

U.S. Department of the Interior
ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW DISTRIBUTION REQUIREMENTS

June 2012

To expedite requests to the Department of the Interior (Department) for the review of environmental documents under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA); Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act; project planning, design, and application documents under various Federal authorities; and requests for coordination and consultation early in project planning; please note the following:

Appendix III to the Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ) regulations (49 FR 49778; December 21, 1984) lists the Director, Office of Environmental Project Review (now the Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance (OEPC)), as the individual responsible for receiving and commenting on other agencies' environmental documents. If properly followed, this process results in your agency receiving one set of comments consolidating the views of all commenting bureaus and offices within the Department. Therefore, please send all officially approved documents requesting environmental and other project review to the following address:

Director, Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, NW (MS 2462)
Washington, DC 20240

OEPC is the central coordination office for the Department on all environmental reviews conducted by other federal agencies. It is unnecessary to send copies of environmental and other project review requests to any other bureau or office within Interior, unless that bureau or office has specifically been a part of your coordination or cooperating agency processes.

We respectfully suggest that providing Interior with an email address for submission of comments will help ensure timely responses and reduce the use of paper.

The following requested numbers of copies and format allow for distribution and simultaneous review of the document, thus producing the Department's consolidated review in the shortest possible time:

- 1. We ask that you provide one copy of the document(s) in electronic format (CD/DVD, or any other widely used electronic storage media) and the URL for review documents available on the Internet. When sending disk media, please use a delivery service (FedEx, UPS, etc.) instead of postal mail. The US Postal Service's irradiation of mail addressed to federal agencies in Washington, DC, destroys disk media.**
- 2. When no electronic versions of environmental documents are available, the following hard copies should be provided:**

Twelve (12) copies of a draft and six (6) copies of a final document for projects in the Eastern United States including MN, IA, MO, AR, and LA. The same numbers of copies should be provided for projects in HI and the U.S. Territories (American Samoa,

Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, Puerto Rico, and U.S. Virgin Islands).

Twelve (12) copies of a draft and nine (9) copies of a final document for projects in the Western United States westward of the western boundaries of MN, IA, MO, AR, and LA.

Twelve (12) copies of a draft and nine (9) copies of a final document for review requests which are national in scope (e.g. agency regulations, scientific reports, special reports, program plans, and other interagency documents).

Twelve (12) copies of a draft and eight (8) copies of a final document for projects in AK.

When a review document does not have draft and final versions, the larger number of copies is requested.

Appendix II to the CEQ regulations (49 FR 49754; December 21, 1984) lists Interior bureaus and offices having jurisdiction by law or special expertise on environmental quality issues. Appendix II should be used to determine appropriate Interior contacts for coordination during early planning, NEPA scoping, and other preliminary activities. Since this document might be out of date, it is recommended that you consult the following Internet addresses for the latest bureau contacts: <http://ceq.hss.doe.gov/nepa/contacts.cfm> or <http://www.doi.gov/pmb/oepc/nrm/upload/Bureau-NEPA-Contacts.pdf>.

Early coordination and scoping requests, environmental assessments, findings of no significant impact, preliminary or working drafts of environmental impact statements, and similar material of a regional nature should be sent directly to Interior bureaus at the field level. It is not necessary to send copies of early coordination documents to the OEPC in Washington, DC. Please note that our Regional Environmental Officers (REO) serve as representatives of OEPC and should be contacted if there are questions about these procedures at the field level. A REO list is available and maintained on our website at <http://www.doi.gov/pmb/oepc/reo.cfm>.

Representatives of your organization should establish direct working relationships with Departmental and bureau field level offices, which welcome such contact. This type of relationship is important not only during early project coordination, but also to expedite the early resolution of environmental issues that would otherwise surface during the formal review of a project document. In many cases, Interior's comments on an environmental review will designate an office at the field level for follow-up activities.

We ask that you make a wide distribution of this information throughout your organization. Such a distribution will greatly assist our agencies in better meeting our obligations under existing laws and in planning projects that will be mutually beneficial.

This document is available on our website at http://www.doi.gov/pmb/oepc/nrm/upload/Environmental_Review_Process.pdf.