

RCW 43.21C.0311 Final environmental impact statements—

Expeditious manner—Time limit—Reports. (1) A lead agency shall aspire to prepare a final environmental impact statement required by RCW 43.21C.030(2) in as expeditious a manner as possible while not compromising the integrity of the analysis.

(a) For even the most complex government decisions associated with a broad scope of possible environmental impacts, a lead agency shall aspire to prepare a final environmental impact statement required by RCW 43.21C.030(2) within twenty-four months of a threshold determination of a probable significant, adverse environmental impact.

(b) Wherever possible, a lead agency shall aspire to far outpace the twenty-four month time limit established in this section for more commonplace government decisions associated with narrower and more easily identifiable environmental impacts.

(2) Beginning December 31, 2018, and every two years thereafter, the department of ecology must submit a report on the environmental impact statements produced by state agencies and local governments to the appropriate committees of the legislature. The report must include data on the average time, and document the range of time, it took to complete environmental impact statements within the previous two years.

(3) Nothing in this section creates any civil liability for a lead agency or creates a new cause of action against a lead agency. [2017 c 289 § 2.]

Finding—Intent—2017 c 289: "The legislature finds that the analysis of environmental impacts required under the state environmental policy act adds value to government decision-making processes in Washington state and helps minimize the potential environmental harm coming from those government decisions. However, the legislature also recognizes that excessive delays in the environmental impact analysis process adds uncertainty and burdensome costs to those seeking to do business in the state of Washington. Therefore, it is the intent of the legislature to promote timely completion of state environmental policy act processes. In doing so, the legislature intends to restore balance between the need to carefully consider environmental impacts and the need to maintain the economic competitiveness of state businesses." [2017 c 289 § 1.]