

# MS DMR Environmental Assessment Preparation Guidelines

1. Project Description
  - Define the project. Be specific and include dimensions. A clear description of the project will prevent delays due to necessary clarifications.
2. Purpose and Need for the Project
  - Demonstrate the need to be met by the proposed project.
  - Describe any public benefit that will be provided.
3. Description and Comparison of Alternatives
  - Describe off-site alternatives (other locations considered for the proposed project). Include impacts associated with these locations illustrating both the quantity of impacts and the quality of the affected wetlands.
  - Describe on-site alternatives (other project designs that were considered). Again, include impacts associated with these designs.
  - Provide feasibility information for the rejected alternatives, along with the reasoning behind the choice of the proposed site/design.
  - Demonstrate that impacts to wetlands have been avoided and minimized to the maximum extent practicable.
4. Description of the Affected Environment
  - Describe the existing conditions of the proposed project site, including information on topography, hydrology, soils, vegetation, and wildlife utilization.
  - Provide both the quantity and quality of all wetlands on-site, whether they are proposed to be impacted or avoided.
  - A submerged aquatic vegetation and/or shellfish survey is required for new or expanded marinas, beach renourishment, large dredging projects, and other significant projects as warranted.
5. Project Impacts
  - Describe how the proposed project would both directly and indirectly affect the biological integrity and productivity of coastal wetlands communities and ecosystems.
  - Demonstrate whether the proposed activity would affect the following characteristics of coastal wetlands:
    - i. The natural supply of sediment and nutrients to the coastal wetlands;
    - ii. The natural temperature regimes that are part of the ecosystem of coastal wetlands;
    - iii. Salinity regimes;
    - iv. Sediment transport processes;
    - v. Water flow and natural circulation; and,
    - vi. The long-term biological productivity of the coastal wetlands' ecosystem.
  - Explain all measures which will be taken to reduce detrimental off-site effects to coastal wetlands during and after the proposed activity. Refer to the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality's Field Manual for Erosion and Sediment Control on Construction Sites in Mississippi for descriptions of acceptable Best Management Practices.
  - Present the plan to mitigate for any unavoidable impacts. This plan should be based on the quantity, quality and function of the impacted wetlands.