
Excerpt From Part 617.15 of the State Environmental Quality Review Act

617.15 Generic Environmental Impact Statements

- a. A generic EIS may be used to assess the environmental effects of:
 1. a number of separate actions in a given geographic area which, if considered singly may have minor effects, but if considered together may have significant effects; or
 2. a sequence of actions, contemplated by a single agency or individual; or
 3. separate actions having generic or common impacts; or
 4. an entire program or plan having wide applications or restricting the range of future alternative policies or projects.

- b. Generic EIS's and their findings should set forth specific conditions or criteria under which future actions will be undertaken or approved, and shall include procedures and criteria for supplements to reflect impacts, such as site specific impacts, which have not been adequately addressed or analyzed in the generic EIS. Such procedures shall include provision for public notice for supplements which allow for public comment on the new material presented by the supplement in the same manner as was provided in respect to the generic EIS. (See section 617.8(g) of this Part)

- c. When a final generic EIS has been filed under this part:
 1. No further SEQRA compliance is required if a subsequent site specific action will be carried out in conformance with the conditions and thresholds established for such actions in the findings statement resulting from the generic EIS;
 2. A supplemental findings statement must be prepared if the subsequent proposed action was adequately addressed in the generic EIS but was not addressed or was not adequately addressed in the findings statement for the generic EIS;
 3. A supplement to the final generic EIS must be prepared if the subsequent proposed action was not addressed or was not adequately addressed in the generic EIS and the subsequent action involves one or more significant environmental effects; and
 4. A negative declaration must be prepared if a subsequent proposed action was not addressed or was not adequately addressed in the generic EIS and the subsequent action will not result in any significant environmental effects.

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- d. Agencies may prepare generic EIS's on new, existing or significant changes to existing land use plans, development plans and zoning regulations so that individual actions carried out in conformance with these plans or regulations may require only supplemental EIS's as described in subdivisions (b) and (c) of this section.

Generic EIS's may be broader, and more general than site or project specific EIS's and should discuss the logic and rationale for the choices advanced. They may also include an assessment of specific impacts if such details are available.

They may be based on conceptual information in some cases. They may identify the important elements of the natural resource base as well as the existing and projected man-made features, patterns and character. They may discuss in general terms the constraints and consequences of any narrowing of future options. They may present and analyze in general terms a few hypothetical scenarios that could and are likely to occur.

- e. In connection with projects that are to be developed in phases or stages, agencies should address not only the site specific impacts of the individual project under consideration, but also, in more general or conceptual terms, the cumulative effects on the environment and the existing natural resource base of subsequent phases of a larger project or series of projects that may be developed in the future. In these cases, this part of the generic EIS shall discuss the important elements and constraints present in the natural and man-made environment that may bear on the conditions of an agency decision on the immediate projects.