

RFSI Grant Environmental Requirements

JOB AID

RFSI grants opportunities aim to build resilience in the middle-of-the-food-supply-chain and strengthen local and regional food systems by creating new revenue streams for Michigan agricultural producers. Continue reading to learn more about environmental requirements.



Purpose

This job aid provides an overview of environmental requirements for RFSI Grants. In this document, we will cover the following topics:

- RFSI Programmatic Environmental Assessment (PEA)
- Environmental Requirements and Documents



Learning Objectives

By the end of this job aid, the applicant should be able to:

- Explain the PEA process.
- Understand environmental requirements.
- Apply learnings to complete the environmental assessment that is required for both types of RFSI grants.

RFSI Grant Environmental Assessment Process

What is NEPA?

NEPA is a law that ensures all necessary steps are taken to protect the environment by evaluating potential effects and complying with certain requirements prior to making decisions.

This law covers air, land, noise, water, etc. See the RFSI Environment Compliance document on the [Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Grant Opportunity](#) website to view a full list of environmental laws.

RFSI Programmatic Environmental Assessment (PEA)

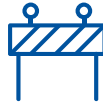
Each grant application will be evaluated to determine if its potential environmental impacts have been addressed in the PEA. The PEA was developed to evaluate projects that involve new or expanded structures or possible resource impacts.

See below to view the process of the NEPA Programmatic Environmental Assessment (PEA):



PRE-SCREENING WORKSHEET (REQUIRED)

Applicants must attach the Environmental Pre-Screening Worksheet (AMS-ENV-A) and Environmental Questionnaire to their application. These documents will be used to assess projects and determine the level of environmental review necessary.



SCREENING WORKSHEET (IF APPLICABLE)

If any of your Pre-Screening responses in Section 2 are “Yes”, complete and attach the Environmental Screening worksheet (AMS-ENV-B) before submitting your application.

Further investigation is required to confirm that project activities do not have significant environmental impacts or extraordinary circumstances.



FULL REVIEW

The PEA is complete once confirmed the project does not require any additional environmental reviews.

Site-specific screenings may take longer based on project complexity.

Note:


Completing the assessment for complex projects may require multiple document requests, permit authorizations, or regulatory agency consultations.

Environmental Requirements and Documents

Environmental Questionnaire (Required)

The Environmental Questionnaire collects project information to allow the USDA to complete a detailed environmental compliance evaluation. Both Infrastructure and Equipment Only grant applicants are required to fill out this questionnaire. All Environmental Documents can be found on the [RFSI website](#).

Complete each section of the three-page Questionnaire including the **Project Information, Questionnaire, and Additional Information.**



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

APPLICANT ENVIRONMENTAL QUESTIONNAIRE

The purpose of this document is to assist AMS staff in collecting adequate project information to complete a detailed environmental compliance evaluation. Based on a review of the application submitted, further information is required. AMS staff may request further information depending on the information provided by the applicant.

PROJECT INFORMATION

1. APPLICANT ENTITY NAME AND APPLICATION NO.:

2. PHYSICAL LOCATION OF THE PROJECT: (INCLUDE [GPS COORDINATES](#) AND ADDRESS, LEGAL DESCRIPTION AS NECESSARY)

Please address the questions below and provide a copy of supporting documentation as requested. If you are unsure on any of the questions, please select "unknown."

SURFACE WATERS		YES	NO	UNKNOWN
1	Will any surface water resource (including wetlands, streams, ponds, or drainage features) be disturbed, diverted, or otherwise impacted during construction or after project completion?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

SOILS AND LAND RESOURCES – GROUND DISTURBANCE		YES	NO	UNKNOWN
2	Will the project involve any ground or soil disturbance? ex. excavation/bulldozing of soil	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2a	If yes to 2 above, is the area of ground disturbance known to contain contaminated soils?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2b	If yes to 2 above, will the project install, remove, or replace any underground storage tanks?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2c	If yes to 2 above, has this soil been previously disturbed/altered/excavated?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

VEGETATION		YES	NO	UNKNOWN
3	Will the project remove or alter existing vegetation or trees at the site? If yes, please provide detail on the kind and amount (ac./so.ft.) of vegetation that will be removed.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

NO	UNKNOWN
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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PREVIOUS SCREENINGS TO RESPONSES

conduct additional screenings and documentation that has the potential for violations of policies or does not provide

Date

18	Will the project result in a change in activities, land use, or zoning occurring at the site or facility?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
19	Will the project cause long-term noise impacts to the area or impacts outside of the allowable times as regulated by local ordinances?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
20	Would the project alter or obstruct views or aesthetics in the immediate vicinity of the site?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Environmental Requirements and Documents

AMS-ENV-A Environmental Pre-Screening Worksheet (Required)

The Environmental Pre-Screening Worksheet (AMS-ENV-A) collects project information to assess adherence to the PEA and determine the level of environmental review necessary. Both Infrastructure and Equipment Only grant applicants are required to complete each section of the one-page document including the **Pre-screening questions** and **Pre-screening determination**.

This form is available electronically.

AMS-ENV-A U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE (12-13-2023) Agricultural Marketing Service		1. GENERAL INFORMATION 1A. Applicant Name and Application Number	
ENVIRONMENTAL PRE-SCREENING WORKSHEET			
1B. Grant Program <input type="checkbox"/> Local Meat Capacity Grant <input type="checkbox"/> Organic Market Development Grant <input type="checkbox"/> Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program		1C. Brief Description of Proposed Action	
2. PRE-SCREENING QUESTIONS		YES	NO
A. Does the project involve any ground disturbing activities?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B. Does the project involve any vegetation or habitat removal?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C. Will the project alter a structure greater than 50-years of age or the general aesthetic of the property (i.e., new interior or exterior configuration)?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
D. Is there an adjacent river, stream, or water body?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
E. Will there be a permanent increase in noise, odor, or traffic as a result of the project?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
F. Will the project increase the emissions of carbon dioxide, methane, and/or nitrous oxide (increased use of internal combustion engines, manure management, etc.)?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
IF ANY "YES" BOX IS SELECTED IN SECTION 2, A SITE-SPECIFIC ENVIRONMENTAL SCREENING WILL BE REQUIRED.			
3. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS			
4. PRE-SCREENING DETERMINATION Based on the results of the screening checklist above, the preparer recommends (check which applies):			
<input type="checkbox"/> The proposed project fits within the scope of the FONSI and triggers no extraordinary circumstances. This screening checklist is sufficient to document the potential impacts of the project, and they are considered insignificant to the environment and/or human health.			
<input type="checkbox"/> The project information reviewed may be outside the scope of the PEA and will require a site-specific environmental review. More information is required to show consistency with the PEA on the level of environmental documentation required before funding the project in conformance with NEPA.			
5. PREPARER INFORMATION AND SIGNATURE			
A. NAME OF PREPARER		B. TITLE OF PREPARER	
C. SIGNATURE OF PREPARER		D. DATE DOCUMENT WAS PREPARED (MM-DD-YYYY)	
6. RESPONSIBLE FEDERAL OFFICIAL SIGNATURE			
A. NAME OF APPROVAL OFFICIAL		B. TITLE OF APPROVAL OFFICIAL	
C. SIGNATURE OF APPROVAL OFFICIAL		D. DATE OF APPROVAL SIGNATURE (MM-DD-YYYY)	
<small>In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.</small>			
<small>Persons with disabilities who require alternative (e.g., Braille) formats of this document should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 690-7442 or (3) email: program.mta@usda.gov. USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.</small>			

Note: Complete and attach the Environmental Screening worksheet (AMS-ENV-B) before submitting your application if any "Yes" box is selected in Section 2. All Environmental Documents can be found on the [RFSI website](#).

Environmental Requirements and Documents

AMS-ENV-B Environmental Screening Worksheet (Only If Required)

The Environmental Screening Worksheet (AMS-ENV-B) collects project information to assess potential impacts not documented in the PEA to determine the level of additional environmental review. All Environmental Documents can be found on the [RFSI website](#).

Complete each section of the two-page document **only** if any of your Pre-Screening responses in Section 2 are answered “Yes”. Complete and attach the Environmental Screening worksheet (AMS-ENV-B) before submitting your application.

This form is available electronically.

AMS-ENV-B (12-13-2023)		U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE Agricultural Marketing Service		1. GENERAL INFORMATION	
ENVIRONMENTAL SCREENING WORKSHEET				1A. Producer or Applicant Name and Application Number	
1B. Location of Proposed Action (address, GPS location, etc.)			1C. Description of Proposed Action (building construction, equipment purchase, approximate acreage, connected actions, etc.)		
2. ENVIRONMENTAL LAW AND POLICY REVIEW					
	A. Is the resource located within the area of potential effect?		B. Does the proposed action have the potential to impact the resource?		C. EFFECT DETERMINATION
	YES	NO	YES	NO	
T&E Species or Critical Habitat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Make a selection
Migratory Birds	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Make a selection
Cultural or Historic Resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Make a selection
	YES	NO	YES	NO	C. EXPECTED IMPACT
Coastal Barrier Resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Make a selection
Coastal Zone	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Make a selection
Wilderness Areas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Make a selection
Wild and Scenic River	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Make a selection
Nationwide River Inventory	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Make a selection
Nationwide Natural Landmarks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Make a selection
Sole Source Aquifer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Make a selection
Floodplains	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Make a selection
Wetlands	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Make a selection
Highly Erodible Land	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Make a selection
303(d) Listed Waterway	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Make a selection
Prime and Unique Farmlands	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Make a selection
Environmental Justice Communities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Make a selection
3. CONSULTATIONS AND COORDINATION					
For any resource where 2B was answered "YES", select and attach the appropriate documentation below.					

FINDING

I have identified the types and degrees of adverse environmental impacts identified by this evaluation. I have also analyzed consistency with the National Environmental Policy Act and have considered the potential benefits of the proposal and balancing of these factors. I recommend one of the following:

1. Environmental Assessment for Local Meat Capacity Grant (FONSI)

2. Environmental Assessment for Organic Market Development Grant (FONSI)

3. Environmental Assessment for Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program (FONSI)

4. Environmental Assessment for Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program (FONSI)

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100. Environmental Assessment for Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Program (FONSI)

Uploading Documents to MiAgGrants

- Upload all required Environmental Forms under **Project Purpose** in the **Attachments** section. Click **Browse** to add the first file. Click **(+)** to add additional attachments. Add a description for all attachments. Click **Save** once attachments are uploaded.

The screenshot shows the MiAgGrants application interface. On the left, a sidebar lists various forms, with 'Project Purpose' highlighted by a red box and callout '1a'. The main content area shows the 'Project Purpose' form, with a 'Save' button at the top right highlighted by a red box and callout '1c'. Below the form, the 'Attachments' section is visible, featuring a 'Browse' button highlighted by a red box and callout '1b', and a '+' button to add more attachments.

Summary



Next Steps

Now that you understand the environmental requirements, review the Infrastructure Grant or Equipment Only Job Aid and Video on the [Resilient Food Systems Infrastructure Grant Opportunity](#) website to learn how to successfully apply.



Summary

Use the following checklist to ensure that you have successfully completed all environmental requirements.

Equipment Only Grant

- Complete and upload Pre-Screening Worksheet (AMS-ENV-A) into MiAgGrants
- Complete and upload Environmental Questionnaire into MiAgGrants

Infrastructure Grant

- Complete and upload Pre-Screening Worksheet (AMS-ENV-A) into MiAgGrants
- Complete and upload Environmental Questionnaire into MiAgGrants
- Complete and upload Environmental Screening Worksheet (AMS-ENV-B) into MiAgGrants if answered “Yes” to Section 2 of Pre-Screening Worksheet (AMS-ENV-A)