

Executive Order Establishing Discipline and Accountability in the Environmental Review and Permitting Process for Infrastructure Projects

Summary:

- The Executive Order (EO) establishes the policy of the Administration to facilitate the efficiency and effectiveness of federal infrastructure decisions by establishing greater accountability in the environmental review and permitting process.
- The policy goals of this will be as follows:
 - To safeguard our communities and maintain a healthy environment.
 - To ensure the Federal decision makers make informed decisions concerning the environmental impacts of infrastructure projects.
 - To develop infrastructure in an environmentally sensitive manner.
 - To provide transparency and accountability to the public on environmental review and authorization decisions.
 - To be good stewards of public funds used to develop infrastructure projects and avoid duplicative and wasteful processes.
 - To conduct environmental reviews and authorization processes in a manner that is sufficiently coordinated, consistent, predictable, and timely to give public and private investors the confidence necessary to make funding decisions for new infrastructure projects.
 - To speak with a coordinated voice when conducting environmental reviews and providing authorization decisions.
 - To make well-informed and timely decisions with the goal that the process for the completion of all Federal environmental reviews and authorization decisions for major infrastructure projects take no longer than 2 years.
- This EO will require agencies to process environmental reviews and permitting decisions for major projects under a “One Federal Decision” plan, meaning a lead agency is identified and works with all relevant agencies to develop a unified schedule for completion.
- Additionally, this EO will establish a 2-year goal for the Federal Government to process all of the actions required by Federal law for the environmental reviews and permits of major infrastructure projects.
- This EO also directs the implementation of the following process enhancements:
 - *Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) Action Plan*: The EO directs CEQ to develop and implement a list of actions that will help facilitate Federal environmental reviews. The EO also empowers CEQ to mediate interagency disputes between Federal agencies to ensure that the environmental review and permitting process for an infrastructure project does not indefinitely stall due to the lack of a decision.
 - *Federal Permitting Improvement Steering Council (FPISC)*: The FPISC is a Federal interagency council established by statute that is comprised of all Federal agencies responsible for environmental reviews and permits of

infrastructure, and is statutorily charged to facilitate the review and permitting of certain infrastructure projects with costs in excess of \$200 million. The EO authorizes the FPISC Executive Director to facilitate the environmental review and permitting process of any infrastructure project in the Federal Government upon request of a Federal agency or project sponsor.

- Finally, this EO will repeal EO 13690, which was signed by President Obama, which established a climate-based approach to defining actions that arise in a floodplain.