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40 CFR Ch. I (7-1-03 Edition)

financial assistance is limited to benefits earmarked for a specific program or action and directly awarded to the program or action. Indirect assistance, e.g., in the form of a loan to a developer by a lending institution which in turn receives Federal assistance not specifically related to the project in question is not Federal financial assistance under section 1424(e).

(h) *Commitment of Federal financial assistance* means a written agreement entered into by a department, agency, or instrumentality of the Federal Government to provide financial assistance as defined in paragraph (g) of this section. Renewal of a commitment which the issuing agency determines has lapsed shall not constitute a new commitment unless the Regional Administrator determines that the project's impact on the aquifer has not been previously reviewed under section 1424(e). The determination of a Federal agency that a certain written agreement constitutes a commitment shall be conclusive with respect to the existence of such a commitment.

(i) *Streamflow source zone* means the upstream headwaters area which drains into the recharge zone as defined in the December 16, 1975, Notice of Determination.

(j) *Significant hazard to public health* means any level of contaminant which causes or may cause the aquifer to exceed any maximum contaminant level set forth in any promulgated National Primary Drinking Water Standard at any point where the water may be used for drinking purposes or which may otherwise adversely affect the health of persons, or which may require a public water system to install additional treatment to prevent such adverse effect.

(k) *Aquifer* means the Edwards Underground Reservoir.

[42 FR 51574, Sept. 29, 1977. Redesignated and amended at 52 FR 23986, June 26, 1987]

§ 149.102 Project review authority.

(a) Once an area is designated, no subsequent commitments of Federal financial assistance may be made to projects which the Administrator determines may contaminate the aquifer so as to create a significant hazard to public health.

(b) The Regional Administrator is hereby delegated the authority and assigned responsibility for carrying out the project review process assigned to the Administrator under section 1424(e) of the Act, except the final determination that a project may contaminate the aquifer through its recharge zone so as to create a significant hazard to public health.

(c) The Regional Administrator may review any project which he considers may potentially contaminate the aquifer through its recharge zone so as to create a significant hazard to public health.

§ 149.103 Public information.

After the area is designated under section 1424(e), Federal agencies, for projects, located in the recharge zone and streamflow source zones, are required to:

(a) Maintain a list of projects for which environmental impact statements will be prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA);

(b) Revise the list at regular intervals and submit to EPA; and

(c) Make the list available to the public upon request.

§ 149.104 Submission of petitions.

Any person may submit a petition requesting the Regional Administrator to review a project to determine if such project may contaminate the aquifer through its recharge zone so as to create a significant hazard to public health. Any such petition shall identify:

(a) The name, address, and telephone number of the individual, organization, or other entity submitting the petition;

(b) A brief statement of the requesting person's interest in the Regional Administrator's determination;

(c) The name of the project and Federal agency involved;

In addition, the petitioner is requested to submit to EPA available information on:

(d) Applicable action already taken by State and local agencies including establishment of regulations to prevent contamination of the aquifer and why,

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in the petitioner's judgment, the action was inadequate.

(e) Any actions taken under the National Environmental Policy Act and why, in the petitioner's judgment, that action was inadequate in regard to evaluation of potential effect on the aquifer.

(f) The potential contaminants involved;

(g) The means by which the contaminant might enter the aquifer; and

(h) The potential impact of the proposed project.

§ 149.105 Decision to review.

(a) The Regional Administrator shall review under section 1424(e) all projects located in the recharge or streamflow source zone of the aquifer for which a draft or final EIS is submitted which may have an impact on ground water quality and which involve Federal financial assistance as defined in these regulations.

(b) Upon receipt of a public petition, the Regional Administrator shall decide whether the project which is the subject of the petition should be reviewed under section 1424(e).

(c) The Regional Administrator may decide to review a project upon his own motion.

(d) In determining whether to review a project upon receipt of a public petition or upon his own motion, the Regional Administrator shall consider whether the project is likely to directly or indirectly cause contamination of the aquifer through its recharge zone, taking into account any factors he deems relevant, including:

- (1) The location of the project, and
- (2) The nature of the project.

(e) In determining whether to review a project upon receipt of a public petition or upon his own motion, the Regional Administrator may consult with, or request information from, the Federal agency to which the project application has been made, the applicant seeking Federal assistance, appropriate State and local agencies, and other appropriate persons or entities.

(f) In determining whether to review a project which is the subject of a public petition, the Regional Administrator may request such additional in-

formation from the petitioner as he deems necessary.

§ 149.106 Notice of review.

(a) *Notice to Federal agency.* If the Regional Administrator decides upon receipt of a public petition or upon his own motion to review a project under section 1424(e), he shall give written notification of the decision to the Federal agency from which financial assistance is sought. The notification shall include a description and identification of the project.

(b) *Notice to public.* When the Regional Administrator undertakes to review a project pursuant to §149.13 above, he shall provide public notice of project review by such means as he deems appropriate. The notice shall set forth the availability for public review of all data and information available, and shall solicit comments, data and information with respect to the determination of impact under section 1424(e). The period for public comment shall be 30 days after public notice unless the Regional Administrator extends the period at his discretion or a public hearing is held under § 149.16.

§ 149.107 Request for information.

In reviewing a project under section 1424(e), the Regional Administrator may request any additional information from the funding Federal agency which is pertinent to reaching a decision. If full evaluation of the groundwater impact of a project has not been submitted in accordance with the agency's NEPA procedures, the Regional Administrator may specifically request that the Federal agency submit a groundwater impact evaluation of whether the proposed project may contaminate the aquifer through its recharge zone so as to create a significant hazard to public health.

§ 149.108 Public hearing.

If there is significant public interest, the Regional Administrator may hold a public hearing with respect to any project or projects to be reviewed if he finds that such a hearing is necessary and would be helpful in clarifying the issues. Public hearings held under this