

## Guidelines for Preparing Comments and Questions during the NEPA Scoping Process

*These remarks are provided to assist citizens wishing to contribute to the issues, concerns and questions that will be addressed by the GSA and Department of State and their consultants during the NEPA environmental review process.*

1. This scoping process will lead to an "Environmental Assessment" (EA). The EA is a several month process with opportunity for public comment before it is finalized. The assessment concludes with a determination that the proposal does or does not present the potential for it to have "Significant Impacts" as it is proposed. If it does then a full "Environmental Impact Study and Report (EIS) is required. This is a far more rigorous process with many reviews by other governmental agencies. An EIS could take years not months to complete.

GSA and the State Department appear to have determined that their time schedule cannot provide the time required for an EIS and are doing all they can to assure that the process ends with an EA.

2. Unlike the posture an opponent of a proposal uses in preparing testimony and argument for a project public hearing, the purpose of your comments here are to raise as many plausible cultural and environmental issues as possible that the government should investigate **before** concluding that project should move forward (with, perhaps, special mitigation requirements).
3. Comments on issues can be both on site and off site, environmental as well as cultural, financial as well as quality of life related, the impact can be on both the current and likely future circumstances. Issues can be local (Queen Anne's County), regional (the upper eastern shore), geographic (The Delmarva Peninsula), State wide, National or global.
4. Rather than picking the most significant issues and stressing those, the more issues the better. There is no advantage to having a coalition of citizens all repeating the same issue; variety is preferred.
5. It is not necessary to "know" that your concern is a significant issue; the government and its consultants are supposed to figure that out and explain their findings in the report.
6. Your comments must be emailed or postmarked by January 15, 2010 (Senator Milulski has told the GSA she wants the comment period extended.)
7. THIS IS IMPORTANT WORK. Please attend to it diligently. Thank you.

Comments should be addressed to:

AECOM  
Attn: FASTC Comments  
601 Prince Street  
Alexandria, VA 22314

Email at:  
[FASTC.NEPA@gsa.gov](mailto:FASTC.NEPA@gsa.gov)