# Mini-Preliminary Environmental Analysis Report (Mini-PEAR) Instructions

The purpose of a PEAR (or preliminary environmental scoping) is to identify, at the PID phase, environmental issues that could have an effect on a project’s scope, schedule, or cost at later phases. In other words, a PEAR should identify the resources needed to complete the environmental document or determination and the estimated costs for environmental mitigation. No PA&ED (or “0”) phase work (e.g. technical studies/memoranda, environmental document/determination, etc.) should be done during the PID (or “K”) phase of a project.

A PEAR is only required for STIP projects programmed with a Project Study Report-Project Development Support (PSR-PDS). However, a PEAR is strongly recommended for the following project types:

* Projects programmed with a standard PSR;
* Projects that qualify for a CE with technical studies;
* Large, complex SHOPP projects that require an environmental document (not a CE), especially Long Lead SHOPP projects where project development will exceed the SHOPP programming period.

The Project Development Team (PDT) has the discretion to prepare a PEAR for any type of PID, and many Districts choose to use a PEAR for all PIDs. The Mini-PEAR is a tool to provide the minimum level of environmental scoping that should be undertaken at the PID phase of a project to develop the project’s environmental scope, schedule, and cost in later phases. The addition of the Mini-PEAR as a tool does not change any existing policy regarding when a PEAR must be prepared, and the use of the Mini-PEAR is not required. For more information on preliminary environmental scoping, please see [Volume 1, Chapter 5 of the Standard Environmental Reference (SER)](https://dot.ca.gov/programs/environmental-analysis/standard-environmental-reference-ser/volume-1-guidance-for-compliance/ch-5-preliminary-environmental-scoping).

The Mini-PEAR is intended to be a concise document and should be no more than 3 pages (excluding attachments). In lieu of field surveys, the use of existing environmental documentation for the project area, such as CDFW’s Natural Diversity Database, internal Caltrans databases, and other tools such as Google Earth, is encouraged for the preparation of a Mini-PEAR. If sufficient PID hours are available, participation by the environmental planner/generalist in a PDT field review is encouraged.

A Mini-PEAR should focus on those environmental issues most likely to affect project scope, schedule, and cost. This may include, but is not limited to:

* The anticipated environmental document or determination and the expected time (in months) needed for completion.
* Field studies, surveys, technical studies or memoranda that will be required during the PA&ED phase to complete the environmental document or determination, any restrictions on those studies (such as seasonal survey windows), and the expected “0” phase time/resources (in hours) needed for completion.
* Any resources within the project area that will mandate the consideration of an avoidance alternative, including Section 4(f) resources, wetlands, and/or a significant encroachment into a floodplain.
* Special areas of jurisdiction, such as the United States Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, Central Valley Flood Protection Board, Tahoe Regional Planning Agency, the Coastal Commission, San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission, local coastal programs, multiple species habitat conservation plans, etc.
* Known environmental resources within the project area such as cultural resources, biological resources, farmlands, scenic resources, etc.
* The results of the Initial Site Assessment (ISA), if available, and/or the occurrence of any portion of a site on the Cortese list within the project limits. A list of Cortese sites can be found on the [CalEPA website](https://calepa.ca.gov/sitecleanup/corteselist/).
* Special assumptions made during the preparation of the Mini-PEAR. For example, if avoidance of sensitive environmental resources was included as part of the project description (such as the removal of certain work locations, removal of certain work components, and/or the inclusion of ESA fencing), include the consequences to the project’s scope, schedule, and cost if these assumptions change during the PA&ED or later phases.
* Permits, licenses, agreements, and certifications (PLACs) that may be needed prior to construction of the project as well as coordination needed to obtain any PLACs. Specify why the PLAC is required and which agency is requiring it. For example, “Replacement of the culvert at PM 3.6 will require a 1602 permit from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife” or “The presence of Giant Garter Snake habitat within the project limits will require a Biological Opinion from the United States Fish and Wildlife Service.” Also include any associated costs (such as permit fees) and the resources (in hours) needed to obtain any required PLACs.
* The desired request date for “Begin Environmental,” if timing is critical (for example, request that “Begin Environmental” be scheduled for January if biological surveys must take place in March).
* Mitigation measures and cost. Include those mitigation measures such as acquisition, in-lieu fee payments, restoration, etc., that may be required by NEPA, CEQA, and/or other laws. Include avoidance and minimization measures that have a measurable cost such as ESA fencing, exclusionary devices, monitoring, etc.

# Mini-Preliminary Environmental Analysis Report

## Project Information

**DIST-CO-RTE:**       **PM/PM:**

**EA:**       **EFIS Project ID:**

**Project Title:** Enter Brief descriptive phrase, e.g., CAPM, Curve Re-alignment, etc.

**Project Manager:**       **Phone:**

**Project Engineer:**       **Phone:**

**Environmental Office Chief/Manager:**       **Phone:**

**PEAR Preparer:**       **Phone:**

## Project Description

### Purpose and Need

*Write a concise statement of the project purpose and need. It should be consistent with the purpose and need statement in the Project Initiation Document (PID).*

### Description of work

*Write a brief summary of the proposed work that will be done. Include work required that is incidental to the project, such as: access roads, utility relocation, de-watering, etc.*

## Anticipated Environmental Approval

**CEQA (choose one):**

[ ]  Exemption

[ ]  Statutory [ ]  Categorical [ ]  Common Sense

[ ]  Initial Study or Focused Initial Study with proposed Negative Declaration (ND) or Mitigated ND

[ ]  Environmental Impact Report[[1]](#footnote-1)

**NEPA (choose one):**

[ ]  Categorical Exclusion

[ ]  Environmental Assessment with Finding of No Significant Impact

[ ]  Routine [ ]  Complex

[ ]  Environmental Impact Statement1

## Summary Statement (this statement will go directly into the PSR)

[Edit as applicable.] In order to identify environmental issues, constraints, costs, and resource needs, a Mini-PEAR was prepared for the project. Potential disposal, staging, and borrow sites will need to be identified in the PA&ED phase for complete environmental review. Field studies were not conducted, and technical studies have been deferred to the PA&ED phase.

*State the anticipated environmental documentation or determination. Include the anticipated time to complete the environmental process based on the existing workload and available resources. Include any special assumptions made about the project. For example, if specific avoidance measures were included in the project description (such as the removal of certain work locations, removal of certain work components, and/or the inclusion of ESA fencing), include the consequences to the project scope, schedule, and cost if those locations or work components are added back in at the PA&ED phase (e.g., additional studies, permits, a higher level of environmental document, etc.).*

## Special Considerations

*Include a very brief summary of key environmental issues that have been identified within the project area. Subheadings for each resource may be included (e.g. Biology, Cultural Resources, Noise, etc.). Include any studies that will be required as well as permits and any anticipated mitigation. Include, as applicable, additional needs that may impact the project’s scope, schedule, and/or cost, such as survey windows, construction windows, biological monitoring, Native American monitoring, Permits to Enter required during PA&ED, etc.*

## Disclaimer

*Include the following statement:*

This report is not an environmental document or determination. The above information and recommendations are based on the project description provided in this report. The discussion and conclusions provided by this Mini-PEAR are approximate and based on a cursory review of existing records, databases, and mapping tools to estimate the potential for probable environmental effects. The purpose of this report is to provide a preliminary level of environmental analysis to support the Project Initiation Document. Changes in project scope, alternatives, existing environmental conditions, and/or environmental laws or regulations will require a re-evaluation of this report.

## Approval

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|       |  |       |
| Environmental Branch Chief |  | Date |

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| --- | --- | --- |
|       |  |       |
| Project Manager |  | Date |

**[ ]  Headquarters Coordinator’s Class of Action Concurrence has been obtained (e-mail concurrence is attached)—required for environmental documents only and not CEs.**

**REQUIRED ATTACHMENTS:**

**Attachment B:** Mitigation and Compliance Cost Estimate (MCCE) (not required for PSR-PDS)

**Attachment D:** Caltrans staff should use the “Bottom Up Tool.” External partners should contact their local Caltrans district office for direction.

**OPTIONAL ATTACHMENTS:**

**Attachment A:** PEAR Environmental Studies Checklist

**Attachment C:** Schedule (Gantt Chart)

1. If the anticipated environmental document is an EIR and/or EIS, the preparation of a standard PEAR is recommended to avoid unanticipated costs and project delays. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)