



CEQA Process Begins



CEQA Process Ends

Legend

Applicant Action

County Action

Public Action

Acronyms

CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
DER	Department of Environmental Resources
IS	Initial Study
MMRP	Mitigation Monitoring Reporting Program
MND	Mitigated Negative Declaration
ND	Negative Declaration
PEIR	Programmatic Environmental Impact Report (JJ&A, 2018)
APEIR	Administrative Programmatic Environmental Impact Report (JJ&A, 2018)

CEQA Overview

The California Environmental Quality Act ([CEQA](#)), passed and signed into law in 1970, implements a framework for environmental review for public and private development projects throughout the State of California. CEQA requires that a project proponent coordinate with a public agency to analyze and mitigate for any potential environmental impacts resulting from implementation of the project or proposed action. This process allows the public to review proposed project activities, scope, and potential impacts while providing the opportunity for public comment and request for project revisions. Through CEQA, the State of California, seeks to avoid, reduce, and/or prevent environmental impacts resulting from projects throughout the state and requires each project to analyze for potential impacts to numerous environmental resources.

CEQA Environmental Resources Review 'Checklist'

The following environmental resources are analyzed for potential impacts resulting from a proposed project:

- Aesthetics
- Agriculture and Forestry
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Energy
- Geology and Soils
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use and Planning
- Mineral Resources
- Noise
- Population and Housing
- Public Services
- Recreation
- Transportation
- Tribal Cultural Resources
- Utilities and Service Systems
- Wildfire
- Mandatory Findings of Significance

County of Stanislaus 2018 Programmatic Environmental Impact Report

In June 2018, the County of Stanislaus (County) published a Programmatic Environmental Impact Report ([PEIR](#)) for the Stanislaus County Discretionary Well Permitting and Management Program. Following the outcome of a series of court cases, specific well permitting actions performed by the County were determined to be 'discretionary actions' and thereby required environmental review under CEQA. As a response to this, the County drafted and published a PEIR analyzing potential impacts to the environment resulting from permit issuance throughout the county. This PEIR covers well permitting and construction for projects within pre-approved criteria and expedites the environmental review process, reducing the overall financial burden of the project proponent and permit applicant.

For projects that are not fully covered under the existing PEIR (as determined by the County), an Initial Study Negative Declaration or Initial Study Mitigated Negative Declaration (ISND/ISMND) environmental review process may be required. This process typically takes 8 to 10 months to complete and is described further in Table 1 and flow diagram (backside). The County utilizes a consultant representative to assist with environmental reviews to reduce the financial burden and timeline to complete CEQA requirements. On behalf of the County and the project applicant, the private consultant will draft the environmental documents and navigate the review process.

Applicant Process

Table 1: Applicant Process provides the approximate timeline, cost and process for development of an ISND/ISMND under this program. The timeline begins after completion of an application completeness review and acknowledgement that the County's Environmental Review has begun.

Table 1: Applicant Process*

CEQA Service Steps	Estimated Duration (Days)	Approximate Cost for Applicant
1. Applicant Consultation	1	- Estimated time for County and CEQA consultant to participate in a one-to-two-hour meeting to initiate project and obtain applicant input. - Approximately \$500
2. Site Visit** and Project Description	14	- Consultant fees will include transportation time, equipment costs if resource delineations are required, and development of a description of proposed project. Approximately \$4,000
3. CEQA Initial Study	30 – 60	- Consultant to evaluate impacts to environmental resources and draft an initial study and prepare ISND/ISMND. - Approximately \$7,000-10,000
4. Administrative Draft ISND or ISMND	45	- Consultant fee will vary depending on complexity of project, proximate resource areas of special concern, presence of special status species, etc. - Approximately: \$5,000-7,000 - County fee for draft ISND/ISMND review, consultant coordination, and follow on applicant discussions. - Approximately: \$2,000
5. Public Draft ISND or ISMND	15	- Post public notice and upload to the California State Clearinghouse. - Approximately \$1,000-2,500
6. Public Notice and Comment Period: Notice of Intent/Notice of Completion (NOI/NOC)	40	- Fees associated with upload of the draft document to the State Clearinghouse website which are calculated based on document type and would be paid directly by the applicant. - Approximately \$2,500.
7. Response to Public Comments and Final ISND or ISMND	30	- Costs to respond to public comments. Consultant will draft response to each comment received before the County renders a decision. - Approximately: \$2,000-3,500
8. County Department of Environmental Resources (DER) Notice of Decision (NOD) Issuance	5	- Signature and submittal of County Notice of Determination (NOD). - No cost.
9. Legal Challenge Period	30	- <u>Important:</u> additional legal fees may be required if the project faces legal challenges upon NOD issuance.
10. Permit Issued	5	- County permit processing and issuance fees: \$700
Anticipated Total	215-245 (~8 months)	\$24,000 - \$32,700***

*Timelines and costs vary for each project and may not directly follow the framework presented in this table.

**Assumes that one site visit will be conducted to identify any sensitive biological species or other environmental resources within the project area

***total costs consolidate costs anticipated for private consultants as well as anticipated County costs.

Contact Information

For further information about the CEQA review process or groundwater permit applications, contact the Stanislaus County Department of Environmental Resources at (209) 525-6700 or cmckinnon@envres.org.