

Environmental Best Practice Subject Matter Content Example

I-5 Skagit Transportation Study - Environmental Best Practices Example

Excerpts from the 2024 I-5 Skagit Transportation Study exemplify a comprehensive, right-sized approach to environmental integration during corridor level planning to inform future project development decisions.

- [Environmental Chapter \(PDF 751 KB\)](#)
- [Environmental Appendix A](#): pages 44-70

The full study is here: [I-5 Skagit Transportation Study](#).

Note:

Federal Environmental Justice (EJ):

Environmental Justice (EJ) is no longer considered in federal documents. Community information collected during planning may later inform NEPA Social & Community Effects (SCE) analysis. For more SCE information, contact sce-ej@wsdot.wa.gov.

State EJ (HEAL Act):

Planning studies do not currently require state-level EJ assessments (EJAs) consistent with the HEAL Act. For more information, contact the HEAL Team at EnvironmentalJustice@wsdot.wa.gov.

Title VI:

For assistance with Title VI compliance, including demographic data review, language access, and ensuring meaningful engagement, please contact the Office of Equity and Civil Rights (OECR) Title VI Team:

- [Albert Valentino](#)
- [Anthony Pheasant](#)
- [Corwin Scott](#)

Additionally, you could work with your region/mode [Title VI Liaison](#), as they support OECR's Title VI Team through coordination and communication on these matters, and can provide technical support.

Community Engagement:

For community engagement questions, please contact [Jesseca Brand](#).

What makes a strong planning study from an environmental perspective?

Effective planning studies lay the groundwork for successful transportation projects by embedding environmental considerations early in the process. [Environmental Guidance for Planning Studies](#) underscores the importance of integrating ecological and regulatory factors at the beginning of the planning process. Early environmental consultation can significantly reduce the likelihood of budget overruns due to unexpected costs arising during the project delivery (design and construction) phase. By applying best practices in environmental screening, data integration, and cross-disciplinary coordination, planning efforts can yield more robust recommendations, reduce duplication and streamline subsequent project-level environmental review and permitting.

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WSDOT's environmental approach to planning best practice emphasizes:

- M2 Team review to confirm consistency with statewide guidance and best practices.
- Early screening of environmental assets and constraints.
- Use of geospatial data layers and mapping tools.
- Right sizing environmental analysis to the scale and purpose of the planning study, rather than treating every planning study like a full project-level environmental review.
- Ongoing coordination with subject matter experts.
- A forward-looking lens toward resilience and resource protection in the design of corridors and future projects.