The purpose of this section is to emphasize agency cooperation early in the NEPA process. Upon request of the lead agency, any other Federal agency which has jurisdiction by law shall be a cooperating agency. In addition any other Federal agency which has special expertise with respect to any environmental issue, which should be addressed in the statement may be a cooperating agency upon request of the lead agency. An agency may request the lead agency to designate it a cooperating agency.

(a) The lead agency shall:
(1) Request the participation of each cooperating agency in the NEPA process at the earliest possible time.
(2) Use the environmental analysis and proposals of cooperating agencies with jurisdiction by law or special expertise, to the maximum extent possible consistent with its responsibility as lead agency.
(3) Meet with a cooperating agency at the latter's request.

(b) Each cooperating agency shall:
(1) Participate in the NEPA process at the earliest possible time.