

# United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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ADDRESS ONLY THE DIRECTOR.  
FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

In Reply Refer To:  
FWS/DHC/BFA

APR

6 1993

Memorandum

To: Service Directorate

From: Deputy Director

Subject: The Fish and Wildlife Service and the National  
Environmental Policy Act

On March 1, 1993, Secretary Babbitt asked all bureaus in the Department of the Interior (Department) to rededicate their commitment to the policy set forth in the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), with a view toward effective conservation and environmental protection (copy attached). I strongly support the Secretary's commitment.

The Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) leads the Department in providing careful scrutiny and review of other Federal agency proposals during external reviews. The purpose of these reviews by Service field and Regional offices is to assist other agencies to adequately consider fish and wildlife resources in their proposals and to incorporate measures to protect and enhance resources under our stewardship. I strongly urge you to provide your comments to other agencies early in their scoping process to seek avoidance and potential resolution of conflicts. By providing clear, concise, and detailed comments on agency "notices of intents," we can be instrumental in the early resolution of important concerns on wetlands, endangered species, migratory birds, and anadromous fish.

I strongly urge you to effectively utilize the planning and decision making functions of NEPA in the execution of Service proposals. Your plans should reflect the Service's commitment to meeting the twin objectives of NEPA: (1) the careful consideration of detailed information on significant environmental impacts before decision making; and (2) recognition of the important role of the public in both the decision making process and the implementation of that decision. These objectives embody the principles of NEPA to make better environmental decisions.

Our renewed attention to making effective use of NEPA will further the resource programs of the Service and of the Department.

Attachment IN-9

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