

4.6 Executive Orders 11988 (Floodplain Management) and 11990 (Protection of Wetlands).

- A. EO 11988 affirms that it is national policy to protect and enhance the natural and beneficial values of floodplains and to actively discourage noncompatible development. EO 11990 recognizes that the remaining U.S. wetlands are a valuable national resource. These EOs caution all Federal agencies to do everything possible to preserve remaining wetlands and floodplains by avoiding direct or indirect support of new construction in wetlands wherever there is a practicable alternative.
- B. It is Service policy to provide Federal leadership in preserving and restoring the natural and beneficial fish and wildlife values of floodplains and wetlands. Whenever there is a practicable alternative, the Service should not undertake, support, or permit activities under its authorities that would adversely impact floodplains or wetlands. The Service should be alert during the NEPA planning process for opportunities to protect, restore, and/or enhance fish and wildlife resources values in floodplains and wetlands.
- C. Service comments on an EIS should identify and discuss impacts to floodplain and/or wetland resources. Alternative project elements with less impact to these resources should be suggested, and steps that could be taken to minimize impacts or to restore or enhance natural floodplain/wetland values should be recommended.
- D. If the proposed action does not appear to be in compliance with the EOs, Service comments should state so and recommendations should be made for modifying or abandoning the project.