

Thresholds for projects requiring Environmental Assessments

*Recommendations to the Chatham County Board of Commissioners
By the Chatham County Environmental Review Board
21 June 2007*

An Environmental Assessment (EA) is required for non-exempt projects that meet one or more of the following:

- 1) Qualifies as a Major Subdivision as defined in the Chatham County Subdivision Ordinance
- 2) Qualifies as a small or large generator of hazardous waste or as a treatment, storage and disposal facility as defined by the North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Division of Waste Management, Hazardous Waste Section.
- 3) Requires any of the following Environmental permits:
 - (a) A Mining Permit pursuant to the NC Mining Act.
 - (b) A State NPDES (National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System) Permit, as administered by the NC Division of Environmental Management (other than NCG010000 issued for land disturbing activities).
 - (c) A Non-Discharge Permit for a land application waste disposal system.
 - (d) A permit for any subsurface wastewater disposal system of 3000 gallons/day or larger.
 - (e) A permit for sludge disposal site.
 - (f) A 404 permit/401 certification.
- 4) Requires Environmental Documentation (such as an EA or EIS) by a State or Federal agency.
- 5) Is located within the Water Quality Critical Area of the Water Supply Watershed as defined by the Chatham County Watershed Protection Ordinance or in a state designated Well Head Protection Area
- 6) Lies within a river corridor as defined by the Chatham County Watershed Protection Ordinance.

- 7) Contains element occurrences (EOs) of natural diversity, including rare species, as determined by and tracked by the NC Natural Heritage Program (NHP), NC Wildlife Resources Commission (WRC), and US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS).
- 8) Contains or is adjacent to (shares at least one boundary with) a Significant Natural Heritage Area (SNHA) as recognized by the NC Natural Heritage Program.
- 9) Lies within a designated 14 digit Hydrologic Unit drainage basin that supports aquatic species that are federally listed or listed as Federal Species of Concern.
- 10) Contains significant cultural and/or historical sites as defined by NC Office of Archaeology and/or Chatham Historical Association.
- 11) Contains lands to be disturbed with slopes 15% or greater (outside of drainage easements or stream buffers), as determined by USGS Topographic maps, at a contour interval of the highest resolution available; or for slopes less than 15%, has a RUSLE K factor of 0.45 or more as tabulated in the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) Chatham County Soil Survey.

Exemptions:

Minor subdivisions (as defined in the Chatham County Subdivision Ordinance) and non-subdivision projects involving a total area of 2 acres or less are exempt from EA requirements except those having one or more of the characteristics listed above.