

enhance the natural and beneficial values served by wetlands (see §9.11);

*Step 6.* Reevaluate the proposed action to determine first, if it is still practicable in light of its exposure to flood hazards, the extent to which it will aggravate the hazards to others, and its potential to disrupt floodplain and wetland values and second, if alternatives preliminarily rejected at Step 3 are practicable in light of the information gained in Steps 4 and 5. FEMA shall not act in a floodplain or wetland unless it is the only practicable location (see §9.9);

*Step 7.* Prepare and provide the public with a finding and public explanation of any final decision that the floodplain or wetland is the only practicable alternative (see §9.12); and

*Step 8.* Review the implementation and post-implementation phases of the proposed action to ensure that the requirements stated in §9.11 are fully implemented. Oversight responsibility shall be integrated into existing processes.

[45 FR 59526, Sept. 9, 1980, as amended at 49 FR 35583, Sept. 10, 1984; 50 FR 40006, Oct. 1, 1985]

#### §9.7 Determination of proposed action's location.

(a) The purpose of this section is to establish Agency procedures for determining whether any action as proposed is located in or affects (1) the base floodplain (the Agency shall substitute the 500-year floodplain for the base floodplain where the action being proposed involves a critical action), or (2) a wetland.

(b) *Information needed.* The Agency shall obtain enough information so that it can fulfill the requirements of the Orders to (1) avoid floodplain and wetland locations unless they are the only practicable alternatives; and (2) minimize harm to and within floodplains and wetlands. In all cases, FEMA shall determine whether the proposed action is located in a floodplain or wetland. In the absence of a finding to the contrary, FEMA may assume that a proposed action involving a facility or structure that has been flooded is in the floodplain. Information about the 100-year and 500-year floods and location of floodways and

coastal high hazard areas may also be needed to comply with these regulations, especially §9.11. The following additional flooding characteristics shall be identified by the Regional Director as appropriate:

- (i) Velocity of floodwater;
- (ii) Rate of rise of floodwater;
- (iii) Duration of flooding;
- (iv) Available warning and evacuation time and routes;
- (v) Special problems:
  - (A) Levees;
  - (B) Erosion;
  - (C) Subsidence;
  - (D) Sink holes;
  - (E) Ice jams;
  - (F) Debris load;
  - (G) Pollutants;
  - (H) Wave heights;
  - (I) Groundwater flooding;
  - (J) Mudflow.

(c) *Floodplain determination.* (1) In the search for flood hazard information, FEMA shall follow the sequence below:

(i) The Regional Director shall consult the FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) the Flood Boundary Floodway Map (FBFM) and the Flood Insurance Study (FIS).

(ii) If a detailed map (FIRM or FBFM) is not available, the Regional Director shall consult a FEMA Flood Hazard Boundary Map (FHBM). If data on flood elevations, floodways, or coastal high hazard areas are needed, or if the map does not delineate the flood hazard boundaries in the vicinity of the proposed site, the Regional Director shall seek the necessary detailed information and assistance from the sources listed below.

#### SOURCES OF MAPS AND TECHNICAL INFORMATION

Department of Agriculture: Soil Conservation Service  
 Department of the Army: Corps of Engineers  
 Department of Commerce: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
 Federal Insurance Administration  
 FEMA Regional Offices/Natural and Technological Hazards Division  
 Department of the Interior:  
 Geological Survey  
 Bureau of Land Management  
 Bureau of Reclamation  
 Tennessee Valley Authority  
 Delaware River Basin Commission  
 Susquehanna River Basin Commission  
 States

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(iii) If the sources listed do not have or know of the information necessary to comply with the Orders' requirements, the Regional Director shall seek the services of a Federal or other engineer experienced in this type of work.

(2) If a decision involves an area or location within extensive Federal or state holdings or a headwater area, and an FIS, FIRM, FBFM, or FHBM is not available, the Regional Director shall seek information from the land administering agency before information and/or assistance is sought from the sources listed in this section. If none of these sources has information or can provide assistance, the services of an experienced Federal or other engineer shall be sought as described above.

(d) *Wetland determination.* The following sequence shall be followed by the Agency in making the wetland determination.

(1) The Agency shall consult with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) for information concerning the location, scale and type of wetlands within the area which could be affected by the proposed action.

(2) If the FWS does not have adequate information upon which to base the determination, the Agency shall consult wetland inventories maintained by the Army Corps of Engineers, the Environmental Protection Agency, various states, communities and others.

(3) If state or other sources do not have adequate information upon which to base the determination, the Agency shall carry out an on-site analysis performed by a representative of the FWS or other qualified individual for wetlands characteristics based on the performance definition of what constitutes a wetland.

(4) If an action is in a wetland but not in a floodplain, and the action is new construction, the provisions of this regulation shall apply. Even if the action is not in a wetland, the Regional Director shall determine if the action has the potential to result in indirect impacts on wetlands. If so, all adverse impacts shall be minimized. For actions which are in a wetland and the floodplain, completion of the decision-making process is required. (See §9.6.) In such a case the wetland will be con-

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sidered as one of the natural and beneficial values of floodplain.

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### §9.8 Public notice requirements.

(a) *Purpose.* The purpose of this section is to establish the initial notice procedures to be followed when proposing any action in or affecting floodplains or wetlands.

(b) *General.* The Agency shall provide adequate information to enable the public to have impact on the decision outcome for all actions having potential to affect, adversely, or be affected by floodplains or wetlands that it proposes. To achieve this objective, the Agency shall:

(1) Provide the public with adequate information and opportunity for review and comment at the earliest possible time and throughout the decision-making process; and upon completion of this process, provide the public with an accounting of its final decisions (see §9.12); and

(2) Rely on its environmental assessment processes, to the extent possible, as vehicles for public notice, involvement and explanation.

(c) *Early public notice.* The Agency shall provide opportunity for public involvement in the decision-making process through the provision of public notice upon determining that the proposed action can be expected to affect or be affected by floodplains or wetlands. Whenever possible, notice shall precede major project site identification and analysis in order to preclude the foreclosure of options consistent with the Orders.

(1) For an action for which an environmental impact statement is being prepared, the Notice of Intent to File an EIS is adequate to constitute the early public notice, if it includes the information required under paragraph (c)(5) of this section.

(2) For each action having national significance for which notice is being provided, the Agency shall use the FEDERAL REGISTER as the minimum means for notice, and shall provide notice by mail to national organizations reasonably expected to be interested in the