



WHAT IS A PD&E STUDY?

A Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study is a process that analyzes a transportation project in terms of the proposed engineering improvements to determine potential impacts to the natural, social and physical environments and looks at ways to avoid or minimize the impacts. Potential alternatives under review are presented to various State and Local Agencies, and to the public through public involvement meetings to solicit comments.

The PD&E Study phase for planned transportation projects provides the interface between the Planning and Design phases to evaluate and document solutions to transportation needs that are compatible with the environment. Simply stated, the **PD&E study determines if there is an engineering and environmentally feasible alternative to meet the need(s) determined in the Planning phase.**

This process is mandated by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the State law. It represents a combined effort by technical professionals who analyze information and document the best alternative for a community's transportation needs.

ISSUES BEING EVALUATED

- **Conceptual Design** – engineering design concepts are developed and evaluated for environmental compatibility and satisfaction of the transportation need.
- **Public Involvement** – a Public Involvement Program is carried out for every PD&E study, to inform/involve all interested parties in the development of the planned transportation project.
- **Air Quality** – assessing existing/future conditions and determining if the project conforms with the Clean Air Act.
- **Noise** – quantifying the project's noise levels and if they meet criteria, investigate reasonable and feasible noise abatement.
- **Wetlands** – finding the best way to avoid, minimize and mitigate long-term and short-term impacts.
- **Water Quality** – measures to prevent, reduce and/or eliminate pollution of ground and surface water.
- **Wildlife/Habitat Impacts** – efforts are made to identify the presence of and to protect/ensure the continued existence of threatened and/or endangered species and their habitat.
- **Contamination** – identifying and evaluating potential contamination problems within and/or adjacent to a project.
- **Floodplains** – efforts are evaluated to avoid, minimize, and mitigate encroachment within the floodplain.
- **Other Environmental Issues** - significance of farmlands, parks, historic sites, socioeconomic, and community sites are evaluated. Also, avoidance methods are determined when lands are impacted by the project.