

**THE COUNCIL ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
ROCKY MOUNTAIN WEST REGIONAL NEPA ROUNDTABLE
AGENDA**

Copper Mountain Conference Center
Ptarmigan Room
Copper Mountain, Colorado

January 8 and 9, 2004

January 8, 2004

- 8:15 a.m. Registration Begins
- 9:00 – 10:00 a.m. Welcome and Opening Remarks
- Horst Greczmiel, Associate Director for NEPA Oversight, Council on Environmental Quality
 - Geraldine Link, National Ski Area Association
 - Marv Hoit, The Greater Yellowstone Coalition
 - Ray Clark, President, The Clark Group LLC
- 10:00 – 10:30 a.m. Discussion of NEPA Background & Roundtable Goals
- 10:30 – 10:40 a.m. Break
- 10:40 – 11:20 a.m. Discussion of Recommendations for Federal and Intergovernmental Collaboration
- Formation of a Federal Advisory Committee to:
 - Identify, develop and share methods of engaging federal, state, local, and tribal partners in training on:
 - NEPA principles
 - Agency missions
 - Collaboration skills
 - Develop guidance on the components of successful collaborative agreements and provide templates applicable to various situations and stages of the NEPA process
 - Develop training for the public on NEPA requirements and effective public involvement
 - Develop a “Citizen’s Guide to NEPA”
 - CEQ should sponsor forums to integrate federal and state NEPA requirements
- 11:20 a.m. – 12:15 p.m. Discussion of Recommendations for Environmental Assessments
- CEQ should issue guidance to:
 - Recognize the broad range in size of environmental assessments (EAs)
 - Clarify that size should be commensurate with magnitude and complexity of environmental issues, public concerns, and project scope
 - Describe the minimum requirements for short EA’s
 - Clarify the requirements for public involvement, alternatives, and mitigation for actions that warrant

longer EA's including those with mitigated findings of no significant impact

- CEQ should issue a clarifying memo to:
 - Reiterate the minimum statutory and regulatory requirements for a short EA

Discussion of Recommendations on Categorical Exclusions

- CEQ should clarify and promote consistent practices for categorical exclusion:
 - Development
 - Public review
 - Approval
 - Use
 - Documentation

12:15 – 1:15 p.m.

Working Lunch

12:15 – 12:45

Presentations by sponsors of the event

- Geraldine Link, National Ski Area Association
- Marv Hoyt, The Greater Yellowstone Coalition

12:45 – 1:15 p.m.

Discussion of Recommendations for Technology and Information Management and Security

- Issue guidance to clarify appropriate roles of communications and information dissemination technologies in the NEPA process to enhance public involvement
- Develop an interagency NEPA technical working group to coordinate with interagency groups regarding protocols and standards pertaining to data, information management, modeling tools, and information security
- CEQ should lead an interagency development of internal agency review protocol to:
 - Promote consistent policies for dealing with sensitive information
 - Review agency quality assurance and quality control for NEPA analyses and documentation

1:15 – 1:25 p.m.

Break

1:25 – 2:00 p.m.

Synopsis of morning discussion

2:00 – 2:40 p.m.

Discussion of Recommendations for Adaptive Management and Monitoring

- CEQ should form an Adaptive Management Work Group to:
 - Integrate the NEPA process with environmental management systems
 - Initiate a pilot study to identify, implement, and document representative actions using an adaptive management approach during the NEPA process to identify aspects of the analyses and documentation requiring CEQ guidance or regulatory action
 - Assess the applicability of NEPA guidance and regulations to adaptive management

2:40 – 3:20 p.m.

Discussion of Recommendations on Programmatic Analyses and Tiering

- Convene a Federal Advisory Committee or Work Group to advise CEQ on:
 - Developing guidance or changing regulations to clearly define the different uses of programmatic analyses, tiering, and associated documentation
 - Developing guidance or changing regulations to define the appropriate scope of programmatic and tiered analyses and documents:
 - Range of issues
 - Depth of analyses
 - Level of description
- Develop guidance to:
 - Include potential future partners, stakeholders, and cooperating agencies in early discussions on the programmatic process
 - Identify and effectively and efficiently address their issues in subsequent tiered NEPA documents
 - Explain the relationship between the programmatic document and future tiered documents:
 - Who will be involved
 - At what stage
 - How potential issues will be addressed
 - What are temporal and spatial scales of analysis
 - Specify criteria to determine when a programmatic NEPA analysis and document requires supplementation

3:20 – 3:30 p.m.

Break

3:30 p.m. – Conclusion

Public Comment
Closing Remarks

January 9, 2004

- 8:30 a.m. Registration Opens—Continental Breakfast
- 9:00 – 9:15 a.m. Summary of discussions and issues addressed the previous day
- 9:15 – 10:50 a.m. Discussion of Recommendations for Additional Considerations
- Alternatives
 - Develop a working group and guidance documents to:
 - Explore the use of a facilitated, collaborative process to develop and refine alternatives and outline how agencies can document the process of refining a proposal and conforming to CEQ regulations
 - Coordinating Compliance with Other Laws
 - Develop a handbook and sponsor forums to
 - Integrate the NEPA process with Endangered Species Act Section 7 consultation, National Historic Preservation Act Section 106 coordination, Clean Air Act conformity requirements, and Clean Water Act total maximum daily load and Section 404 requirements
 - Social, Cultural and Economic Analyses
 - Develop a handbook to:
 - Develop tools for when and how social, cultural and economic analysis should be performed
 - Disputes and Post-Decisional Reviews
 - Assess the effectiveness of alternatives for resolving disputes during and after the NEPA process - including disputes over environmental mitigation and project implementation
 - Three General Recommendations:
 - Establish a professional position, or positions, to provide technical NEPA process consultation and better coordinate advice and guidance to agencies about improving NEPA implementation and environmental analyses
 - Convene an annual NEPA legal forum to (1) Discuss important NEPA case law and issues of interest, (2) recommend any CEQ guidance needing clarification and (3) facilitate a consensus on addressing legal issues
 - Develop a handbook or web publication to provide existing guidance by topic area and supplement when new guidance is issued
- 10:50 – 11:00 am Break
- 11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Public Comments
Closing Comments