

is implemented as contemplated by the NEPA analysis. Baseline data gathered for these analyses may include pertinent social, economic, and environmental data.

(5) If proposed actions are planned for the same geographic area or are otherwise closely related, environmental analysis should be integrated to ensure adequate consideration of resource use interactions, to reduce resource conflicts, to establish baseline data, to monitor and evaluate changes in such data, to adapt actions or groups of actions accordingly, and to comply with NEPA and the CEQ Regulations. Proposals shall not be segmented in order to reduce the levels of environmental impacts reported in NEPA documents.

(6) When proposed actions involve approval processes of other agencies, the Department shall use its lead role to identify opportunities to consolidate those processes.

B. In Internally Initiated Proposals

Officials responsible for development or conduct of planning and decisionmaking systems within the Department shall incorporate environmental planning as an integral part of these systems in order to ensure that environmental values and impacts are fully considered, facilitate any necessary documentation of those considerations, and identify reasonable alternatives in the design and implementation of activities that minimize adverse environmental impacts. An interdisciplinary approach shall be initiated at the earliest possible time to provide for consultation among all participants for each planning or decision making endeavor. This interdisciplinary approach should, to the extent possible, have the capacity to consider innovative and creative solutions from all participants.

C. In Externally Initiated Proposals

Officials responsible for the development or conduct of loan, grant, contract, lease, license, permit, or other externally initiated activities shall require applicants, to the extent necessary and practicable, to provide environmental information, analyses, and reports as an integral part of their applications. As with internally initiated proposals, officials shall encourage applicants and other interested parties to consult with the Department and provide their comments, recommendations, and suggestions for improvement.

1.5 Consultation, Coordination, and Cooperation with Other Agencies and Organizations

A. Departmental Plans and Programs

(1) Officials responsible for planning or implementing Departmental plans and programs will develop and utilize procedures to consult, coordinate, and cooperate with relevant State, local, and Indian tribal governments; other bureaus and Federal agencies; and public and private organizations and individuals concerning the environmental effects of these plans and programs on their jurisdictions or interests. Such efforts should, in accordance with FACA, include consensus-based management whenever possible. This is a planning process that incorporates direct community

involvement into bureau activities from initial scoping to implementation of the bureau or office decision. All bureau NEPA and planning procedures will be made available to the public.

(2) Bureaus and offices will use, to the maximum extent possible, existing notification, coordination, and review mechanisms established by the Office of Management and Budget and CEQ. However, use of these mechanisms must not be a substitute for early consultation, coordination, and cooperation with others, especially State, local, and Indian tribal governments.

(3) Bureaus and offices are encouraged to expand, develop, and use new forms of notification, coordination, and review, particularly by electronic means and the Internet. Bureaus are also encouraged to stay abreast of and use new technologies in environmental data gathering and problem solving.

B. Other Departmental Activities

(1) Technical assistance, advice, data, and information useful in restoring, maintaining, and enhancing the quality of the environment will be made available to other Federal agencies; State, local, and Indian tribal governments; institutions; and other entities as appropriate.

(2) Information regarding existing or potential environmental problems and control methods developed as a part of research, development, demonstration, test, or evaluation activities will be made available to other Federal agencies; State, local, and Indian tribal governments; institutions; and other entities as appropriate.

(3) Recognizing the worldwide and long-range character of environmental problems and consistent with the foreign policy of the United States, appropriate support will be made available (in consultation with States or Tribal governments, if applicable) to initiatives, resolutions, and programs designed to maximize international cooperation in anticipating and preventing a decline in the quality of the world environment.

C. Plans and Programs of Other Agencies and Organizations

(1) Officials responsible for protecting, conserving, developing, or managing resources under the Department's jurisdiction shall coordinate and cooperate with State, local, and Indian tribal governments; other bureaus and Federal agencies; and public and private organizations and individuals, and provide them with timely information concerning the environmental effects of these entities' plans and programs.

(2) Bureaus and offices are encouraged to participate early in the planning processes of other agencies and organizations in order to ensure full cooperation with, and understanding of, the Department's programs and interests in natural, cultural, and human resources.

(3) Bureaus and offices will use, to the fullest extent possible, existing Departmental review mechanisms to avoid unnecessary duplication of effort and to avoid confusion by other organizations.

(4) Bureaus and offices will work closely with other Federal agencies to ensure that similar or related proposed actions in the same geographic area are fully evaluated to determine if agency analyses can be integrated so that one NEPA compliance document can be used by all for their individual permitting and licensing needs.

1.6 Public Involvement

A. Bureaus and offices, in consultation with the Office of Communications, will develop and implement procedures to ensure the fullest practicable provision of timely public information and understanding of their plans and programs with environmental impacts including information on the environmental impacts of alternative courses of action. This is to include public involvement in the development of NEPA analyses and documents.

B. These procedures will include, wherever appropriate, provision for public meetings in order to obtain the views of interested parties, newsletters, and status reports of NEPA compliance activities. Public information shall include all necessary policies and procedures concerning plans and programs in a readily accessible, consistent format.

C. Bureaus and offices will also coordinate and collaborate with State and local agencies and Indian tribal governments in developing and using similar procedures for informing the public concerning their activities affecting the quality of the environment. (See also 301 DM 2.)

1.7 Mandate

A. This Part provides Department-wide instructions for complying with NEPA, Executive Orders 11514, as amended by 11991 (Protection and Enhancement of Environmental Quality) and 12114 (Environmental Effects Abroad of Major Federal Actions), and the CEQ Regulations.

B. The Department hereby adopts the CEQ Regulations implementing the procedural provisions of NEPA [Sec. 102(2)(C)] except where compliance would be inconsistent with other statutory requirements. In the case of any apparent discrepancies between these procedures and the NEPA statute; Executive Orders 11514, 11991, and 12114; or the mandatory provisions of the CEQ Regulations, the laws, executive orders, and regulations shall govern.

C. Instructions supplementing the CEQ Regulations are provided in Chapters 2–7 of this Part. Citations in brackets refer to the CEQ Regulations.

D. Instructions specific to each bureau are found in Chapters 8 through 15. This portion of the manual may expand or contract depending on the number of bureaus existing at any particular time. In addition, bureaus may prepare handbooks or other technical guidance for their personnel on how to apply this Part to principal programs. In the case of any apparent discrepancies between these procedures and bureau handbooks or technical guidance, 516 DM 2–7 shall govern.

Department of the Interior

Departmental Manual

Effective Date: