



**United States
Department of the Interior
Minerals Management Service**

MMS

**Overview of MMS
Environmental
Review Process**

**MMS Delaware Task Force
October 29, 2009 Lewes, Delaware**

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Environmental Analysis



Environmental Studies

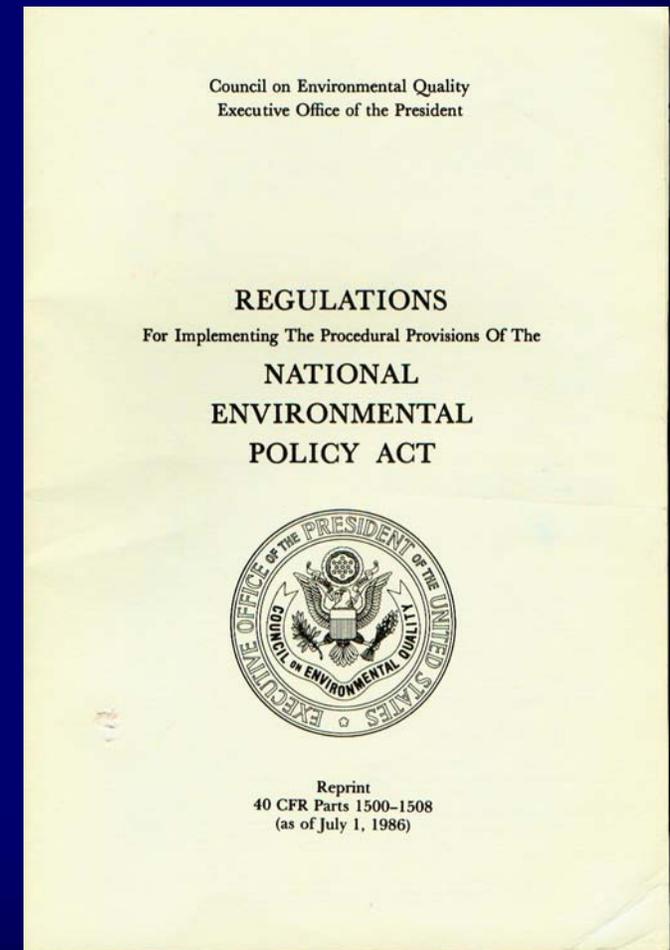


Our Mandate:

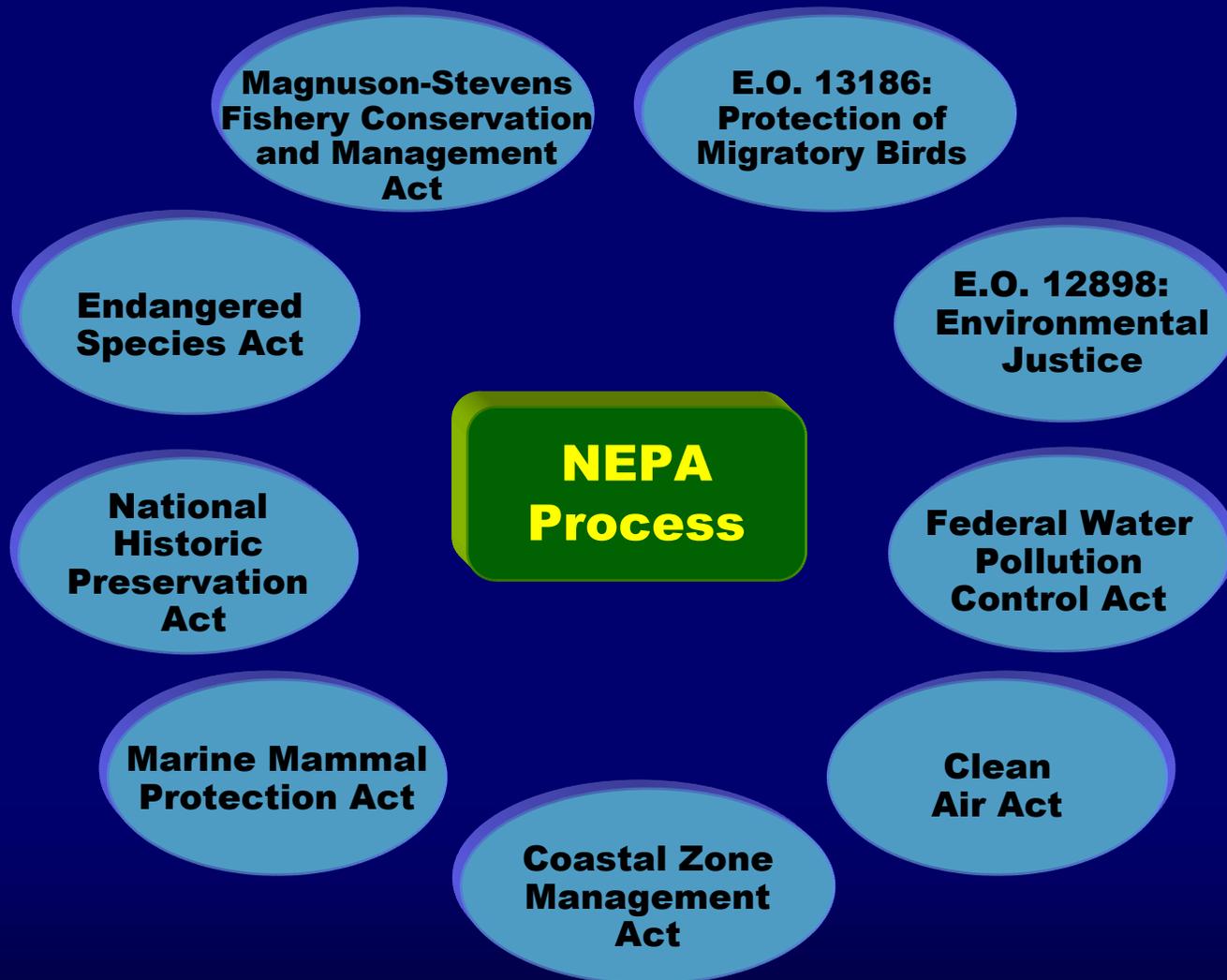
Protect the environment and develop information necessary to assess and manage environmental impacts on the human, marine, and coastal environments.

The National Environmental Policy Act "NEPA"

- **Disclose Plans**
- **Involve Public**
- **Identify and Evaluate Alternatives**
- **Avoid Negative Effects**
- **Unify Environmental Analysis**



The National Environmental Policy Act "NEPA"



Major Federal Agencies Involved in OCS Activities



Minerals Management Service



U.S. Coast Guard



Environmental Protection Agency



Fish and Wildlife Service



Army Corps of Engineers



Federal Aviation Administration



U.S. Geological Survey



National Marine Fisheries Service

Major State/Local Agencies Involved in OCS Activities

- **Coastal Commissions**
- **Departments of Fish and Wildlife**
- **Air Resources Boards**
- **Departments of Water Resources**
- **Departments of Conservation and Natural Resources**
- **Departments of Environmental Regulations**
- **Departments of Culture, Recreation, and Tourism**

Impact Producing Factors

- **Project life cycle:**
 - **Site Characterization Surveys**
 - **Installation**
 - **Operation and Maintenance**
 - **Decommissioning**
- **Visual and aesthetic interference**
- **Vessel traffic**
- **Air emissions**
- **Bottom disturbance**
- **Discharges**
- **Infrastructure (emplacement and presence)**
- **Noise**
- **Lighting**

Environmental and Socioeconomic Resources and Issues

- **Air Quality**
- **Water Quality**
- **Marine Mammals**
- **Sea Turtles**
- **Marine and Coastal Birds**
- **Bats**
- **Seafloor Habitats**
- **Geo hazards**
- **Physical Oceanography**
- **Coastal Habitats (wetlands, barrier beaches and submerged vegetation)**
- **Socioeconomics (employment and land use)**
- **Archaeological Resources (historic and prehistoric)**
- **Fisheries (fish resources and essential fish habitat)**
- **Multiple Use Conflicts (marine traffic, aviation, military use areas, and other alternative energy projects)**



Other Environmental Processes: Required for MMS Lease Issuance or Plan Approval

- **Consultations:**
 - **Coastal Zone Management Act**
 - **Essential Fish Habitat**
 - **National Historic Preservation Act**
 - **Section 7, Endangered Species Act**
- **Clean Air Act Conformity Determination**
- **Migratory Birds Treaty Act Analysis**

Run concurrent with NEPA process

Other Environmental Processes:

**Required by Other Federal Agencies
or Responsibility of Applicant**

- **Marine Mammal Protection Act**
- **FAA Hazard Determination**
- **U.S. Army Corps of Engineers permits
under Section 404, Clean Water Act**

Mitigation Measures

- **MMS's primary mitigation strategy is avoidance**
- **Lease Stipulations**
- **Source of mitigation measures:**
 - **Subject matter experts through the NEPA process**
 - **Consultations**
 - **Renewable Energy Regulatory Framework**
 - **Best Management Practices in the Record of Decision on the AEAU Programmatic EIS**
 - **Applicable stipulations from OCS oil and gas leases**

MMS Environmental Review Process for OCS Wind Energy Offshore Delaware



Multi-Step Environmental Review Process

- 1) Programmatic Lease Sale EIS and Consultations**
 - **Minimum 18-24 months**
- 2) Site Specific EA and Consultations for Site Assessment Activities**
 - **Minimum 6 months**
- 3) Site Specific EIS and Consultations for Construction and Operation Activities**
 - **Minimum 18-24 months**

Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

Steps:

- **Public Scoping Meetings and Comment Period**
 - **Draft EIS**
 - **Public Hearings and Comment Period**
 - **Final EIS**
 - **Record of Decision**
-
- **Minimum of 18-24 months to prepare**
 - **Life of the leases (site assessment, construction, operation and decommissioning activities)**



Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

Sections

- I Purpose and Need**
- II Alternatives and Proposed Action**
- III Affected Environment**
- IV Environmental Consequences**
 - Cumulative Effects**

Environmental Review of Site Assessment Activities

- **Site Assessment Plan (SAP)**
 - Geological, geophysical and biological surveys
 - Construction and operation of data collection facilities (e.g., meteorological towers and buoys)
 - Up to 5 years
- **Initial Review of SAP**
 - Internal review by MMS's subject matter experts
 - Identification of additional information needed for environmental analysis and consultations
 - Information request sent to lessee
- **Environmental Assessment**
 - Minimum 6 months to prepare
 - Tiers from Lease Sale EIS
 - Prepared by 3rd Party, Funded by MMS
 - Finding of No Significant Impacts or Prepare an EIS

Environmental Review of Construction and Operation

- **Construction and Operation Plan (COP)**
 - Up to 25 years activities
- **Initial Review of COP**
 - Internal review by MMS's subject matter experts
 - Identification of additional information needed for environmental analysis and consultations
 - Information request sent to lessee
- **Environmental Impact Statement**
 - Minimum 18-24 months to prepare
 - Analyzes information collected during site assessment
 - Public meetings and comment period
 - Tiers from Lease Sale EIS and Site Assessment EA
 - Prepared by 3rd Party, Funded by Lessee
 - Record of Decision and Mitigation Measures

Questions?



MMS