

§ 137.312 Who is the proper defendant in a civil enforcement action under section 509(a)(2) of the Act [25 U.S.C. 458aaa-8(a)(2)]?

Only the designated Tribal certifying officer acting in his or her official capacity may be sued. Self-Governance Tribes and other Tribal officials are not proper defendants in lawsuits brought under section 509(a)(2) of the Act [25 U.S.C. 458aaa-8(a)(2)].

NOTIFICATION (PRIORITIZATION PROCESS, PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT AND CONSTRUCTION)

§ 137.320 Is the Secretary required to consult with affected Indian Tribes concerning construction projects and programs?

Yes, before developing a new project resource allocation methodology and application process the Secretary must consult with all Indian Tribes. In addition, before spending any funds for planning, design, construction, or renovation projects, whether subject to a competitive application and ranking process or not, the Secretary must consult with any Indian Tribe that would be significantly affected by the expenditure to determine and honor Tribal preferences whenever practicable concerning the size, location, type, and other characteristics of the project.

§ 137.321 How do Indian Tribes and the Secretary identify and request funds for needed construction projects?

In addition to the requirements contained in section 513 of the Act [25 U.S.C. 458aaa-12], Indian Tribes and the Secretary are encouraged to jointly identify health facility and sanitation needs at the earliest possible date for IHS budget formulation. In developing budget justifications for specific projects to be proposed to Congress, the Secretary shall follow the preferences of the affected Indian Tribe(s) to the greatest extent feasible concerning the size, location, type, and other characteristics of the project.

§ 137.322 Is the Secretary required to notify an Indian Tribe that funds are available for a construction project or a phase of a project?

(a) Yes, within 30 days after the Secretary's allocation of funds for planning phase, design phase, or construction phase activities for a specific project, the Secretary shall notify, by registered mail with return receipt in order to document mailing, the Indian Tribe(s) to be benefitted by the availability of the funds for each phase of a project. The Secretarial notice of fund allocation shall offer technical assistance in the preparation of a construction project proposal.

(b) The Secretary shall, within 30 days after receiving a request from an Indian Tribe, furnish the Indian Tribe with all information available to the Secretary about the project including, but not limited to: construction drawings, maps, engineering reports, design reports, plans of requirements, cost estimates, environmental assessments, or environmental impact reports and archeological reports.

(c) An Indian Tribe is not required to request this information prior to either submitting a notification of intent or a construction project proposal.

(d) The Secretary shall have a continuing responsibility to furnish information to the Indian Tribes.

PROJECT ASSUMPTION PROCESS

§ 137.325 What does a Self-Governance Tribe do if it wants to perform a construction project under section 509 of the Act [25 U.S.C. 458aaa-8]?

(a) A Self-Governance Tribe may start the process of developing a construction project agreement by:

(1) Notifying the Secretary in writing that the Self-Governance Tribe wishes to enter into a pre-agreement negotiation phase as set forth in section 105(m)(3) of the Act [25 U.S.C. 450j(m)(3)]; or

(2) Submitting a proposed construction project agreement. This proposed agreement may be the final proposal, or it may be a draft for consideration and negotiation, or

(3) A combination of the actions described in paragraphs (a)(1) and (2) of this section.

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(b) Upon receiving a Self-Governance Tribe's request to enter into a pre-negotiation phase the Secretary shall take the steps outlined in section 105(m)(3) of the Act [25 U.S.C. 450j(m)(3)].

§ 137.326 What must a Tribal proposal for a construction project agreement contain?

A construction project proposal must contain all of the required elements of a construction project agreement as defined in § 137.280. In addition to these minimum requirements, Self-Governance Tribes may propose additional items.

§ 137.327 May multiple projects be included in a single construction project agreement?

Yes, a Self-Governance Tribe may include multiple projects in a single construction project agreement proposal or may add additional approved projects by amendment(s) to an existing construction project agreement.

§ 137.328 Must a construction project proposal incorporate provisions of Federal construction guidelines and manuals?

(a) No, the Self-Governance Tribe and the Secretary must agree upon and specify appropriate building codes and architectural and engineering standards (including health and safety) which must be in conformity with nationally recognized standards for comparable projects.

(b) The Secretary may provide, or the Self-Governance Tribe may request, Federal construction guidelines and manuals for consideration by the Self-Governance Tribe in the preparation of its construction project proposal. If Tribal construction codes and standards (including national, regional, State, or Tribal building codes or construction industry standards) are consistent with or exceed otherwise applicable nationally recognized standards, the Secretary must accept the Tribally proposed standards.

§ 137.329 What environmental considerations must be included in the construction project agreement?

The construction project agreement must include:

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(a) Identification of the Tribal certifying officer for environmental review purposes,

(b) Reference to the Tribal resolution or equivalent Tribal action appointing the Tribal certifying officer and accepting the jurisdiction of the Federal court for enforcement purposes as provided in §§ 137.310 and 137.311.

(c) Identification of the environmental review procedures adopted by the Self-Governance Tribe, and

(d) An assurance that no action will be taken on the construction phase of the project that would have an adverse environmental impact or limit the choice of reasonable alternatives prior to making an environmental determination in accordance with the Self-Governance Tribe's adopted procedures.

§ 137.330 What happens if the Self-Governance Tribe and the Secretary cannot develop a mutually agreeable construction project agreement?

The Self-Governance Tribe may submit a final construction project proposal to the Secretary. No later than 30 days after the Secretary receives the final construction project proposal, or within a longer time agreed to by the Self-Governance Tribe in writing, the Secretary shall review and make a determination to approve or reject the construction project proposal in whole or in part.

§ 137.331 May the Secretary reject a final construction project proposal based on a determination of Tribal capacity or capability?

No, the Secretary may not reject a final construction project proposal based on a determination of Tribal capacity or capability.

§ 137.332 On what basis may the Secretary reject a final construction project proposal?

(a) The only basis for rejection of project activities in a final construction project proposal are:

(1) The amount of funds proposed in the final construction project proposal exceeds the applicable funding level for the construction project as determined under sections 508(c) [25 U.S.C. 458aaa–