



U.S. General Services Administration

# Highgate Springs Land Port of Entry (LPOE) Expansion and Modernization Project



**Draft Environmental Assessment Public Hearing**  
**October 29, 2024**  
**6 PM EDT**

*Photo: Existing Highgate Springs LPOE*  
*Source: U.S. Customs and Border Protection*



# Welcome and Housekeeping

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- **Recording and Accessibility**

- Audio of this presentation is being recorded with closed captioning
- The Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) is available at:  
[www.gsa.gov/highgatesprings](http://www.gsa.gov/highgatesprings)

- **Comment Submission**

- Instructions on how to submit comments will be provided at the end of the presentation

- **Tonight's Speakers**

- Cristina Clow, *U.S. General Services Administration (GSA)* - Project Manager
- Leon Kolankiewicz, *Solv, LLC* - GSA's Contractor for the Draft EA



# Meeting Purpose and Agenda

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**Purpose: Receive public input on the resources evaluated and the findings of the Draft EA**

- National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)
- Anticipated EA Timeline
- Project Background
- Project Overview, Purpose and Need, Project Alternatives
- Resources Evaluated in the Draft EA and Summary of Effects
- Next Steps for the EA and the Overall Project Schedule
- How to Comment
- Commenting Session





# NEPA Overview

- **NEPA requires federal agencies to:**

- Consider and document the effects of their proposed projects on the natural and human environment
- Involve the public in the decision-making process

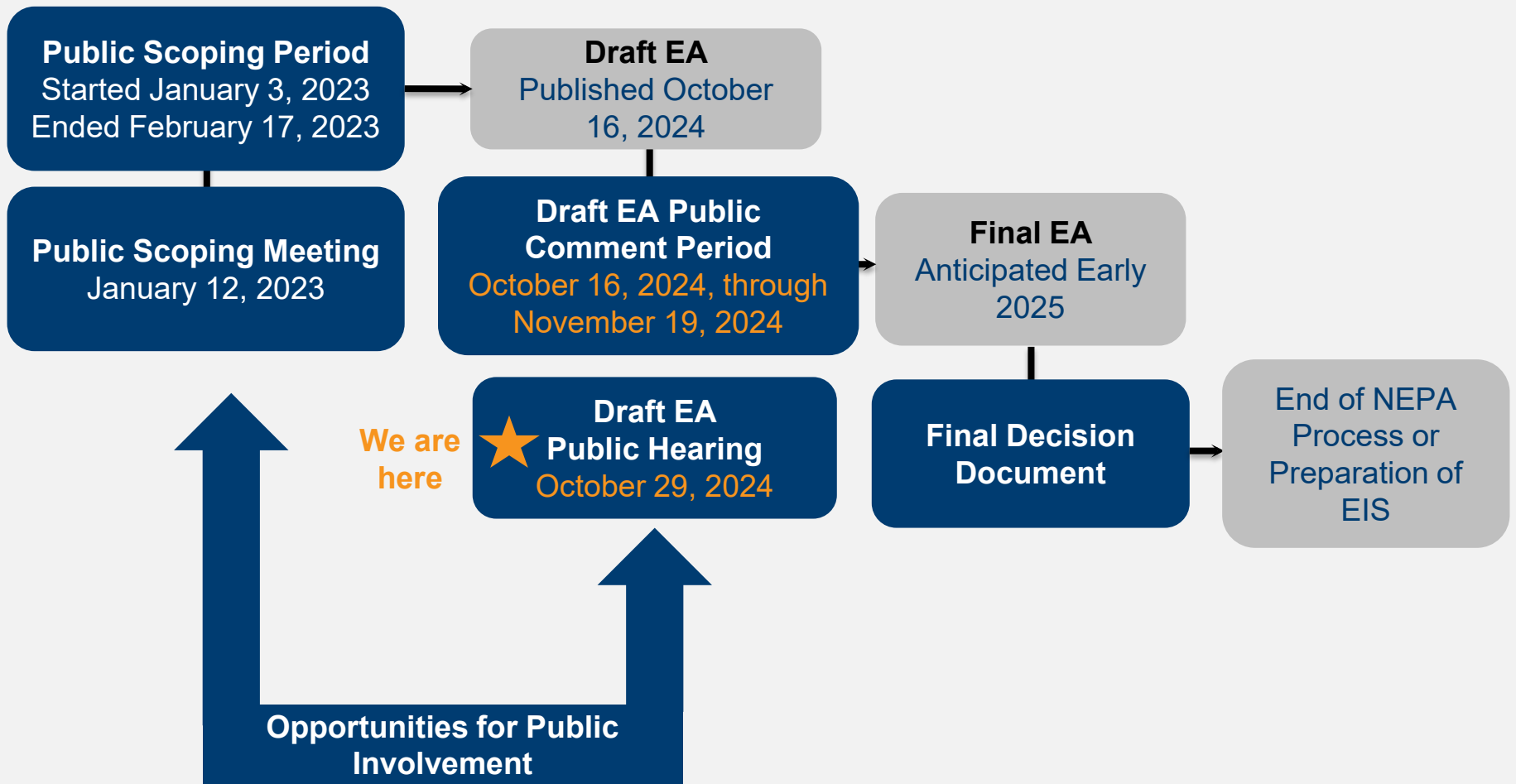
GSA has prepared a Draft EA per NEPA requirements to assess potential effects from the proposed expansion and modernization of the Highgate Springs LPOE

- **Public Input:**

- The public review period is an opportunity for you to review and provide input on the Draft EA
- GSA will consider all comments during the decision-making process and development of the Final EA

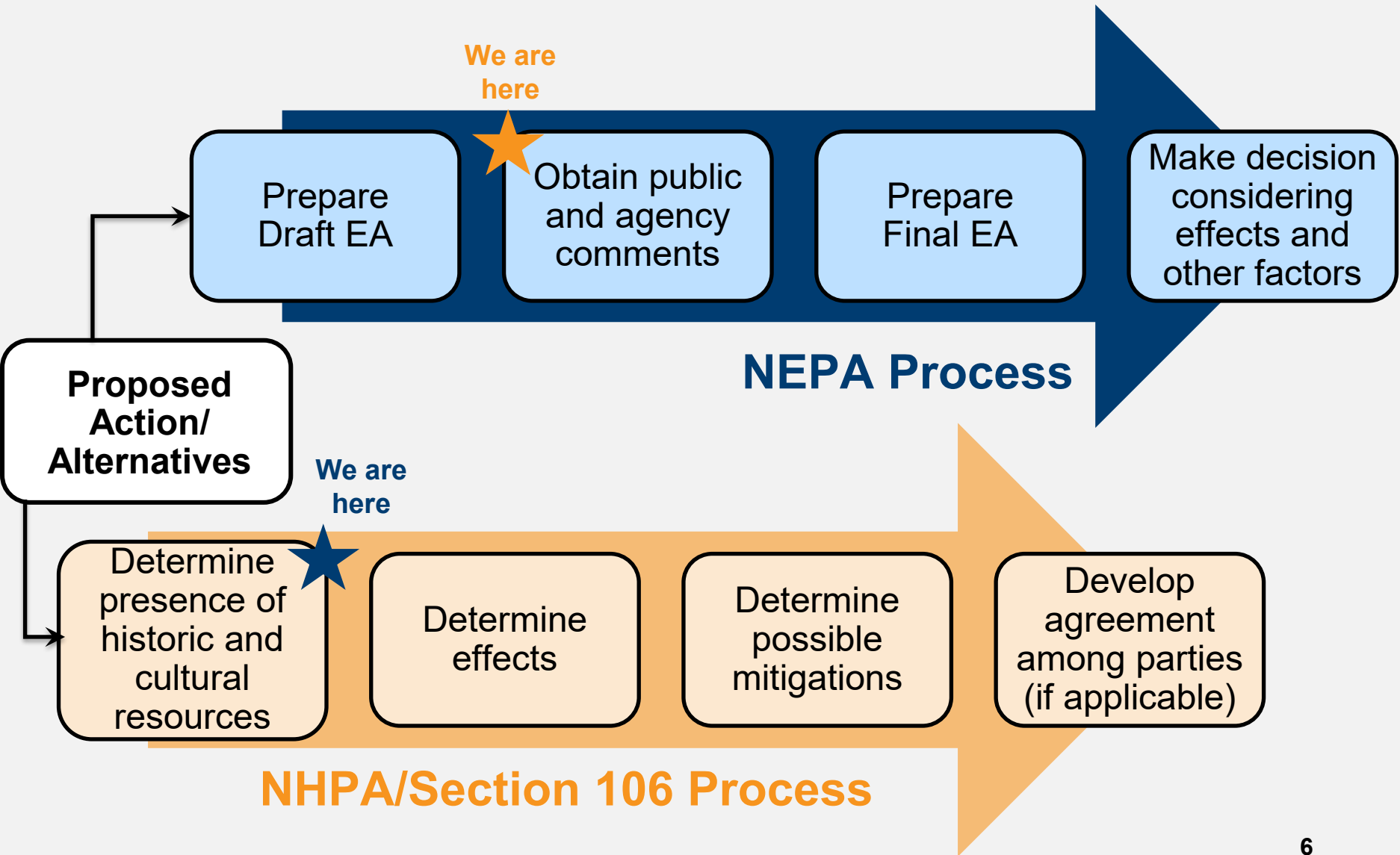


# EA Timeline





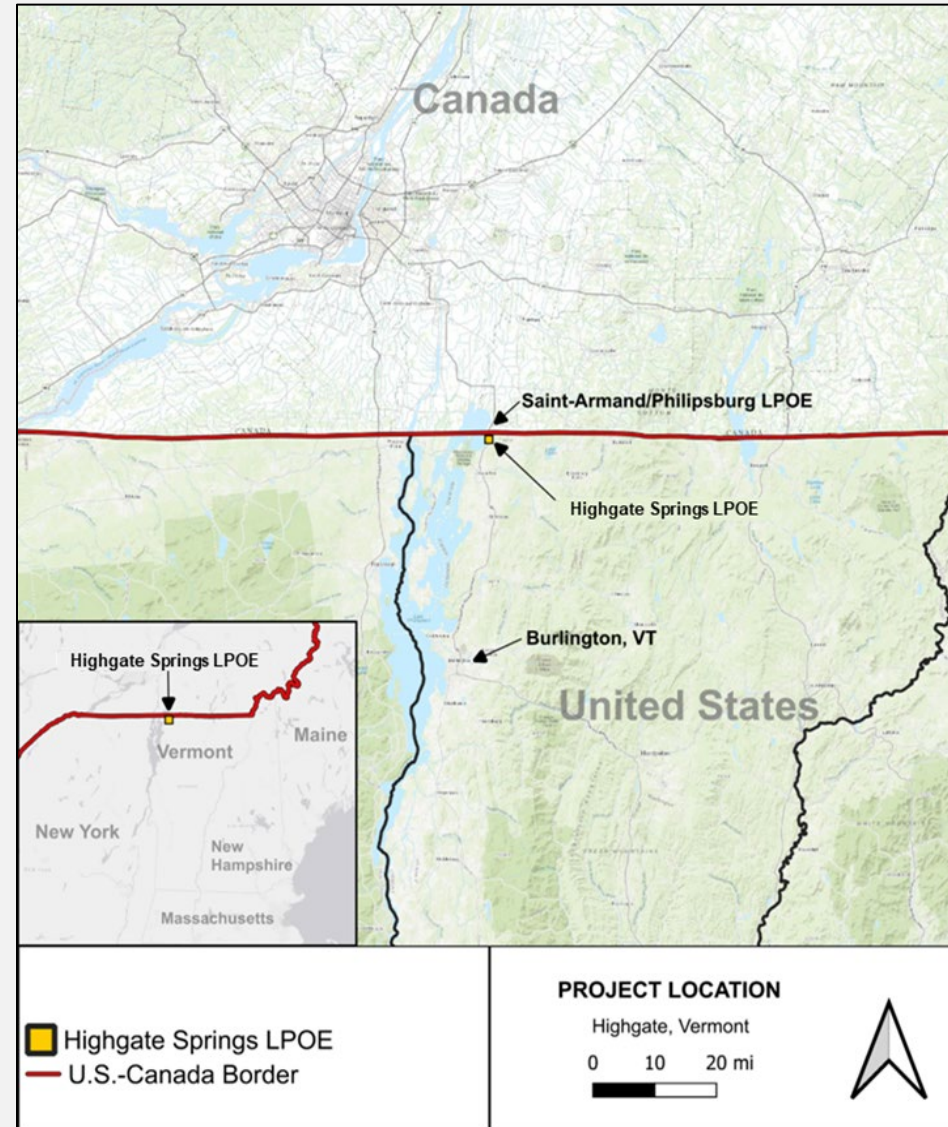
# NEPA and National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) Integration





# Highgate Springs LPOE Background Information



- Located on Interstate 89 (I-89), approximately 40 miles north of Burlington
- Operates 24 hours per day, 7 days per week
- Processes commercial and non-commercial traffic. It is one of the busiest LPOEs in New England
- Federal tenant agencies include: U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Customs and Border Protection (CBP), the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS)





# Existing LPOE Facilities



-  Existing LPOE Boundary
-  Existing LPOE Buildings
- 1 Main Port Building
- 2 Commercial Inspection Building
- 3 APHIS Inspection Facility
- 4 Wastewater Treatment Building
- 5 Hazmat Inspection Canopy
- 6 NII VACIS Building
- 7 FDA Building





# Project Purpose and Need

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**Purpose:** Expand and modernize the Highgate Springs LPOE to improve and enhance the performance, safety, security, and efficiency of operations for cross-border travelers and federal agencies at the LPOE

**Need:** (1) Increase the LPOE's capacity due to increased demand and (2) Facilitate and accommodate the changing operations of CBP, FDA, and APHIS

## Proposed Action

- Acquire the 57-acre private property and up to 4 acres of state property to the west and south of the LPOE, respectively
- Demolish all existing structures
- Conduct site work, including vegetation clearing, excavation, grading, and cut & fill operations
- Construct three new buildings: Main Building, Commercial Building, and Training Building
- Construct supporting facilities

## No Action Alternative

- No modernization and expansion, to include construction and demolition, of the Highgate Springs LPOE would occur
- Maintenance, repairs, and alterations would occur as needed



# Proposed Action

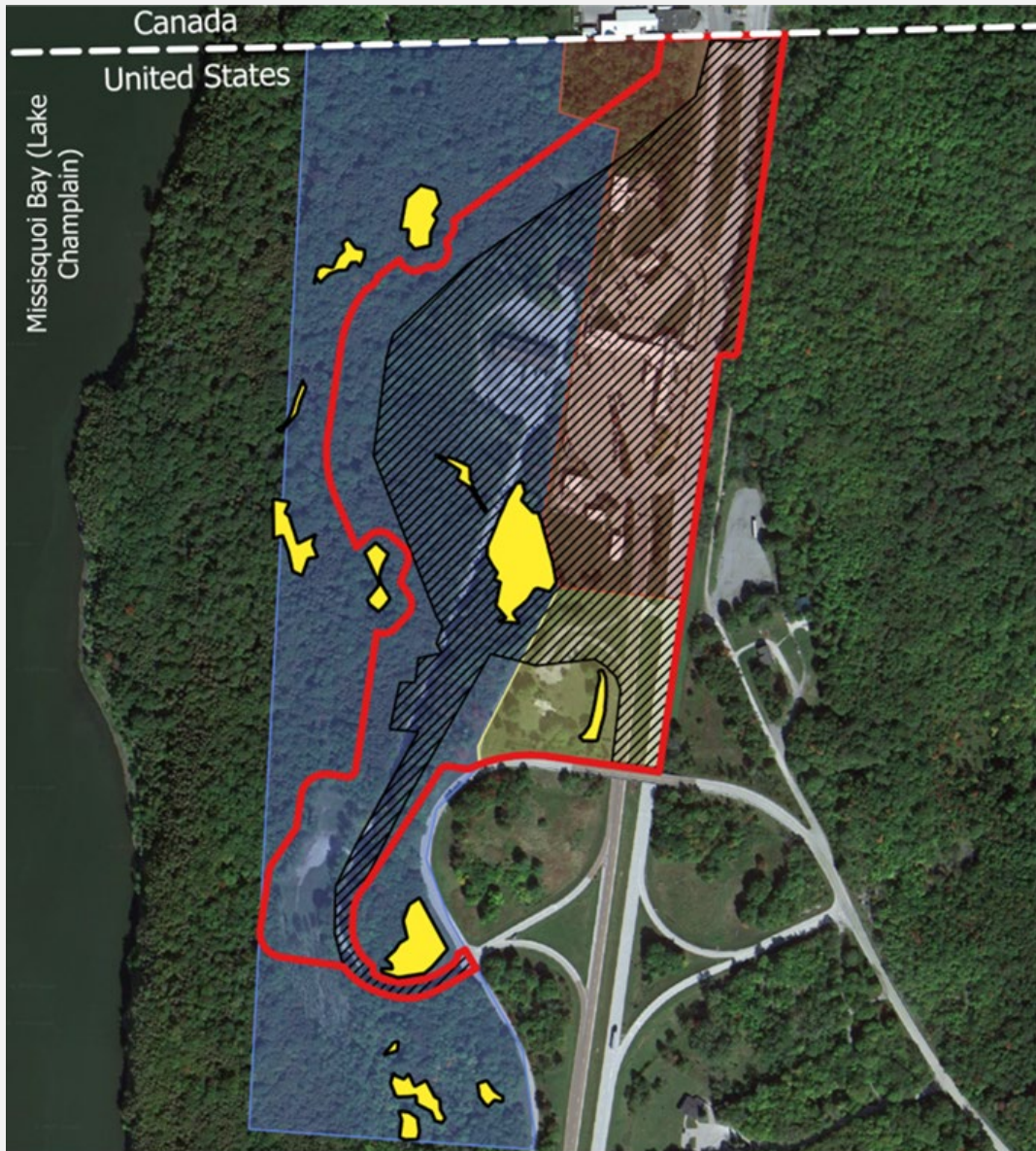
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## **Additional details about the Proposed Action**

- CBP would operate seven inspection lanes for private vehicles, two bus lanes, two commercial lanes, and one bypass lane for larger vehicles
- Additional support infrastructure would include employee and visitor pedestrian paths, rejection routes for vehicles, new utility connections, monitoring wells, helipad, snow storage locations, and sufficient employee parking spaces
- The new LPOE would achieve a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED®) Version 4 Gold Rating and comply with the Guiding Principles for Sustainable Federal Buildings
- Construction activities would begin in 2025 and end in 2028; the LPOE will remain fully operational during this time



# Proposed Action Project Area



	Proposed Project Area Boundary (50 acres)
	Proposed Permanent Disturbance (34 acres)
	Delineated Wetlands
	Existing Highgate Springs LPOE
	State of Vermont Property
	Private Property

- Total land to be acquired under the Proposed Action = up to **61 acres**
- Total project area under the Proposed Action = **50 acres**
- Proposed area of permanent disturbance = **34 acres**
- Acreage proposed for vegetation clearing = **11 acres**
- Developed/Disturbed acreage in the Project Area = **27 acres**



# Affected Environment

A snapshot of existing resources and conditions within and near the alternative sites



Land Use



Geology,  
Topography &  
Soils



Water Resources



Biological  
Resources



Utilities



Solid and  
Hazardous Waste  
& Materials



Traffic &  
Transportation



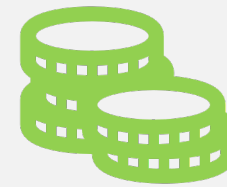
Noise



Climate  
Change



Cultural  
Resources



Socioeconomics



Environmental  
Justice

**Resources  
Dismissed from  
Detailed Analysis**

Air Quality, Recreation, Human Health & Safety,  
Visual Resources



# Environmental Consequences

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**Analysis of potential effects to each resource area that may result from the proposed project**

## **1) Intensity (How Much)**

None, Negligible, Minor, Moderate, Major

## **2) Duration (How Long)**

Short-term, Long-term, Permanent

## **3) Geographic Context (How Far)**

Site-specific, Localized, Regional





# Potential Effects to Resource Areas

Resource Area	Proposed Action		No Action Alternative	
Land Use				
Geology, Soils, and Topography				
Water Resources				
Biological Resources				
Utilities				
Solid and Hazardous Waste and Materials				
Traffic and Transportation				
Noise				
Climate Change				
Cultural Resources				
Socioeconomics				
Environmental Justice				

No Effects   
 Beneficial Effect   
 Negligible to Minor Adverse Effect   
 Moderate Adverse Effect



# Best Management Practices (BMPs)/Mitigation Measures

Resource Area	BMP / Mitigation Measure
Geology, Topography, and Soils	Silt fencing and sediment traps; gravel construction entrances/exits; revegetate disturbed areas with native species; use best available boring techniques to minimize effects to bedrock
Water Resources	Implement stormwater pollution prevention plan (SWPPP); wetland mitigation measures (e.g., establishing new wetlands, participation in a federal “in-lieu fee” program, etc.); adhere to best practices during well drilling
Biological Resources	Use existing roadways and disturbed areas for staging; observe maximum speed limits; adhere to time of year restrictions for protected species
Solid and Hazardous Waste and Materials	Remove waste frequently; use licensed contractors for tank removal and waste disposal; implement spill prevention, control, and countermeasure (SPCC) plan; separate storage and disposal of ammunition waste
Cultural Resources	Consultation under Section 106 of the NHPA is ongoing and mitigation measures would be developed as needed; implement Inadvertent Discovery Plan



# Next Steps & Anticipated Timeline

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- **Project Planning & Development**
- **NEPA**
  - Draft EA Publication
  - Public Review Period (**October 16, 2024 – November 19, 2024**)
  - Publish Final EA and Decision Document (**Early 2025**)
- **Demolition of acquired private buildings and initial site work** anticipated to occur in **2025**
- **Construction** anticipated to begin in **2026** and end in **2028**
- **Occupancy** anticipated in **2028**





# Providing Public Comments on the Draft EA

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GSA welcomes public input and will be accepting comments until **November 19, 2024**. GSA has provided multiple ways to submit comments:

- **In-Person Written:** Fill out a comment form and leave it here with us tonight
- **In-Person Verbal:** Verbal comments are welcome and will be recorded by the stenographer
- **Email:** Send an email to [highgatesprings.LPOE@gsa.gov](mailto:highgatesprings.LPOE@gsa.gov) with subject line **“Highgate Springs LPOE EA”**
- **Mail:** Send written comments to:  
General Services Administration  
Attention: John Maurer, GSA Project Executive  
Thomas P. O’Neill Jr., Federal Building  
10 Causeway Street, 11th Floor  
Boston, MA 02222-1077



# In-Person Commenting Etiquette

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- Once called, please step up to the microphone
- State and spell your first and last name at the start of your comment
- Be respectful of participants and presenters
- Remain quiet while others are speaking
- Verbal comments will be held to a 3-minute time limit
- If time allows, participants may be permitted to speak again after all commenters have had the opportunity to speak. Additional comments can also be submitted in writing
- A recording of the meeting will be made available online at [www.gsa.gov/highgatesprings](http://www.gsa.gov/highgatesprings), and your comments will be included in the administrative record

**THANK YOU!**