

§ 641.15

foreseeable potential effects of a proposed action on the antarctic environment, prepared in accordance with the provisions of § 641.17.

(k) *Preliminary environmental review* means the environmental review described in § 641.15(a).

(l) *Protocol* means the Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty, adopted on October 4, 1991, in Madrid, at the fourth session of the Eleventh Special Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting and signed by the United States on that date, and all annexes thereto.

(m) *Responsible official* means the Director of the Office of Polar Programs, or any NSF employee(s) designated by the Director to be principally responsible for the preparation of environmental action memoranda or environmental documents under this part.

(n) *Treaty* means the Antarctic Treaty signed in Washington, D.C., on December 1, 1959, T.I.A.S No. 4780.

[57 FR 40339, Sept. 3, 1992, as amended at 59 FR 37438, July 22, 1994]

§ 641.15 Preliminary environmental review.

(a) The responsible official shall be notified early in the general planning process of actions proposed by USAP components that may have impacts on the Antarctic environment, so that environmental review may be integrated into the planning and decisionmaking processes. The responsible official shall conduct a preliminary environmental review of each action, including consideration of the potential direct and reasonably foreseeable indirect effects of a proposed action on the Antarctic environment.

(b) If, on the basis of the preliminary environmental review, the responsible official determines that an action will have less than a minor or transitory impact on the Antarctic environment, he will prepare an Environmental Action Memorandum briefly summarizing the environmental issues considered and conclusions drawn from the review. No further environmental review shall be necessary.

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§ 641.16 Preparation of environmental documents, generally.

(a) *Preparation of an environmental document.* If the responsible official determines, either initially or on the basis of a preliminary environmental review, that a proposed action may have at least a minor or transitory impact on the Antarctic environment, he will prepare an environmental document in accordance with the provisions of this part. In making this determination, the responsible official should consider whether and to what degree the proposed action:

(1) Has the potential to adversely affect the Antarctic environment;

(2) May adversely affect climate and weather patterns;

(3) May adversely affect air or water quality;

(4) May affect atmospheric, terrestrial (including aquatic), glacial or marine environments;

(5) May detrimentally affect the distribution, abundance or productivity of species, or populations of species of fauna and flora;

(6) May further jeopardize endangered or threatened species or populations of such species;

(7) May degrade, or pose substantial risk to, areas of biological, scientific, historic, aesthetic or wilderness significance;

(8) Has highly uncertain environmental effects, or involves unique or unknown environmental risks; or

(9) Together with other actions, the effects of any one of which is individually insignificant, may have at least minor or transitory cumulative environmental effects.

(b) *Prior assessments.* Notwithstanding the provisions of § 641.16(a), if (1) An environmental document (including a generic or programmatic CEE) or its equivalent has been prepared for a particular type of action; (2) That document includes an analysis of potential environmental effects that are directly relevant to the potential effects of the proposed action, taking in account factors such as the similarity of the actions and of the locations within which they take place; and (3) There are no potential site specific or other impacts that would require further evaluation, then a new environmental document