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Sent: Thu, Dec 3, 2009 10:42 am  
Subject: P&S Released by CEQ!!!

To all concerned: CEQ posted the newly proposed P&S and info below on their website this morning. There should be an email blast from CEQ on this shortly. More to follow.

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Building Strong!

From  
<<http://www.whitehouse.gov/administration/eop/ceq/initiatives/PandG>>

Updated Principles and Guidelines for Water and Land Related Resources  
Implementation Studies

On December 3, 2009, the White House Council on Environmental Quality released a proposal to the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) for their review that would significantly change the principles and guidelines that govern America's water resource planning. The proposal would require that such projects help to improve the economic well-being of the Nation for present and future generations, better protect communities from the effects of floods and storms, help communities and individuals make better choices about where to build based on an understanding of the risk, and protect and restore the environment.

The proposal calls for the development of water resources projects to be based on sound science, increased consideration of both monetary and non-monetary benefits to justify and select a project, improved transparency, and consideration of nonstructural approaches that can solve the flooding problem without adversely impacting floodplain functions. The proposal would also expand the scope of the Principles and Guidelines to cover all Federal agencies that undertake water resource projects.

The Administration sent the new draft Principles and Guidelines to both the Federal Register for public comment and, in accordance with WRDA 2007, to the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) for its review. The NAS review is expected to be completed by November 2010. Additionally, CEQ is taking public comment on the new draft Principles and Guidelines for 90 days.

Federal water planning has been guided by a process that has remained largely unchanged for over twenty-five years. The first set of "Principles and

Standards" was issued in September 1973 to guide the preparation of river basin plans and to evaluate federal water projects. Following a few attempts to revise those initial standards, the current principles and guidelines went into effect in March 1983.

In the Water Resources Development Act of 2007, Congress instructed the Secretary of the Army to develop a new Principles and Guidelines for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (section 2031). In an effort to modernize the approach to water resources development, the Obama Administration is expanding the scope of the Principles and Guidelines to cover all federal agencies that undertake water resource projects, not just the four agencies (i.e., U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Bureau of Reclamation, Natural Resources Conservation Service and the Tennessee Valley Authority) which are subject to the current Principles and Guidelines.

The revised Principles and Guidelines include a number of important changes that modernize the current approach to water resources development in this country, which include:

**Achieving Co-Equal Goals:** The Administration's proposal reiterates that federal water resources planning and development should both protect and restore the environment and improve the economic well-being of the nation for present and future generations. While the 1983 standards emphasized economic development alone, the new approach calls for development of water resources projects based on sound science that maximize net national economic, environmental, and social benefits.

**Considering Monetary and Non-Monetary Benefits:** The revised Principles and Guidelines shift away from the earlier approach to project selection. Specifically, this revised version will consider both monetary and non-monetary benefits to justify and select a project that has the greatest net benefits - regardless of whether those benefits are monetary or non-monetary. For example, the monetary benefits might capture reduced damages measured in dollars while the non-monetary benefits might capture increased fish and wildlife benefits, or biodiversity.

**Avoiding the Unwise Use of Floodplains:** The new Principles and Guidelines represent significant progress in the way we manage our floodplain resources. The decision to modify water resources and floodplains will be based on evaluations of the services gained and lost by such an action. Only those actions that provide a net benefit will be further pursued or recommended for construction. For the first time such evaluations must give full and equal consideration to nonstructural approaches that can solve the flooding problem without adversely impacting floodplain functions.

**Increasing Transparency and "Good Government" Results:** The revised Principles and Guidelines are intended to significantly increase the transparency of the planning and implementation process for water resource development projects in this country. The proposed changes were made to deliver "good government" results for the American people.

It is expected that the use of best science, peer review, and full transparency will ensure that projects undergo a more rigorous study process, which should inform authorization and funding decisions. Moving forward the interagency work will focus on the development of the "Procedures" which lay out the detailed methodology for conducting

implementation studies under this new Principles and Guidelines. The interagency process to develop those procedures will begin almost immediately and will likely take more than a year to complete.

Each agency will develop its own "Implementation Guidance" to outline how the new Principles and Guidelines apply to their agency-specific missions completed in late 2010.