



# United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY  
Washington, D.C. 20240

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## PEP - ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT MEMORANDUM NO. ESM 10-9

To: Heads of Bureaus and Offices

From: Willie R. Taylor, Director   
Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance

Subject: Procedures for Review and Approval of Bureau and Office NEPA Chapters, Categorical Exclusions, Handbooks, and Other Procedures

Bureaus and offices must have the approval of the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) and Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance (OEPC) before publishing changes to their chapters in the Departmental Manual, categorical exclusions, and other procedures for implementing CEQ regulations. Authority is contained in the CEQ regulations at 40 CFR 1507.3.

Bureaus and offices should contact OEPC when revising and publishing any NEPA-related guidance documents. The OEPC will assign the matter to the Natural Resources Management Team member who normally works with the originating bureau.

When a draft document has reached the point where it is ready for publication in the Federal Register or the Departmental manual as a proposal, it will be made available to OEPC for review and circulation to CEQ. The OEPC will forward the draft to CEQ requesting their review and approval. Upon receipt of that approval or recommended changes, OEPC will contact the bureau or office with an approval to publish or with a request to consider and implement any changes from CEQ or OEPC. Following acceptance of the revision they will be given approval to publish by OEPC. OEPC is available to facilitate any meetings between the bureau or office and CEQ. If a bureau or office arranges and conducts its own meetings with CEQ, it must keep OEPC informed of any critical issues and the outcome.

After publication of the draft, consideration of public comments, and revision, the bureau or office will again submit its proposed final copy to OEPC for OEPC and CEQ review and approval. In a manner identical to that described above in the third paragraph, OEPC will seek CEQ approval and will convey approval or recommended changes back to the bureau or office. When all changes have been acted upon, OEPC will give a clearance to publish a final document.

Handbooks and other procedures that do not require CEQ approval must be coordinated through OEPC.

This memorandum replaces ESM 04-9.