

Feasibility Study Milestones At a Glance



Alternatives Milestone

Primary Decision. The PDT has a clear and logical formulation and evaluation rationale that indicates the PDT is making risk-informed decisions and has a clear direction on steps to the next decision point milestone and a sound strategy to complete the study.

Readiness for the Alternatives Milestone. The District Planning Chief, in consultation with the MSC Planning and Policy Chief, determines the readiness for conducting the Alternatives Milestone meeting. The PDT has completed initial scoping, formulated alternatives, and completed an initial screening and preliminary evaluation to develop a focused array of distinctly different alternative strategies for achieving the water resources objectives in the study area. The PDT has also engaged the vertical team and completed District Quality Control (DQC) review of milestone read aheads. In a 3-year study, the Alternatives Milestone meeting would be expected within the first 3-6 months of the study.

Decision-Maker & Lead Presenter. The decision-maker for the Alternatives Milestone meeting is the Chief of Office of Water Project Review (OWPR). The lead presenter is the District Planning Chief.

Read Aheads. Read Aheads are to be provided no later than one week prior to the milestone date. Read ahead material is informational for the decision-maker. Read ahead material is not reviewed for comment and response. Expected Read Ahead materials include:

1. A Report Summary, incorporating an explicit discussion of risk drivers and consequences.
2. The Project Study Issue Checklist.
3. A final draft of District presentation slides.

Meeting Documentation. The decisions reached and any required follow-up actions must be documented at the Alternatives Milestone meeting and acknowledged by the decision-maker and the MSC and District Planning Chiefs before adjourning the meeting. Significant decisions made will be documented by the PDT in a Memorandum for the Record (MFR) and Decision Log.

Participation. Teleconference and web meeting are the preferred methods for conducting the Alternatives Milestone meeting. Invited Milestone meeting participants include representatives of the PDT and Vertical Team: District, MSC, HQ, and PCXes. The non-Federal sponsor representatives, as study partners, should participate in the meeting. Other Federal Agencies and Tribal Nations may be invited to the meeting based on the decision and the needs of the study.

Alternatives Milestone Meeting Best Practices

- Always have a map of the project area.
- Be ready to talk about your scope to continue the study, anticipated schedule and budget to complete – and the uncertainty that remains. *Do you already know you will need a 3x3x3 exemption?*
- Tell the Planning story, including the basics: your problems, opportunities, objectives, constraints.
- What is the status of environmental compliance and coordination with other agencies?
- Do you expect to meet an IEPR trigger? Are you planning for an IEPR exemption?
- Will you be using an approved model or seek approval? Eco studies should have a discussion of potential models or selected models for ecosystem outputs.
- Decide who will capture the decisions at the meeting – the District, MSC, or RIT – so you can capture and get agreement before you leave the milestone meeting.