

A. INTRODUCTION

This part of the EIS, Chapter 4.0, discusses potential impacts that the proposed action and the alternatives may have on each of the resource areas discussed in Chapter 3, “Affected Environment.”

Under NEPA, an EIS is intended to assist a federal decision maker by analyzing the potential impacts of making a particular decision on a specific proposal. The proposal on whether to bring properties into trust was presented to the Department on the date the Cayuga Indian Nation made their fee-to-trust application. That application date establishes the environmental baseline that we use as a comparison to proposed future conditions to determine the potential impact of implementing the tribal proposal. Environmental differences between the current conditions at the date of the application to those projected for the proposal are analyzed for specific impacts. Since the time of the applications to the present, the existing conditions relevant to an analysis of the potential impacts of the proposed action have not changed to any material extent. The temporary closing of the Class II gaming operations presented an interruption of the environmental baseline in regards to traffic, noise and traffic related air quality impacts. Since the various analyses could not be conducted with the gaming facilities operational, the analysis of impacts presented is conservative. The actual impacts from the proposal, upon the resumption of gaming, would be anticipated to be similar to those corresponding to the environmental baseline date of the tribal application.