.
- The project requires and has developed a SWPPP.

### **Moderate to Large Impact**

Moderate to large impacts may occur if:

- The project is in a 100 year floodplain and is likely to change floodwaters, water flow or drainage to the water body.
- No SWPPP has been developed, and stormwater discharges will flow to adjacent properties, and negatively impact that property or other natural resources off-site such as wetlands, reservoirs, or protected streams.
- Stormwater discharges will flow to existing conveyance systems but expansions or extensions of that system are needed to handle the added runoff.

In these scenarios, check "moderate to large impacts may occur" in the Part 2 table and when all questions of Part 2 are completed, proceed to Part 3.

### **Recording your decision**

If you have determined that there are no impacts, or that only a small impact may occur, no further analysis of this topic is needed. Simply check the box under "No, or small impact may occur" next to the question and move on to [Question 11](#). You may choose to include an explanation in Part 3 as to why you decided there were no, or only small impacts, but you are not required to do so.

If you have determined that one or more moderate to large impacts may occur, then additional analysis of this impact will be required in Part 3. You should note what the impacts are, and the reasoning that lead to your decision before moving on to Question 11.

## Examples

**Scenario 1:** A 20,000 square foot retail store is proposed in an already built area along a major street.

- The building is being built on a site that contained other buildings to be demolished.
- Almost the entire site will be covered with building or parking area.
- More than one-acre is to be disturbed.
- An existing stormwater conveyance system exists that has the capacity to handle the discharge.

**Then:** Because there will be stormwater discharges, there will be an impact. However, because of the SWPPP, site engineering, and the existing conveyance system, there will be only small impacts.

**Scenario 2:** A small wholesale greenhouse is proposed to be established on a former farm field which is located on lands partially within a 100 year floodplain of a river.

- The greenhouse will be in the 100 year floodplain.
- No parking lot is planned.

**Then:** Because this project is located in the 100 year floodplain, the Planning Board determined that there is the possibility that some impact would occur. After analysis, the Board also determined that due to the nature of the structure, that the impact would be small.

**Scenario 3:** A structure is proposed to be built on ½-acre of land that has a DEC protected stream running through it.

- The structure and its septic system are 150' away from the stream.
- The stream flows into a DEC regulated wetland off-site that is also identified as potentially being the habitat of a threatened plant species.

**Then:** Because of the slope of the land and presence of highly erodible soils on the site, the drainage and runoff will flow into the stream which could impact the wetland. The Planning Board determined that this could be a moderate to large impact

## Q.11, Short EAF (Part 2) Health & Safety Hazards Short Environmental Assessment Form Workbook

Will the proposed action create a hazard to environmental resources or human health?

## Background

This question evaluates hazards that include any solid or hazardous waste. These substances can be toxic, infectious, inflammable, or corrosive. They can occur as solids, liquids, semi-solids, or gases. Whatever the form they take, hazardous substances can adversely affect the environment and human health if not properly handled and disposed of. Both [solid and hazardous wastes](#) are regulated by New York State.

Other hazards may result from previous land uses, such as agriculture or landfills. Pesticide residue, such as in orchards, may persist in the soils and groundwater for decades, and can be a source of potential exposure by direct human contact or drinking water. Landfills may generate leachate, which can also be a source of groundwater or surface water pollution and subsequent human exposure. Landfills can also generate methane or toxic gases, which can be a safety or human health threat.

Hazards may also result from failures of impounded areas such as dams that create reservoirs, or storage facilities such as retention ponds and waste lagoons. In these cases, a hazard could occur as a result of leakage or dam failure that releases water or waste into the environment.

## Applicable Part 1 Information

Some of the Part 1 questions that should be specifically reviewed when answering this question are:

- [Question 18](#)
- [Question 19](#)
- [Question 20](#)

## Analysis

In order to decide if impacts will occur, the reviewing agency should look at the available information and ask:

- Does the proposed project include the commercial, recreational, or industrial use or application or storage of pesticides, herbicides, or known contaminants beyond normal household use, in or around any water body, well or water sources?
- Will there be any bulk storage of petroleum or chemical products and if so, what type of storage will be used?
- Are there any alterations to or construction of new dams, ponds or lagoons planned, and if so, do they meet safety criteria?
- Will the proposed project generate hazardous air pollutants? If so, how much?

- Is the proposed site an active or inactive solid or hazardous waste site, or has the site previously been exposed to pollutants or contamination?
  - If so, is it undergoing or planned to undergo remediation?
- Will there be any solid or hazardous wastes to be disposed of on or off the site? If so, where and how much?
- Is there to be any unearthing of solid or hazardous materials?
- Does the site contain a former agricultural use that is known to have used pesticides

### **Will there be an impact?**

There is not likely to be any impact if the proposed project:

- Does not use or store any pesticides, herbicides, or other chemicals (Commercial, industrial, or recreational properties only).
- Does not impound liquids.
- Does not produce any hazardous air emissions.
- Does not generate any solid wastes.
- Does not disturb or create an existing solid or hazardous waste disposal area.
- Does not expose people to residual chemicals from chemical or fuel storage, disposal, spills, or agricultural applications.

If you determine that the project is such that it will not generate, use, store or disturb hazardous materials in these ways, then there is not likely to be any impact. In this case, you can check, "no, or small impact may occur" on the Part 2 table, and when all questions from Part 2 are completed, proceed to Part 3.

If the proposed project is likely to generate, use or store hazardous materials then this impact must be evaluated as to its size.

### **If there is an impact, how big will it be?**

If there will be an impact, the reviewing agency must then evaluate the magnitude of that impact. This will depend on the overall scale and context of the proposed project as described in [the Introduction to Part 2](#). The reviewing agency should [be reasonable](#) when conducting this review.

### **No Impact to Small Impact**

No impact to a small impact could occur, and no significant impacts to human health are anticipated, if the project will result in one or more of the following:

- Storage of pesticides, herbicides or other chemicals will take place, but is done in a completely enclosed structure that meets appropriate storage requirements, and the site is greater than 300 feet from any water body, well or water source used for irrigation.

- An existing impoundment or storage lagoon is altered or expanded.
- Air emissions will occur at a level that does not require a state air emission permit.
- Solid or hazardous waste will be generated in an amount easily handled at a permitted disposal facility.

In these cases, check "no, or small impact may occur" on the Part 2 table, and when all of Part 2 are completed, then proceed to Part 3.

### Moderate Impact

Moderate impacts may occur if:

- Storage of pesticides, herbicides or other chemicals will take place on a site that is greater than 100 feet but less than 300 feet from any water body, well or surface water source used for irrigation.

### Moderate to Large Impact

- An new impoundment or storage lagoon is proposed.
- Air emissions will occur at a level that requires a state air emission permit, and that produces large amounts of greenhouse gases.
- Solid or hazardous waste will be generated in an amount that may require additional capacity to be developed at an existing or new permitted disposal facility.

### Large Impact

- Storage of pesticides, herbicides or other chemicals will take place on a site that is within 100 feet of any water body, well or water source used for irrigation.

In these scenarios, check "moderate to large impacts may occur" in the Part 2 table and when all questions of Part 2 are completed, then proceed to Part 3.

## Recording your decision

If you have determined that there are no impacts, or that only a small impact may occur, no further analysis of this topic is needed. Simply check the box under "No, or small impact may occur" next to the question and move on to [Part 3](#). You may choose to include an explanation in Part 3 as to why you decided there were no, or only small impacts, but you are not required to do so.

If you have determined that one or more moderate to large impacts may occur, then additional analysis of this impact will be required in Part 3. You should note what the impacts are, and the reasoning that lead to your decision before moving on to [Part 3](#).

## Examples

**Scenario 1:** A facility for large truck repair is proposed that includes an accessory structure for storage of oils and other chemicals.

- The storage site is located 100' from a DEC regulated wetland

- The accessory building used for storage will be completely enclosed and fitted with drainage that sends any liquid to an underground closed storage system

**Then:** The Planning Board determined that even though the storage is enclosed and leakage addressed, because the site is near a regulated wetland and a spill or accident is always a possibility, that this would be a small impact. They checked "No, or small impact may occur" on Part 2.

**Scenario 2:** A five-lot residential development is proposed.

- Each new house will have its own well and septic system.
- There are no wetlands, streams, or regulated water bodies nearby or associated with the parcel.
- Future owners will generate solid waste typical of a residence and there is capacity at the local landfill to accommodate this.
- Some pesticides or herbicides may be used for lawn care.

**Then:** The Planning Board determined that this proposed subdivision will not create any hazard to environmental resources or human health and checked "No, or small impact may occur" on Part 2.

**Scenario 3:** A five-lot residential development is proposed.

- Each new house will have its own well and septic system.
- There are no wetlands, streams, or regulated water bodies nearby or associated with the parcel.
- The site is a former apple orchard that is known to have used lead arsenate based pesticides.

**Then:** The Planning Board determined that this proposed subdivision may create a hazard to human health due to documented potential for groundwater contamination or contact with contaminated soil. They checked "Moderate to large impact may occur" on Part 2.

**Scenario 4:** An industrial use is planned on a 45-acre 'green field' site.

- The use will include manufacturing of a product that requires use of a variety of chemicals, some of which are flammable.
- The site is on a former agricultural field and has a regulated DEC stream flowing along one boundary.
- The site is located over limestone bedrock known to have numerous caves, cracks, and sinkholes.
- All potable drinking water used by area residents in the area comes from wells drilled into the limestone bedrock aquifer.

**Then:** The Planning Board determined that this proposed industrial use has the potential for contamination of underground water supplies because of the presence of limestone bedrock and considered this a moderate to large potential impact for Part 2

**End of Part Two**

# Part 3 - Determination of Significance (SEAF)

## Short Environmental Assessment Form (SEAF)

The Lead Agency is responsible for the completion of Part 3.

For every question in Part 2 that was answered "moderate to large impact may occur", or if there is a need to explain why a particular element of the proposed action may or will not result in a significant adverse environmental impact, please complete Part 3. Part 3 should, in sufficient detail, identify the impact, including any measures or design elements that have been included by the project sponsor to avoid or reduce impacts. Part 3 should also explain how the lead agency determined that the impact may or will not be significant. Each potential impact should be assessed considering its setting, probability of occurring, duration, irreversibility, geographic scope, and magnitude. Also consider the potential for short-term, long-term, and cumulative impacts.

### Introduction

The purpose of Part 3 is to summarize evaluations made during Part 2 and then decide if the moderate to large impacts identified in Part 2 may be significant. Part 3 is where the reviewing agency discusses for each potential impact, the context, probability of occurrence, duration of impact, irreversibility of impact, geographic scope, magnitude, and cumulative impacts. Note that some of these features - such as context, duration, irreversibility, and magnitude - were also considered in Part 2 as part of decision-making about whether an impact was small, moderate or large. The Part 3 evaluation looks again at those features to determine if a potential impact is significant or not.

Part 3 is important because it will help the reviewing agency determine if impacts are significant, if they have been mitigated by some aspect of the project, or if additional evaluation needs to be done through an environmental impact statement. Part 3 expands on the decisions made in Part 2. Taken together, Parts 1, 2, and 3 will create a strong record of the 'hard look' required by SEQR.

Note that nothing in this workbook, particularly the guidance offered in Part 2 and 3, is found in regulation. While the EAF's need to be completed according to the Part 617 regulations, interpretation on the size or significance of an impact is at the discretion of the reviewing agency.

### Instructions for the Reviewing Agency

#### Part 3 should include the following:

- Identification of the impact



- Assessment of each impact considering the project's setting, probability of occurring, duration, irreversibility, geographic scope and magnitude, and the potential for short-term, long-term and cumulative impacts
- Identification of any measures or design elements that have been included as part of the project to avoid or minimize impacts
- Explanation of how the reviewing agency has determined that the impact may or will not be significant, and
- A final determination of whether the project may or will not result in one or more potentially large or significant adverse impacts.

## General Instructions

- It is the responsibility of the reviewing agency to complete Part 3 and determine the significance of any of the identified impacts. Part 3 evaluates only those impacts identified in the Part 2 table as being moderate to large.
- You should use information submitted by the applicant or project sponsor in Part 1 and your evaluation of that information in Part 2 to complete Part 3.
- You can request clarification or expansion of information submitted in Part 1 if needed to complete Part 3. However, new information that is requested should come from currently existing, or readily available sources. It is not intended that exhaustive new studies be developed to complete Part 3.
- Although it is not a requirement to do so, Part 3 can also be used to explain why a particular impact was deemed to be small, why it may not be significant, or if it has already been mitigated.

### If you checked "No or small impact may occur" for ALL eleven questions in Part 2

Go to the signature box on page four and check the second box indicating that you have determined that the proposed action will not result in any significant adverse environmental impacts. **This will serve as your negative declaration.** Be sure to sign it.

You are only required to check the second box at the bottom of Part 3 on page four, fill out the lead agency information, date, and sign the form. You are not required to complete Part 3, but you may use Part 3 to explain any measures or design elements that have been included by the project sponsor to avoid or reduce impacts, or to explain your rationale for determining that the impact will not occur or will be small.

### If you checked "Moderate to large impact may occur" for ANY question in Part 2

Then each of these questions will need additional evaluation in Part 3. Part 3 will help the reviewing agency decide if the impacts identified are significant and whether or not to require an environmental impact statement

# Part 3 - How to Determine Significance

## Short Environmental Assessment Form (SEAF)

In this section, you will revisit several pieces of Part 2 such as the scale and context of a project. The task of Part 3 is to determine the significance of an impact. However, the term 'significant' is somewhat subjective. That is because the significance of an impact is dependent on the context of the project, and the magnitude, duration, importance, irreversibility, and likelihood of that impact occurring. Each impact must be judged and weighed by these different characteristics. Similar projects may have different decisions on significance because of that.

The following steps will help you determine the environmental significance of the impacts identified in Part 2.

### Understand What Makes an Impact Significant:

The significance of an impact is decided by evaluating the **magnitude**, **duration**, and **likelihood** of an impact occurring within the context (geographic scope, setting, and scale) of the project and project area. Each of these is described as follows:

- **Magnitude:**

Part 3 only addresses moderate to large impacts. For each potential impact being evaluated in Part 3, decide if it will be moderate or large. Magnitude reflects both the area of land as well as the amount of a particular resource or the number of people being impacted.

- **Moderate Impact:** These are impacts that are of a size that will likely result in more impacts on one or more environmental resources but are more localized. Moderate impacts can occur when the project affects a portion of a parcel or even a larger area extending to a small area just beyond the parcel. Moderate environmental impacts may be either isolated (only in one location), or of neighborhood concern. Size is not the only aspect of magnitude, however. If a project affects a small area of land, but the resource being impacted is locally rare, for example, then the actual impact may be large. When reviewing an impact's magnitude, the reviewing agency should consider the size of the impact and resource, as well as the scope and context of the project. A proposed project that impacts a small number of people may also be considered a moderate impact. The resources affected often have broad local or regional concern and often are activities or resources that are regulated or protected by some local, state, or national agency.
- **Large Impact:** These are impacts that may cover larger areas beyond the parcel in the neighborhood or community or impact larger numbers of people. The resources affected often have

broad local or regional concern and often are activities or resources that are regulated or protected by some local, state, or national agency.

- You should decide if the potential impact is a moderate or large impact. Some of the evaluation you did in Part 2 can help with this decision.
- **Duration:** For each potential impact being evaluated in Part 3, decide if it will be short-term, medium-term, long-term, or irreversible.
  - **Short-term Impact:** Some actions may have short-term impacts. These are often due to the initial land disturbance or construction phase. Short-term impacts can occur for a few days, weeks or several months, and then improve quickly. In this case, short-term impacts may be of minor or negligible importance in a long time frame. It is very important to evaluate the duration of an impact in the context and scope of a project. A short-term impact in one situation may not be significant, but in other cases, may be very significant.
    - An example of a short-term impact would be stock-piling topsoil and placement of erosion control methods in one location during construction of a structure. After construction, the topsoil would be graded and re-seeded or landscaped. Short-term impacts would occur due to the initial disturbance of soil and vegetation, but within several weeks, it would be replaced.
  - **Medium-term Impact:** Some actions may have impacts that last longer but that are still not permanent or irreversible. Medium-term impacts can be measured in months, over several seasons, or perhaps a few years, but have an end-point where the conditions improve and adverse impacts dissipate. Depending on the context and scale of the project as well as the other feature evaluated in Part 3, medium-term impacts could have minor or large significance.
    - An example of a medium-term impact would be construction of an access way using a single culvert over a small, non-regulated stream that has wooded streambanks. Construction of the culvert and driveway will require removal of some additional stream-side vegetation and disturbance to the water flow. Thus it could affect water temperature (by removal of the trees), increase turbidity, change water flow, and reduce habitats for fish and invertebrates. In this example, there could be both short-term and medium-term impacts. After construction, the water flow and turbidity issues would dissipate, but the changes to the streambank and stream bottom habitats could last months or seasons before the vegetation returns and habitats re-formed. If the applicant included stream bank and stream bottom restoration, use of best management practices for stream corridors, and re-planting of deciduous trees, then the adverse impacts could be moderated in duration.
  - **Long-term Impact:** These are impacts that last for years, or last as long as the activity that generates the impact continues to take place. Some projects continually impact the environment in an adverse way while the activity takes place, but then the environment improves after the

operation ceases. Other actions may occur only for a short period of time, but the impacts last a very long time and it takes years for the environment to recover.

- Examples of long-term impacts could include adverse changes in air quality while a manufacturing use operates, or continual production of noise levels above ambient levels while the use operates. Should the manufacturing cease operations, the air pollution and noise impacts end. Removal of large acreages of forest lands on a portion of a parcel to be planted in grass would likely be considered long term impact but the forest could regenerate if maintenance of the lawn stopped and trees were allowed to re-grow. Another example of a long-term impact would be a chemical spill that pollutes water or soils that would take decades before the natural resources are recovered.
- **Irreversible Impact:** These are impacts that occur where the environment can't return to its original state at any time or in any way. Use of nonrenewable resources may be irreversible since it is unlikely that the resource can be used again. Impacts that generally commit future generations to similar uses may also be considered irreversible impacts. Projects where there is no potential for future restoration are also considered irreversible. In some cases, there may be difficulty distinguishing between a long-term impact and one that is irreversible, but generally, irreversible impacts are those that permanently result in an adverse change.
  - Examples of irreversible impacts include:
    - The extinction of an animal or plant species
    - Demolition of existing historical structures
    - Conversion of prime farmland soils to residential use
    - Construction of a structure that permanently alters a scenic view in a negative way
- Other impacts may not fit neatly in the short, medium, or long term categories because they may be continuous, or intermittent. The reviewing agency should use their best judgment to determine the category that fits the duration of the potential impact.
- **Likelihood:** For each potential impact being evaluated in Part 3, decide if it will be unlikely to occur, will possibly occur, or will probably occur. Given the nature of the project, some impacts may be very likely to occur while others may possibly occur, and others are unlikely to occur. The reviewing agency may decide that unlikely impacts may be of large magnitude or long duration but are ultimately not significant because they are so unlikely to actually occur. In other cases, an unlikely impact may carry such a high risk that the reviewing agency may decide it is very significant.
  - **Unlikely to Occur:** These are impacts that have a very low chance of occurring now or in the future.
    - An example of an impact that is unlikely to occur could be a spillage of a toxic chemical used in a manufacturing process. There is an extremely low probability of this occurring.

- **Possibly will Occur:** These are impacts that are possible, but not likely occur.
  - An example of an impact that possibly could occur would be the growth inducing aspects of a new 28-lot subdivision development in a town that has had very slow growth and is not near an urbanized area. The residential development may create consumer demands that will influence and promote development in another location in the community. There is the potential for impacts to the community long-term, but it is less likely to occur given the character and economy of the area.
- **Probably will Occur:** These are impacts that are very likely to occur.
  - An example of an impact that probably will occur would be loss of fisheries due to a dredging operation in a water body that supports warm water fish species that require shallow water to survive.

### Organize Your Decisions

Because there are many variables that will influence your determination on the significance of an impact, it may be useful to organize your decisions for each impact discussed. Using a chart or checklist can be a helpful tool. -The chart below is a tool to help you organize, think about, and help make your decisions on magnitude, duration, and likelihood for each question answered and illustrates the options to be considered when doing Part 3. If you use a tool similar to the following chart, you can circle or highlight one choice in each column for each impact evaluated.

Magnitude of Impact	Duration of Impact	Likelihood of Impact
Moderate (localized)	Short-term	Unlikely to occur
	Medium-term	Possibly will occur
Large (Severe)	Long-term	Probably will occur
	Irreversible	

### An Example Using the Chart

The following example illustrates an action that, according to Part 2, the reviewing agency determined could have moderate to large impacts. This example is for a project proposed to be built in an area having significant archaeological resources. The Planning Board evaluated the information available and determined that the potential impacts on the archaeological resources are confined to the parcel itself, are irreversible because the resources could potentially be destroyed, that the type of resources are very important because of the reliance on those archeological resources as a significant part of the communities identity, and that the impacts will probably occur because the site plan shows disturbances

to the area where the resources exist. The chart below summarizes the thought process that went into the Planning Board's evaluation of this particular impact:

Question	Magnitude of Impact	Duration of Impact	Likelihood of Impact
<p>Question 8: Impact on historic, archaeological, architectural, or aesthetic resources</p>	<p>Moderate - because a significant portion of the parcel will be impacted</p> <p>Large</p>	<p>Short-term</p> <p>Medium-term</p> <p>Long-term</p> <p>Irreversible - because the resources could be destroyed during construction or permanently made inaccessible</p>	<p>Unlikely to occur</p> <p>Possibly will occur</p> <p>Probably will occur - because the site plan shows grading, soil removal, and construction over the site where the resources are located</p>

### What is a significant impact?

The decision about whether a potential impact is significant is made by the reviewing agency. The description above offers the reviewing agency tools to help pull all the known information together, organize decisions, and make that determination of significance. As seen from the above discussion, for each potential impact, there are many combinations of magnitude, duration, and likelihood that can occur.

The decision as to whether a potentially adverse impact is significant or not must ultimately be tempered by specifics related to the scale of the proposed project and context in your community. Remember that the determination of significance needs to be based on the scale and context of the community as well as the magnitude, duration, and likelihood of an impact occurring. These criteria cannot be inserted into a formula that will automatically produce a finding of significance or insignificance. These criteria simply aid the reviewing agency in making a judgment on a case-by-case basis. There is no universally accepted measure of significance. None of the criteria (magnitude, duration, likelihood, scale, and context) should be considered more important than any other. Instead, they should be examined in an equal manner to help frame the rationale for making a determination of significance and for communicating why you made that determination.

Many variables go into a determination of significance. The importance of an impact is to be based on the specific environmental setting where the activity is proposed, on the type of resource being impacted, and on the values, history, and preferences of the community.

## Statement of Significance

Once you have determined the significance of the various impacts, it is time to write your decision. The next section - [Statement of Significance](#) - describes the process of summarizing how you determined the significance of the impacts, identified mitigations included in the project, and if an Environmental Impact Statement is necessary.

## Part 3 - Statement of Significance Short Environmental Assessment Form (SEAF)

Write a short summary explaining how you determined that the impact will or will not be significant. Also describe the reasons why you decided that one or more impacts are significant.

If you used a chart or checklist to organize your decisions [as described in the previous page](#), you can use that to describe the impact(s), and your decisions about significance. Add this short summary to the space on the SEAF Part 3 form. See the [example for a model Part 3 statement](#).

### Identify Mitigations Included in the Project

After you have decided what impacts may or may not be significant, review the proposed action and identify methods that the project sponsor or applicant has included in the project design to avoid or reduce the identified impacts. Examples of mitigations could be changes to the size or location of the structure or of the disturbance, phasing of the project construction by time of day or season, or creation of a berm or fence to block noise or visual impacts.

### Determine if an Environmental Impact Statement is Necessary

- If one or more significant adverse environmental impacts have been identified, but the project includes mitigation to reduce or avoid it, then you may decide that an environmental impact statement is not

necessary. If so, describe this reasoning in your Part 3 statement. Then, check the box stating that the proposed action will not result in any significant adverse environmental impact.

- If one or more significant adverse environmental impacts identified in Part 3 are not mitigated, then you may decide that an environmental impact statement is required. If so, describe this reasoning in your Part 3 statement. The environmental impact statement will study and evaluate the resources and potential adverse impacts in more detail. If you decide that further study and evaluation is needed, then check the box stating that the proposed action may result in one or more potentially adverse impacts and that an environmental impact statement is required. The results of your analysis of Part 3 can also be used as a draft scope of topics to be discussed in the environmental impact statement.

### Complete the form

- Fill in the Lead Agency information at the bottom of Part 3
- Sign and date the form
- This completes this stage SEQR

## Part 3 - Examples

### Short Environmental Assessment Form (SEAF)

#### Example 1

**Proposed activity:** A 10,000 square foot commercial building is proposed to be located in a mixed commercial/residential zoning district within a village on a five acre parcel. The area is currently all residential or vacant parcels. There is no potable water or sewer available on the parcel, but they are available nearby and could be extended to the parcel. There is access directly to a state highway. There is a stream and wooded stream bank located at the rear of the parcel. This stream flows to a larger, state-regulated wetland. There are currently no sidewalks to this part of the village. The proposed business will create noise above the normal ambient noise levels and will generate traffic to the site all day. The location on the stream is also a former mill but it is not listed on the State or National Register of Historic Places, and has not been formally determined eligible for listing.

- Using information from Part 1, the Planning Board has answered questions 1 through 11 on Part 2.
- Using the Part 2 tools, the Planning Board determined that there would be no impact to the environmental resources evaluated in Questions 1, 3, 4, 6, 7 and 11. These were all checked as "no or small impact may occur" on Part 2.



- However, the Planning Board determined that questions 2, 5, 8, 9, and 10 would need further evaluation in Part 3 because the impacts could potentially be moderate to large.

**After further review, the Planning Board found:**

1. The proposed use is consistent with the existing zoning and the comprehensive plan. Therefore, the change in intensity is planned for and desired by the community.
2. The potential impact to traffic, transportation, and pedestrian opportunities, while likely to occur for a long time, is considered a minor impact because of the location of the commercial business on a state highway, and because there will be less than 100 extra cars per day added to the street.
3. The applicant recognized the historical significance of the mill site and planned to keep all structures and the parking area away from any historic features on the parcel.
4. The applicant will be disturbing more than one acre of land and therefore will have to meet all NYS DEC stormwater regulations. However, the Planning Board also felt that removal of vegetation along the stream along with changes due to stormwater coming off the parking lot were not mitigated in the project application, and that this could potentially have significant adverse impacts on the stream and thus the associated wetland.

As a result of this analysis, the Planning Board decided that of the impacts identified from Part 3, the impact on flooding, stormwater, erosion, and natural resources were not mitigated and needed further analysis. They decided that an environmental impact statement would be required and that the scope of that would be limited to these topics.

**An appropriate Part 3 statement for this example would be:**

The Planning Board decided that potential moderate to large impacts could occur related to changes in use, intensity of use, traffic, historic and archaeological resources, natural resources, and to erosion, flooding, and drainage. This is because the action will be a more intense use in that part of the village, will add more cars to the street in that area, may impact the old mill site which is a historic site in the village, could impact the stream ecology and the wetland downstream, and could add significant erosion and runoff.

After analysis, the Planning Board decided that these impacts would be moderate in magnitude, mostly long-term, and probably will occur. Thus these are all potentially significant impacts. However, the project design and layout is on a state highway that can handle the traffic, is in an area that is planned to have higher intensity uses in the future, and the applicant has agreed to move all disturbances away from the historic mill site. These impacts are felt to have already been adequately mitigated. The impact to the stream and its downstream wetland could be negatively impacted and there is not adequate information or analysis on what those impacts would be.

Therefore, the Planning Board has determined that there is likely to be an adverse environmental impact to the stream's natural resources as a result of vegetation removal, changes to the stream bank, and risks of more flooding and erosion. An environmental impact statement would therefore be necessary. The core issues to be addressed in that EIS would be to further explore the impacts of vegetation removal, changes to the stream bank, and flooding and erosion.

## Example 2

**Proposed activity:** A project includes dredging of bottom sediments along a lake shore for placement of a pier and marina. The project would take place during the summer and would involve removal of sediments and some shoreline aquatic vegetation. The location is included in a waterfront recreation zoning district and is consistent with the adopted comprehensive plan of the municipality. There is another marina within ¼ mile.

- Using information from Part 1, the Planning Board has answered questions 1 through 11 on Part 2.
- Using the Part 2 tools, the Planning Board determined that there would be no impact to the environmental resources evaluated in questions 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 11. These were all checked as "no or small impact may occur" on Part 2.
- However, the Planning Board determined that questions 3, 9, and 10 would need further evaluation in Part 3 because the impacts could potentially be moderate to large.

### After further review, the Planning Board found:

1. The project does not include sediment control measures to isolate the work area and there was concern about direct and indirect impacts of turbidity.
2. The project could result in the loss of bottom habitats and an increase in water turbidity, at least temporarily.
3. The Planning Board is also concerned about the associated loss of fisheries and impacts to water quality.
4. They determined that the project was not a change in intensity of use because similar uses were nearby.
5. Construction done in the summer may impact the aesthetic quality of the water and create nuisances that would negatively impact the character of the area.

As a result of this analysis, the Planning Board decided that these impacts would be moderate in magnitude, of moderate duration, and probably would occur. Because the project did not include mitigation for these impacts, further analysis is needed.

### An appropriate Part 3 statement for this example would be:

The Planning Board has evaluated the magnitude, duration, likelihood, scale and context of potential adverse environmental impacts. As a result of this analysis, it was decided that the project would have significant adverse impacts on the environment because there is potential for uncontrolled erosion and sedimentation, loss of aquatic habitats, and changes to surface water quality.

The impacts would be moderate in magnitude because one localized area of the lake shore will be affected but some of the disturbed area (shore line and other aquatic habitats) could recover in time. Impacts to fisheries due to turbidity, loss of aquatic vegetation, and change in water temperature could occur and could be short to moderate in duration, depending on the species. Water quality may be impacted during the construction period due to turbidity. Loss of vegetation and water turbidity could also change the character of that part of the lake.

There is a high probability these impacts will occur given the nature of the project but there is not adequate information yet. Because the application did not include sediment control measures to isolate the work area, the Planning Board determined the direct and indirect impacts of sedimentation, turbidity, loss of habitats and fisheries and change in character would be significant impacts. An environmental impact statement would therefore be necessary. The core issues to be addressed in that EIS would be to further explore the impacts of erosion and sedimentation on water quality, aquatic habitats, and the lakeside character.

### Example 3

**Proposed activity:** The proposed project is construction of a 55,000 square foot big-box style grocery store. It is located at the southern border of the municipality on a state highway, adjacent to a locally designated historic district, and within an area identified in the comprehensive plan as scenic. There are no public water, sewer, or infrastructure facilities to this location, but the proposal incorporates on-site facilities. Zoning allows for grocery store uses in the area but does not include any building size restrictions.

- Using information from Part 1, the Planning Board has answered questions 1 through 11 on Part 2.
- Using the Part 2 tools, the Board determined that there would be no impact to the environmental resources evaluated in questions 4, 6, 7, 9, 10 and 11. These were all checked as "no or small impact may occur" on Part 2.
- However, the Planning Board determined that questions 1, 2, 3, 5, and 8 would need further evaluation in Part 3 because the impacts could potentially be moderate to large.

**After further review, the Planning Board found:**

1. The proposal may not be consistent with the comprehensive plan because the area is identified as a scenic location and a large structure of that design may not be consistent with, and could adversely impact, the scenic character of the area.
2. The project introduces a land use that may adversely affect the nearby historic resources.
3. The project introduces a land use that is more intense than any current use of land in the area.
4. There will likely to be changes in traffic volumes in the area.
5. The project could potentially induce growth of other similarly intense uses in the area.

As a result of this analysis, the Planning Board decided that these impacts would be large in magnitude, of long-term duration, and possibly could occur. Because the project did not include mitigation for these impacts, further analysis is needed.

### **An appropriate Part 3 statement for this example would be:**

As a result of this analysis, the Planning Board has evaluated the magnitude, duration, likelihood, scale and context of potential impacts. The Planning Board has determined that the magnitude of the project could be large because the entire neighborhood at the southern entrance to the municipality is likely to be impacted and because the scenic views could be disturbed. The project's design and scale may not be consistent with either the historic character of the area or protective of those resources.

The project will introduce a more intense land use to the area which may not be consistent with the comprehensive plan or existing uses. Because of increased traffic volumes, it is possible that traffic patterns into the municipality would change, and make it more difficult for area residents to access the neighborhood. Further, the Planning Board has determined that there is potential that the proposed project could induce similarly intense commercial uses in the future. These impacts are likely to be very long-term.

Given the nature of the project and the context of the location upon which it is proposed, the likelihood of these impacts occurring is very probable. Because of these concerns the Planning Board has determined that these are potentially significant impacts that would require additional analysis through an environmental impact statement. The core issues to be addressed in the EIS would be to explore impacts on scenic and historic resources, consistency with community character, traffic, and growth inducing aspects.

### **Example 4**

**Proposed activity:** A single family residence is proposed to be converted into a bed and breakfast in a village zoning district that does not allow that use. The residence would continue to house the owner along with use of 3 bedrooms as part of the B&B. A use variance will be required. On-street parking is available but a three car parking lot is proposed to be added as an extension to the existing driveway

located to the rear of the existing structure. A small illuminated landscaped sign 2 x 3 feet in size with one shielded, exterior light is proposed to be placed in the front yard.

Because this is a use variance, the Zoning Board of Appeals is the reviewing agency.

- Using information from Part 1, the ZBA has answered questions 1 through 11 on Part 2.
- Using the Part 2 tools, the Board determined that there would be no impact to the environmental resources evaluated in questions 1, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11. These were all checked as "no or small impact may occur" on Part 2.
- However, the ZBA determined that questions 2, 3, and 5, would need further evaluation in Part 3 because the impacts could potentially be moderate to large.

**After further review, the ZBA found:**

1. There may be changes to neighborhood character due to introduction of a different and more intense use than normally found in the area.
2. The small parking lot may also adversely impact the character of the area but will not be highly visible from the street or from nearby neighbors. There is a possibility that it could introduce noise or additional traffic not normally associated with residential uses in the area.
3. New outdoor lighting associated with the sign may impact neighbors.

As a result of this analysis, the ZBA decided that these impacts would be small in magnitude, could be of long-term duration, and possibly could occur. Taken together in context of the neighborhood, the ZBA determined that these impacts would not be significant and that no further analysis was necessary.

**An appropriate Part 3 statement for this example would be:**

After evaluation and consideration of the scale and context of the proposal, the ZBA has determined that the addition of a two car parking lot along with a shielded outdoor light fixture and small sign could impact the immediate neighborhood long term, but the impact is small in magnitude. The impacts are already mitigated through use of a shielded light fixture that will reduce glare onto neighboring properties. Impacts from the new parking lot are also already mitigated because the parking lot will be placed to the rear of the building and will not be visible from the street or nearby houses. Three additional cars entering and exiting per day on the street are likely to be insignificant given the normal daily traffic volumes at that location. For these reasons, the ZBA has determined that there would not be a significant impact and no further environmental analysis is required.

**Example 5**

**Proposed activity:** An eight-lot subdivision is planned on a vacant lot in an area that already has public water, sewer, and stormwater facilities with adequate capacity to handle additional residences. The area is zoned for residential use, and there is adequate street access. There are archaeological resources on

the site but no wetlands, streams, or other natural resources of concern, and no previous agricultural use, or history of solid or hazardous material use or waste.

- Using information from Part 1, the Planning Board has answered questions 1 through 11 on Part 2.
- Using the Part 2 tools, the Board determined that there would be no impact to the environmental resources evaluated in questions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10 and 11. These were all checked as "no or small impact may occur" on Part 2.
- However, the Planning Board determined that question 8 would need further evaluation in Part 3 because the impacts could potentially be moderate to large.

**After further review, the Planning Board found:**

1. The subdivision design incorporates establishment of building envelopes that places houses, driveways, and other disturbed areas outside the location where the resources occur and thus disturbance of the archeological resources will be avoided.
2. The developer has also voluntarily offered to place a deed restriction on the new lots to prevent further disturbances to the archaeological resources.

As a result of this analysis, the Planning Board has decided that the impacts will be avoided and thus small in magnitude and unlikely to occur. They made a determination that the project was not significant and would not need further analysis in an EIS.

**An appropriate Part 3 statement for this example would be:**

The Planning Board has determined that the impact to the archaeological resources would be small in magnitude, but unlikely to occur because the subdivision layout and use of deed restrictions will mean the resources will be completely avoided on this part of the parcel. Given the scale and context, the Planning Board determined there would not be any significant adverse impacts and no EIS would be required.

## **Example 6**

**Proposed activity:** A non-retail commercial use already located and operating in a rural area wants to expand. The proposal is to add more parking spaces and enlarge the structure to accommodate an increase in the number of employees. The project is located along a local town road and there will be additional commuter and truck delivery traffic. The facility depends on a drilled well for water supply and an onsite septic system for wastewater disposal. The Health Department has determined there is capacity to accommodate the additional employees. Surrounding land uses include farms and single-family residences. The project design includes construction of the new parking lot that will use crushed gravel instead of asphalt, will include six more shielded lighting fixtures to be placed in landscaped planting islands, and a vegetated berm between the parking lot and the road to screen views of some of the parking lot. New drainage and erosion controls designed according to a DEC approved stormwater

pollution prevention plan are also planned. To accommodate additional cars and trucks, the applicant has also included a re-design of the local road.

- Using information from Part 1, the Planning Board has answered questions 1 through 11 on Part 2.
- Using the Part 2 tools, the Planning Board determined that there would be no impact to the environmental resources evaluated in Questions 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9,10 and 11. These were all checked as "no or small impact may occur" on Part 2.
- However, the Planning Board determined that questions 2, 3, and 5 would need further evaluation in Part 3 because the impacts could potentially be moderate to large.

**After further review, the Planning Board found:**

1. There is ample acreage on the parcel to accommodate these enlargements and such enlargements are adequately sized.
2. A 25 foot forested buffer already exists on all sides of the parcel except along the road frontage, so screening of the facility will be maintained.
3. Stormwater runoff will be mitigated by use of pervious surfaces in the parking lot and new stormwater control facilities.
4. There will likely be issues handling the anticipated additional commuter and delivery truck traffic, but that these will be mitigated by the road redesign. The design has been approved by the local highway department.
5. The aesthetics of the parking lot will be improved due to placement of landscaped islands.
6. Lighting fixtures will be shielded so no glare will occur on neighboring properties.
7. The community has a comprehensive plan that seeks to maintain rural character, but also recognizes the need for jobs in the area and encourages re-use of existing buildings.

After this analysis, the Planning Board decided that the magnitude of the project was large, that the impacts to changes in intensity and traffic would be long-term, but are unlikely to occur because of the mitigation included in the project design. Given the scale and context of the proposed project, the Planning Board determined there would be not be significant impacts.

**An appropriate Part 3 statement for this example would be:**

The Planning Board has evaluated the magnitude, duration, likelihood, scale and context of the project and has decided that the potential impacts could be large in magnitude because it could change the

character of the area, increase the intensity of land use in a rural community, and impact roads and traffic. However, because the use already exists, and because the project includes features such as use of a pervious parking lot surface, screening, new landscaping, use of shielded lights, incorporation of erosion and stormwater control devices, and a redesign of the road to accommodate traffic, the impacts are largely mitigated. Short-term impacts may occur during construction, but in light of the scale and context of the project area, is seen as a small impact. As a result of the project design the Planning Board has determined that significant adverse impacts are unlikely to occur and will not require preparation of an environmental impact statement

### **End of Part Three**

- **This completes SEQR using the Short Environmental Assessment Forms Workbooks.**