

4410.1700 DECISION ON NEED FOR EIS.

Subpart 1. **Standard for decision on need for EIS.** An EIS shall be ordered for projects that have the potential for significant environmental effects.

Subp. 2. **Decision-making process.** The decision on the need for an EIS shall be made in compliance with one of the following time schedules:

A. if the decision is to be made by a board, council, or other body which meets only on a periodic basis, the decision shall be made between three and 30 days after the close of the review period; or

B. for all other RGUs the decision shall be made no later than 15 days after the close of the 30-day review period. This 15-day period shall be extended by the EQB chair by no more than 15 additional days upon request of the RGU.

Subp. 2a. **Insufficient information.** If the RGU determines that information necessary to a reasoned decision about the potential for, or significance of, one or more possible environmental impacts is lacking, but could be reasonably obtained, the RGU shall either:

A. make a positive declaration and include within the scope of the EIS appropriate studies to obtain the lacking information; or

B. postpone the decision on the need for an EIS, for not more than 30 days or such other period of time as agreed upon by the RGU and proposer, in order to obtain the lacking information. If the RGU postpones the decision, it shall provide written notice of its action, including a brief description of the lacking information, within five days to the project proposer, the EQB staff, and any person who submitted substantive comments on the EAW.

Subp. 3. **Form and basis for decision.** The RGU's decision shall be either a negative declaration or a positive declaration. The RGU shall base its decision regarding the need for an EIS on the information gathered during the EAW process and the comments received on the EAW.

Subp. 4. **Record of findings supporting decision.** The RGU shall maintain a record, including specific findings of fact, supporting its decision. The record must include specific responses to all substantive and timely comments on the EAW. This record shall either be a separately prepared document or contained within the records of the governmental unit.

Subp. 5. **Distributing decision.** The RGU's decision shall be provided, within five days, to all persons on the EAW distribution list pursuant to part 4410.1500, to all persons that commented in writing during the 30-day review period, and to any person upon written request. All persons who submitted timely and substantive comments on the EAW shall be sent a copy of the RGU's response to those comments prepared under subpart 4. Upon notification, the EQB staff shall publish the RGU's decision in the EQB Monitor.

Subp. 6. **Standard.** In deciding whether a project has the potential for significant environmental effects the RGU shall compare the impacts that may be reasonably expected to occur from the project with the criteria in this part.

Subp. 7. **Criteria.** In deciding whether a project has the potential for significant environmental effects, the following factors shall be considered:

A. type, extent, and reversibility of environmental effects;

B. cumulative potential effects. The RGU shall consider the following factors: whether the cumulative potential effect is significant; whether the contribution from the project is significant when viewed in connection with other contributions to the cumulative potential effect; the degree to which the project complies with approved mitigation measures specifically designed to address the cumulative potential effect; and the efforts of the proposer to minimize the contributions from the project;

C. the extent to which the environmental effects are subject to mitigation by ongoing public regulatory authority. The RGU may rely only on mitigation measures that are specific and that can be reasonably expected to effectively mitigate the identified environmental impacts of the project; and

D. the extent to which environmental effects can be anticipated and controlled as a result of other available environmental studies undertaken by public agencies or the project proposer, including other EISs.

Subp. 8. [Repealed, 13 SR 1437]

Subp. 9. **Connected actions and phased actions.** Connected actions and phased actions shall be considered a single project for purposes of the determination of need for an EIS.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 116D.04; 116D.045*

History: *13 SR 1437; 21 SR 1458; 31 SR 539; 34 SR 721*

Published Electronically: *July 13, 2026*