

**§ 1940.312 Environmental assessments for Class II actions.**

Class II actions are basically those which exceed the thresholds established for Class I actions and, consequently, have the potential for resulting in more varied and substantial environmental impacts. A more detailed environmental assessment is, therefore, required for Class II actions in order to determine if the action requires an EIS. The format that will be used for completing this assessment is included as exhibit H of this subpart. Further guidance on Class II actions is contained in § 1940.318 of this subpart. Class II actions are presumed to be major Federal actions and are defined as follows:

(a) *Housing assistance.* If either of the following actions is an expansion of a previously approved FmHA or its successor agency under Public Law 103-354 housing project, see § 1940.310(b)(8) of this subpart to determine if it meets the requirements for a categorical exclusion, otherwise it is a Class II action.

(1) Financial assistance for a multi-family housing project, including labor housing, which comprises more than 25 units; and

(2) Financial assistance for, or the approval of, a subdivision as well as the expansion of an existing one, which involves more than 25 lots.

(b) *Community and business programs and nonprofit national corporations loan and grant program.* (1) Class II actions are those which either do not meet the criteria for a categorical exclusion as stated in § 1940.311 of this subpart, or involve a livestock-holding facility or feedlot meeting the criteria for a Class II action as defined in paragraphs (c) (9) and (10) of this section; and

(2) Non-technical assistance grant or loan guarantee under nonprofit national corporation loan and grant program.

(c) *Farm programs.* In completing environmental assessments for the following actions, FmHA or its successor agency under Public Law 103-354 will first determine if the applicant has sought technical assistance from the Soil Conservation Service (SCS). If not, the applicant will be requested to do so. Subsequently, an approved loan will

be structured so as to be consistent with any conservation plan developed with the application by SCS. However, the FmHA or its successor agency under Public Law 103-354 approving official need not include an element of the conservation plan within the loan agreement if that official determines that the element is both nonessential to the accomplishment of the plan's objectives and so costly as to prevent the borrower from being able to repay the loan. The SCS environmental review will be adopted by FmHA or its successor agency under Public Law 103-354 if the requirements of § 1940.324 of this subpart are met.

(1) Financial assistance for the installation or enlargement of irrigation facilities including storage reservoirs, diversion dams, wells, pumping plants, canals, pipelines, and sprinklers either designed to irrigate more than 160 acres or that would serve any amount of acreage and affects a wetland;

(2) Financial assistance for the development of farm ponds or lakes either larger than 10 acres in size or for any smaller size that would affect a wetland;

(3) Financial assistance for land-clearing operations either encompassing more than 35 acres or affecting a wetland, if less than 35 acres is involved;

(4) Financial assistance for the construction or enlargement of aquaculture facilities;

(5) Financial assistance for the conversion of more than 320 acres of pasture to agricultural production or for any smaller conversion of pasture to agricultural production that affects a wetland;

(6) Financial assistance to an individual farmer or an association of farmers for water control facilities such as dikes, detention reservoirs, stream channels, and ditches;

(7) Financial assistance for the use of a farm or portion of a farm for recreational purposes or nonfarm enterprises either utilizing more than 10 acres or affecting a wetland, if less than 10 acres is involved.

(8) Financial assistance for alteration of a wetland;

## § 1940.313

(9) Financial assistance for a livestock-holding facility or feedlot located in a sparsely populated farming area having a capacity as large or larger than one of the following capacities; 1,000 slaughter steers and heifers; 700 mature dairy cattle (whether milkers or dry cows); 2,500 swine; 10,000 sheep; 55,000 turkeys; 100,000 laying hens or broilers when facility has unlimited continuous flow watering systems; 30,000 laying hens or broilers when facility has liquid manure handling system; 500 horses; and 1,000 animal units from a combination of slaughter steers and heifers, mature dairy cattle, swine, and sheep; (The term *animal unit* means a unit of measurement for any animal feeding operation calculated by adding the following numbers: the number of slaughter and feeder cattle multiplied by 1.0, plus the number of mature dairy cattle multiplied by 1.4, plus the number of swine weighing over 25 kilograms (approximately 55 pounds) multiplied by 0.4, plus the number of sheep multiplied by 0.1, plus the number of horses multiplied by 2.0) and

(10) Financial assistance for a livestock-holding facility or feedlot which either could potentially violate a State water quality standard or is located near a town or collection of rural homes which could be impacted by the facility, particularly with respect to noise, odor, visual, or transportation impacts and having a capacity of at least one-half of those listed in paragraph (c)(9) of this section.

(d) *General.* (1) Any action which meets the numerical criteria or other restriction for a Class I action contained in §1940.311 of this subpart, but is controversial for environmental reasons. If the action is the subject of isolated environmental complaints or any questions or concerns that focus on a single impact, air quality, for example, the analysis of such a complaint or questions can be handled under the assessment format for a Class I action, Form FmHA or its successor agency under Public Law 103-354 1940-21, as explained in §1940.319 of this subpart. When several potential impacts are questioned, however, the assessment format (exhibit H of this subpart) for a Class II action must be used to address these questions;

## 7 CFR Ch. XVIII (1-1-08 Edition)

(2) Loan-closing and servicing activities, transfers, assumptions, subordinations, construction management activities and amendments and revisions to all approved actions listed either in this section or equivalent in size or type to such actions and that alter the purpose, operation, location, or design of the project as originally approved;

(3) The approval of plans and State Investment Strategies for Energy Impacted Areas, designated under section 601 Energy Impacted Area Development Assistance Program, as well as the applications for financial assistance (excluding the award of planning funds) for Energy Impact Areas;

(4) Proposals for legislation as defined in CEQ's regulations, §1508.17;

(5) The issuance of regulations and instructions, as well as amendments to these, that described either the entities, proposals and activities eligible for FmHA or its successor agency under Public Law 103-354 financial assistance, or the manner in which such proposals and activities must be located, constructed, or implemented; and

(6) The lease or disposal of any real property by FmHA or its successor agency under Public Law 103-354 which either does not meet the criteria for a categorical exclusion as stated in §1940.310(e)(6) of this subpart or a Class I action as stated in §1940.311(d)(3) of this subpart.

### **§ 1940.313 Actions that normally require the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).**

The environmental assessment process will be used, as defined in this subpart, to identify on a case-by-case basis those actions for which the preparation of an EIS is necessary. Given the variability of the types and locations of actions taken by FmHA or its successor agency under Public Law 103-354, no groups or set of actions can be identified which in almost every case would require the preparation of an EIS.

### **§ 1940.314 Criteria for determining a significant environmental impact.**

(a) EISs will be done for those Class I and Class II actions that are determined to have a significant impact on the quality of the human environment.