of Indian Affairs (BIA) has typically conducted NEPA reviews of actions associated with single-family homes by preparing EAs; the addition of a categorical exclusion to cover these actions will allow for a more efficient NEPA review.

Proposed Categorical Exclusion

The Department of the Interior proposes to add a categorical exclusion to the Departmental Manual at 516 DM 10.5 for approval of leases or funds for single-family homesites, including associated improvements and easements on Indian land. This category includes Federal actions that may include BIA lease approval or funding for a single-family homesite, which would include a residence with one to four dwelling units, as well as other improvements such as a garage, barn or corral. In addition to building construction, associated easements may also need BIA approval on adjacent lands for an access road and utilities, such as gas, electric and fiber optics. The categorical exclusion would be limited to single-family homesites where the total area to be disturbed by construction of homes, associated structures, and related easements must be five acres or less; do not adversely affect any tribal cultural resources or historic properties; and are in compliance with applicable federal and tribal laws. As a final review, each proposed approval of a lease or funding for a single-family homesite must also be reviewed for extraordinary circumstances that would preclude use of this categorical exclusion. The Department’s list of extraordinary circumstances under which a normally excluded action would require further analysis and documentation in an EA or EIS is found at 43 CFR 46.215.

Analysis

The intent of this categorical exclusion is to improve the efficiency of a routine environmental review process for approval of new home construction on Indian land. The BIA environmental staff: (1) Reviewed other agencies’ NEPA procedures to determine if similar categorical exclusions were in effect; (2) reviewed EAs of homesites previously prepared by BIA to verify that no significant impacts had been identified; and (3) conducted a post-construction reviews of individual homesites to determine if any unanticipated impacts had occurred as a result of house construction.

The BIA reviewed other agencies’ NEPA procedures and identified comparable categorical exclusions currently used by the Department of the Army, Indian Health Service, and Rural Development Program. These categorical exclusions are comparable because they are for structures that provide housing or office space; they have a size limitation on the area to be disturbed; they are not restricted to an environmental setting or geographic region of the country; and they are subject to review for extraordinary circumstances.

On Indian reservations across the country, the BIA and tribal environmental staff routinely conduct NEPA analysis of single-family homesites by preparing EAs. These EAs, which have been prepared over the years in a variety of environmental and geographic areas, consistently result in Findings of No Significant Impact (FONSI).

To verify these findings the BIA environmental professionals reviewed 159 EAs completed between 2009 and 2011 that covered 643 individual homesites. These EAs ranged in scope from a single homesite to a programmatic EA covering over 100 scattered homesites. The review confirmed that FONSI’s were reached in all cases. The BIA environmental professionals also conducted post-construction reviews on 117 homesites where construction had already occurred. No unanticipated environmental effects were identified in any of these areas, and the conclusions of the original EAs and FONSI’s were confirmed. The most typical site specific mitigation measures that limited site selections involved modifying or moving the location of the homesite lease in order avoid cultural resources or historic properties. The analysis conducted by BIA environmental staff concluded that a sufficient administrative record exists to demonstrate the construction of scattered homesites would normally not have a significant impact on the human environment, with the following limitations: The area of disturbance of the home site and any associated facilities must have a five acre limitation; and each homesite must be reviewed for extraordinary circumstances, which not only includes a review for historic properties and other relevant federal and tribal laws, but also the effect to other resources such as wetlands, and endangered species. The review for extraordinary circumstances, which BIA normally conducts for all categorical exclusions, insures that measures would continue to be taken to identify and reduce any significant impacts.

Public Comments

To be considered, any comments on this proposed addition to the list of categorical exclusions in the Departmental Manual must be received by the date listed in the DATES section of this notice at the location listed in the ADDRESSES section. Comments received after that date will be considered only to the extent practicable. Comments, including names and addresses of respondents, will be part of the public record and available for public review at the BIA address shown in the ADDRESSES section, during business hours, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays. Before including your address, telephone number, email address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment—including your personal identifying information—may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

Text of Proposed Addition to 516 DM 10

10.5 Categorical Exclusions

M. Other.

(7) Approval of leases, easements or funds for single-family homesites and associated improvements, including but not limited to homes, outbuildings, access roads, and utility lines, which encompass five (5) acres or less of contiguous land, provided that such sites and associated improvements do not adversely affect any tribal cultural resources or historic properties and are in compliance with applicable federal and tribal laws.


Willie R. Taylor,
Director, Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

[Docket No. ONRR–2012–0003]

U.S. Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative Stakeholder Assessment and Multi-Stakeholder Group Options

AGENCY: Office of the Secretary, Interior.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The U.S. Department of the Interior (Interior) has retained an independent facilitator, the Consensus
Building Institute (CBI), to conduct a stakeholder assessment as part of the U.S. Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (USEITI) implementation process. On May 18, 2012, Interior will receive and publish CBI’s findings regarding options for forming a U.S. multi-stakeholder group that will be responsible for determining how USEITI will be implemented. By this notice, Interior is providing the public advance notice of the opportunity to comment between May 18 and June 29, 2012 on CBI’s assessment and findings.

Comments may be provided in writing or in person at public listening sessions and a public workshop. Details will be provided by Federal Register Notice at a later date.

DATES: The public listening sessions, webinar and workshop dates are:

Session 2—Public Webinar, June 1, 2012.
Session 4—New Orleans, Louisiana Public Listening Session, June 12, 2012.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ben Nussdorf, telephone (202) 254–5573, fax number (202) 254–5589, email benjamin.nussdorf@onrr.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On February 24th, 2012, Interior published a notice in the Federal Register seeking public comment on the formation of a multi-stakeholder group to implement USEITI (74 FR 11151). In that notice, Interior stated that it would hold a series of public listening sessions to provide additional opportunities for public comment. In March, Interior held those listening sessions in St. Louis, Missouri; Denver, Colorado; Houston, Texas; and Washington, DC. CBI analyzed the input from these four public listening sessions, interviews with potential stakeholders, and written comments that were submitted to Interior. This input will form the basis of CBI’s independent stakeholder assessment and findings regarding options for establishing the U.S. multi-stakeholder group, which will be responsible for implementing USEITI.

In response to feedback received during the first public comment period, once Interior receives the assessment from CBI on May 18, 2012, it will be published and made available online at www.doi.gov/EITI. Alternatively, you may request a copy of the assessment from Ben Nussdorf, whose contact information is listed previously in this notice. We encourage stakeholders and members of the public to participate in the additional public comment period held from May 18–June 29, 2012, to gather feedback on the stakeholder assessment and recommended options for establishing the U.S. multi-stakeholder group. During the May 18–June 29 public comment period, three public listening sessions, a public webinar, and a public workshop will be held as listed previously in this notice. Further details regarding specific times and locations will be provided in advance via Federal Register Notice and online at www.doi.gov/EITI.

Background: In September 2011, President Barack Obama announced the United States’ commitment to participate in the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative. EITI is a signature initiative of the U.S. National Action Plan for the international Open Government Partnership and offers a voluntary framework for governments and companies to publicly disclose in parallel the revenues paid and received for extraction of oil, gas and minerals owned by the state. The design of each framework is country-specific, and is developed through a multi-year, consensus based process by a multi-stakeholder group comprised of government, industry and civil society representatives. On October 25, President Obama named Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar as the U.S. Senior Official responsible for implementing USEITI. In response, Secretary Salazar posted a White House blog the same day, committing to work with industry and civil society to implement USEITI. For further information on EITI, please visit the USEITI Web page at http://www.doi.gov/EITI.


Amy Holley,
Acting Assistant Secretary, Policy, Management and Budget.

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Foreign Claims Settlement Commission

Sunshine Act Meeting

F.C.S.C. Meeting and Hearing Notice No. 04–12.

The Foreign Claims Settlement Commission, pursuant to its regulations (45 CFR 503.25) and the Government in the Sunshine Act (5 U.S.C. 552b), hereby gives notice in regard to the scheduling of open meetings as follows:

Wednesday, May 16, 2012: 2:30 p.m.—Issuance of Proposed Decisions in claims against Libya.
Thursday, May 17, 2012: 9:00 a.m.—Issuance of Proposed Decisions in claims against Libya.

Status: Open.

All meetings are held at the Foreign Claims Settlement Commission, 600 E Street NW., Washington, DC. Requests for information, or advance notices of intention to observe an open meeting, may be directed to: Judith H. Lock, Executive Officer, Foreign Claims Settlement Commission, 600 E Street NW., Suite 6002, Washington, DC 20579. Telephone: (202) 616–6975.

Jahle F. Barrett,
Chief Counsel.

[FR Doc. 2012–10748 Filed 5–1–12; 11:15 am]

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