

**FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FOR THE
CATSKILL/DELAWARE UV FACILITY
METHODOLOGIES**

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3.5. OPEN SPACE

3.5.1. Introduction

Open space is defined as publicly or privately owned land that is publicly accessible and has been designated for leisure, play, or sport. Uses of open space are categorized as active or passive. Active open space is used for sports, exercise or active play; passive open space is used for sitting and relaxing (e.g., a cemetery with seating could be classified as a passive open space). Open space can also be classified as land that has been set aside for the protection and/or enhancement of the natural environment.

The purpose of an open space analysis is to determine whether or not a proposed action would have either a direct or indirect impact on existing open space within the study area. Direct impacts physically change, diminish, or eliminate an open space or reduce its utilization or aesthetic value. Indirect impacts could occur if a significant new user population were to be introduced into the study area that would create or exacerbate an over-utilization of open space resources.

3.5.2. Baseline Conditions

3.5.2.1. Existing Conditions

The open space study area was defined to permit analysis of nearby open spaces and the population using those open spaces. Generally, a reasonable walking distance defines the study area that users would travel to reach local open space and recreation areas. This is typically a one-half mile radius for residential users and a one-quarter mile radius for those working at a commercial project site within the study area.

A one-half mile study area was assessed for the Eastview Site. For the associated off-site work locations, a preliminary screening was conducted to determine when an analysis was necessary. Since the Eastview Site is located in suburban Westchester County, where park users are more likely to drive or take public transportation to access open space resources, the resources located closest to the Eastview Site were identified, using information gathered in the Land Use, Zoning, and Public Policy and the Neighborhood Character analyses and supplemental information provided by Westchester County Department of Parks, Recreation and Conservation.

3.5.2.2. Future Without the Project

An analysis of future conditions without the proposed facility was conducted to provide baseline conditions against which the impacts of the proposed facility could be measured. Available data were collected on population projections as well as recreational and open space facilities approved to be constructed or modified by the peak construction year.

3.5.3. Potential Impacts

3.5.3.1. *Potential Project Impacts*

Potential impacts such as displacement of, or encroachment upon, open space, and the introduction of an additional population that would place further demands on existing open space, along with disruption of access to open space were considered.

3.5.3.2. *Potential Construction Impacts*

The potential disruption or elimination of open space resources resulting from construction activities was considered.

3.5.4. Mitigation

Mitigation measures for the proposed facility were developed when significant adverse impacts to open space resources were identified.