

Reclamation Manual

Directives and Standards

Subject:	Reclamation Manual Release Procedures
Purpose:	Establishes Bureau of Reclamation requirements for managing the Reclamation Manual (RM) and prescribes a system for developing and issuing RM releases. The benefits of this Directive and Standard (D&S) are improved internal and external communication, efficiency, and transparency of RM requirements.
Authority:	381 Departmental Manual (DM) 1, <i>Directives Management</i> ; and 200 DM 1, <i>Delegation of Authority</i>
Approving Official:	Director, Policy and Administration
Contact:	Business and Administrative Services Division, Program Services Office (84-52100)

1. **Introduction.** The Department of the Interior requires each of its bureaus to establish a directives system setting forth its bureau-wide requirements (see 381 DM 1.2). Reclamation's directives system is the RM. For a description of the RM, see RM Policy, *Bureau of Reclamation's Directives System - Reclamation Manual* ([RCD P03](#)). For information on requesting a deviation from an RM requirement, see RM D&S, *Request for Deviation from a Reclamation Manual Requirement and Approval or Disapproval of the Request* ([RCD 03-03](#)). The RM is available at <http://www.usbr.gov/recman>.
2. **Applicability.** This D&S applies to all Reclamation employees who participate in the development, review, and approval of RM releases. It has limited applicability to discretionary guidance documents. See Paragraphs 3.A. and 10 of RCD P03 for information regarding discretionary guidance.
3. **Definitions.** See Paragraph 3 of RCD P03 for definitions applicable to this D&S.
4. **Responsibilities.**
 - A. **RCD P03.** The following responsibilities are established in addition to those in Paragraph 4 of RCD P03 in regard to the origination, review, and issuance of RM releases.
 - B. **Reclamation Manual Manager.** The RM manager is responsible for:
 - (1) issuing final RM releases;
 - (2) serving as Reclamation's consultant in all matters related to managing the RM;
 - (3) communicating RM-related activities inside and outside of the organization to create a transparent RM process;

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- (4) providing training and guidance on RM requirements and writing RM releases;
 - (5) advising managers, supervisors, and employees on the development of RM releases;
 - (6) ensuring Senior Executives are notified of upcoming biennial certifications of releases for their organizations; and
 - (7) responding to questions concerning RM procedures.
5. **Origination, Review, and Issuance of Reclamation Manual Releases.** See Appendix A for a graphic illustration of the process for originating, reviewing, and issuing RM releases.
- A. **Originating Office.** The originating office must:
- (1) **Inventory.** Notify the RM manager (84-52100) when development of new RM releases or substantial revisions to existing RM releases is undertaken to ensure proper maintenance of the [*Inventory of Reclamation Manual Policy and Directives and Standards Development Efforts*](#).
 - (2) **Drafting.**
 - (a) During the drafting stages, provide coordination with all offices in Reclamation affected by a specific RM release, particularly regional and field staff and management involved in the program related to the RM release, and consult with interested offices to expedite approval of the final product.
 - (b) Identify RM releases that a new release supersedes.
 - (3) **Internal Review.** Distribute the draft RM release under the signature of the organizational directorate identified in Paragraph 6.Q.(2) of the RM Delegations of Authority, or their delegate, to all Senior Executives, directorate RM contacts, directorate labor relations officers, area managers, and program coordinators for an **internal** review and comment period of at least 45 calendar days. This memorandum must explain the reason Reclamation is issuing the RM release, identify the staff involved in developing the draft RM release, and briefly describe the substantive changes made to the release if it is revising an existing release. See Appendix B for a sample memorandum requesting review and comment of an RM release with the directorate RM contacts and labor relations officers identified. For additional requirements regarding documenting substantive changes made to an existing release, see Paragraph 7.B. of this D&S.

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- (a) If a commenting office determines that additional time is needed to provide comments, the corresponding directorate RM contact must request an extension from the staff to whom comments are to be sent. Granting the extension is at the discretion of the originating office.
 - (b) The originating office will coordinate disposition of internal comments received and make appropriate revisions to the RM release. The originating office will facilitate discussion with commenting offices, particularly regional and area office staff and management involved in the program related to the RM release, to resolve conflicting comments prior to determining final disposition of comments received. If necessary, the originating office will consult its Senior Executive.
 - (c) When the originating office consults its Senior Executive because disposition of a comment cannot be resolved, the Senior Executive of the program will consult with the Senior Executive(s) making the comment, and either make a decision on the disposition of the comment or elevate disposition of the comment to the appropriate Deputy Commissioner(s). If necessary, the Commissioner will determine the disposition of the comment.
 - (d) Address all internal comments received and make appropriate revisions to the RM release. See Paragraph 5.A.(5) for maintaining records on the disposition of internal comments.
- (4) **External Review.**
- (a) Submit the draft RM release, under the e-mail account of the appropriate Senior Executive who has been delegated authority to issue RM releases for their organization to the RM manager (84-52100) to post on the RM Web site for an **external** review and comment period of at least 30 calendar days. The submittal must include the following:
 - (i) an electronic file in Microsoft Word providing a background of the RM release and a statement of its purpose (see Appendix C for a sample statement);
 - (ii) the e-mail address of the author to which the public will submit comments; and
 - (iii) an electronic file in Microsoft Word of the draft RM release and appendices, if applicable.
 - (b) Address all external comments received and make appropriate revisions to the RM release. See Paragraph 5.A.(5) for maintaining records on the disposition of external comments.

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- (5) **Comment Disposition.** Maintain a record of all significant¹ **internal and external** comments received on a draft RM release and the final disposition of each comment, and submit an electronic copy in Microsoft Word to the RM manager (84-52100).²
- (6) **Formatting.** Ensure formatting of RM Policy, D&S, and Temporary Reclamation Manual Releases (TRMRs) meet the requirements identified in the templates provided in Appendix D and the formatting requirements provided in Appendix E.
- (7) **Approval.** Obtain the required review and approval of RM releases using the *Reclamation Manual Routing Slip* (Form No. [7-2522C](#)) and the *Reclamation Manual Approval Form* (Form No. [7-2522B](#)). See Appendix F for samples of completed forms.
- (8) **Distribution.** Provide the RM manager (84-52100) a hard copy of the final RM release with the signed routing and approval forms (Form Nos. 7-2522C and 7-2522B) and an e-mail with an electronic copy of the final RM release in Microsoft Word.

B. Reviewing Offices. Offices reviewing draft RM releases must:

- (1) Provide any comments to the originating office by the stated due date or request an extension from the originating office. The originating office will assume concurrence of any reviewing office it does not receive a response from by the stated or extended due date.
- (2) Consolidate and submit all comments associated with draft RM releases under the signature of the Senior Executive or their delegate.

C. Reclamation Manual Manager. The RM manager must:

- (1) manage the RM records;
- (2) post draft RM releases on the RM Web site for external review and comment;
- (3) maintain the official approval records for all RM releases;
- (4) ensure current RM releases are readily available on the Internet; and
- (5) finalize all RM releases, which includes:

¹Comments concerning edits such as commas, typographical errors, and RM formatting are not considered significant, and recording the disposition of such comments is not required.

²Communicating the disposition of internal and external comments beyond submittal to the RM manager is **not** required unless specifically requested by a commenter.

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- (a) produce final RM releases from Microsoft Word files supplied by the originating office;
- (b) assign RM release numbers and issue dates (the dates on which RM releases are signed by approving officials);
- (c) complete the *Reclamation Manual Transmittal Sheet* (Form No. [7-2522A](#)) (see Appendix F) and forward RM releases electronically to the RM distribution list and as directed by the originating office on Form No. 7-2522B;
- (d) post final RM releases on the RM Web site; and
- (e) provide quarterly Distribution EC³ of RM activity.

6. **Standard Elements.** Each RM release will include all of the following:

A. **Standard Headings.**

- (1) **Subject.** Each RM release will include a title describing the subject matter being addressed.
- (2) **Purpose.** Each RM release will include a statement setting forth its purpose and intended benefits.
- (3) **Authority.** Each RM release will explicitly identify its underlying authority. See Appendix G for details regarding proper citation of authority.
- (4) **Approving Official.** Each RM release will identify the official who is delegated the authority to approve the release. See RM Delegations of Authority, Paragraph 6.Q.(2).
- (5) **Contact.** Each RM release will identify the office that developed the release and include its organizational code. See Appendix E, Paragraph 5.A. for more information on identifying the contact office.

B. **Standard Contents.** The following paragraphs must be included as the first four paragraphs of every RM release:

- (1) **Introduction.** Each RM release will include an introduction orienting the reader to its contents.
- (2) **Applicability.** Each RM release must state to whom the release applies. This paragraph may also include the scope of the release.

³A Distribution EC is a mailing that is sent to all Reclamation employees and contractors.

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- (3) **Definitions.** Each RM release will define terms that are used in the release to facilitate comprehension of the requirements it sets forth. The terms will be listed in alphabetical order for easy reference. All terms defined in the RM release must be used in the release.
 - (4) **Responsibilities.** Each RM release will include statements of responsibility for those positions and offices accountable for the implementation of its requirements. The statements generally set forth responsibilities further detailed through the remainder of the Policy or D&S.
 - (5) **Policy.** The fifth paragraph in every RM Policy must include a Policy statement establishing the Commissioner's leadership philosophy and the framework within which Reclamation will pursue its mission in a specific program.
7. **Review of and Revisions to Reclamation Manual Releases.** The Senior Executive responsible for the program related to the RM release will perform the following review and revision requirements.
- A. **Biennial Review.** Each RM release must be reviewed at least every 2 years, as required by 381 DM 1.8.G., to ensure it is current and the requirements respond to the needs of Reclamation and its stakeholders.
 - (1) The Director, Policy and Administration will notify Senior Executives of RM releases issued by their organization requiring biennial certification in the coming months. Attached to the memorandum will be the *Reclamation Manual Biennial Review and Certification* (Form No. [7-2523](#)) (see Appendix H), which must be completed and submitted to the RM manager (84-52100) by the due date indicated on the form.
 - (2) The biennial review will consist of the technical expert in the originating office ensuring the information in the release is accurate and reflects current Reclamation requirements. In addition, the review must ensure the release meets the requirements established in this release, RCD 03-01; the Internet links in the document are current and working properly; and information such as mail codes and organizational references are accurate.
 - (3) The originating office will document its biennial reviews using Form No. 7-2523 (see Appendix H), and submit the completed Form No. 7-2523 to the RM manager (84-52100) by the established due date.
 - B. **Substantive Revision.** If substantive revisions are required to an existing RM release, the originating office must follow the procedures in Paragraphs 5 and 6. In addition, the originating office must maintain a record of all substantive changes made to a release prior to it going out for the official 45-day internal review [see Paragraph 5.A.(3)]. A record of substantive changes must be documented (i.e., track

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changes, list of changes, etc.) and include, as deemed appropriate, the reasoning for the changes.

- C. **Minor Revision.** If a Senior Executive determines minor revisions are required to an existing release within their program area, the Senior Executive will prepare and sign a memorandum to the RM manager (84-52100). The memorandum must include a copy of the minor revisions in track changes as an attachment. If the only revision to an existing release is to extend the expiration date of a TRMR, no attachment is required. The RM release will be reissued by the RM manager with a notation of minor revision. See Appendix I for a sample memorandum.
- D. **Rescission.** If a Senior Executive determines an existing release is no longer needed, they must rescind the obsolete RM release by completing Form Nos. 7-2522B and 7-2522C, and submitting those documents along with a copy of the release being rescinded to the RM manager.

8. Appendices.

- A. **Appendix A.** Process for Originating, Reviewing, and Issuing a Reclamation Manual Release.
- B. **Appendix B.** Sample Memorandum Requesting Internal Review and Comment.
- C. **Appendix C.** Sample Purpose Statement for External Comment.
- D. **Appendix D.** Formatting Templates for Policy, Directives and Standards, Temporary Reclamation Manual Releases, and Appendices.
- E. **Appendix E.** Reclamation Manual Formatting Requirements.
- F. **Appendix F.** Samples of Completed Reclamation Manual Routing, Approval, and Transmittal Forms.
- G. **Appendix G.** Citing Authorities in Reclamation Manual Releases.
- H. **Appendix H.** Sample of Completed Reclamation Manual Biennial Review and Certification Form.
- I. **Appendix I.** Sample Memorandum Approving Minor Revisions.