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(e) Identify the proposed method for accomplishing the scoping procedure.

(f) Indicate the relationship between the timing of the preparation of environmental analyses and the tentative planning and decisionmaking schedule including:

(1) The scoping process itself.

(2) Collection or analysis of environmental data, including required studies.

(3) Preparation of draft and final EISs (DEISs and FEISs), and associated review periods.

(4) Filing of the ROD.

(5) Taking the action.

(6) For a programmatic EIS, preparation of a general expected schedule for future specific implementing (tiered) actions that will involve separate environmental analysis.

(g) If applicable, identify the extent to which the EIS preparation process is exempt from any of the normal procedural requirements of this part, including scoping.

§ 651.50 Public interaction phase.

(a) During this portion of the process, the proponent will invite comments from all affected parties and respondents to the NOI to assist in developing issues for detailed discussion in the EIS. Assistance in identifying possible participants is available from the ODEP.

(b) In addition to the affected parties identified in paragraph (a) of this section, participants should include the following:

(1) Technical representatives of the proponent. Such persons must be able to describe the technical aspects of the proposed action and alternatives to other participants.

(2) One or more representatives of any Army-contracted consulting firm, if one has been retained to participate in writing the EIS or providing reports that the Army will use to create substantial portions of the EIS.

(3) Experts in various environmental disciplines, in any technical area where foreseen impacts are not already represented among the other scoping participants.

(c) In all cases, the participants will be provided with information developed during the preliminary phase and with as much of the following information that may be available:

(1) A brief description of the environment at the affected location. When descriptions for a specific location are not available, general descriptions of the probable environmental effects will be provided. This will also address the extent to which the environment has been modified or affected in the past.

(2) A description of the proposed alternatives. The description will be sufficiently detailed to enable evaluation of the range of impacts that may be caused by the proposed action and alternatives. The amount of detail that is sufficient will depend on the stage of the development of the proposal, its magnitude, and its similarity to other actions with which participants may be familiar.

(3) A tentative identification of ''any public environmental assessments and other environmental impact statements that are being or will be prepared that are related to but are not part of the scope of the impact statement under consideration'' (40 CFR 1501.7(a)(5)).

(4) Any additional scoping issues or limitations on the EIS, if not already described during the preliminary phase.

(d) The public involvement should begin with the NOI to publish an EIS. The NOI may indicate when and where a scoping meeting will take place and who to contact to receive preliminary information. The scoping meeting is an informal public meeting, and initiates a continuous scoping process, allowing the Army to scope the action and the impacts of alternatives. It is a working session where the gathering and evaluation of information relating to potential environmental impacts can be initiated.

(e) Starting with this information (paragraph (d) of this section), the person conducting the scoping process will use input from any of the involved or affected parties. This will aid in developing the conclusions. The proponent determines the final scope of the EIS. If the proponent chooses not to require detailed treatment of significant issues or factors in the EIS, in spite of relevant technical or scientific objections by any participant, the proponent will

clearly identify (in the environmental consequences section of the EIS) the criteria that were used to eliminate such factors.

§ 651.51 The final phase.

(a) The initial scope of the DEIS is determined by the proponent during and after the public interaction phase of the process. Detailed analysis should focus on significant issues (40 CFR 1501.7(a)(2)). To determine the appropriate scope, the proponent must consider three categories of actions, alternatives, and impacts.

(1) The three categories of actions (other than unconnected single actions) are as follows:

(i) Connected actions are those that are closely related and should be discussed in the same impact statement. Actions are connected if they automatically trigger other actions that may require EISs, cannot or will not proceed unless other actions are previously or simultaneously taken, are interdependent parts of a larger action, and depend on the larger action for their justification.

(ii) Cumulative actions are those that, when viewed with other past and proposed actions, have cumulatively significant impacts and should be discussed in the same impact statement.

(iii) Similar actions are those that have similarities which provide a basis for evaluating their environmental consequences together, such as common timing or geography, and may be analyzed in the EIS. Agencies should do so when the best way to assess such actions is to treat them in a single EIS.

(2) The three categories of alternatives are as follows:

(i) No action.

(ii) Other reasonable courses of action.

(iii) Mitigation measures (not in the proposed action).

(3) The three categories of impacts are as follows:

(i) Direct.

(ii) Indirect.

(iii) Cumulative.

(4) The proponent can also identify any public EAs and EISs, prepared by the Army or another federal agency, related to, but not part of, the EIS under consideration (40 CFR 1501.7(a)(5)). Assignments for the preparation of the EIS among the lead and any cooperating agencies can be identified, with the lead agency retaining responsibility for the statement (40 CFR 1501.7(a)(4)); along with the identification of any other environmental review and consultation requirements so the lead and cooperating agencies may prepare other required analyses and studies concurrently with the EIS (40 CFR 1501.7(a)(6)).

(b) The identification and elimination of issues that are insignificant, non-controversial, or covered by prior environmental review can narrow the analysis to remaining issues and their significance through reference to their coverage elsewhere (40 CFR 1501.7(a)(3)).

(c) As part of the scoping process, the lead agency may:

(1) Set time limits, as provided in § 651.14(b), if they were not already indicated in the preliminary phase.

(2) Prescribe overall page limits for the EIS in accordance with the CEQ regulations that emphasize conciseness.

(d) All determinations reached by the proponent during the scoping process will be clearly conveyed to the preparers of the EIS in a Scope of Statement. The Scope of Statement will be made available to participants in the scoping process and to other interested parties upon request. Any scientific or technical conflicts that arise between the proponent and scoping participants, cooperating agencies, other federal agencies, or preparers will be identified during the scoping process and resolved or discussed by the proponent in the DEIS.

§ 651.52 Aids to information gathering.

The proponent may use or develop graphic or other innovative methods to aid information gathering, presentation, and transfer during the three scoping phases. These include methods for presenting preliminary information to scoping participants, obtaining and consolidating input from participants, and organizing determinations on scope for use during preparation of the DEIS. The use of the World Wide Web