§ 15924. Pilot project to improve Federal permit coordination

(a) Establishment

The Secretary of the Interior (referred to in this section as the “Secretary”) shall establish a Federal Permit Streamlining Pilot Project (referred to in this section as the “Pilot Project”).

(b) Memorandum of understanding

(1) In general

Not later than 90 days after August 8, 2005, the Secretary shall enter into a memorandum of understanding for purposes of this section with—

(A) the Secretary of Agriculture;
(B) the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency; and
(C) the Chief of Engineers.

(2) State participation

The Secretary may request that the Governors of Wyoming, Montana, Colorado, Utah, and New Mexico be signatories to the memorandum of understanding.

(c) Designation of qualified staff

(1) In general

Not later than 30 days after the date of the signing of the memorandum of understanding under subsection (b), all Federal signatory parties shall, if appropriate, assign to each of the field offices identified in subsection (d) an employee who has expertise in the regulatory issues relating to the office in which the employee is employed, including, as applicable, particular expertise in—

(A) the consultations and the preparation of biological opinions under section 1536 of title 16;
(B) permits under section 1344 of title 33;
(C) regulatory matters under the Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. 7401 et seq.);
(D) planning under the National Forest Management Act of 1976 (16 U.S.C. 472a et seq.); and
(E) the preparation of analyses under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.).

(2) Duties

Each employee assigned under paragraph (1) shall—

(A) not later than 90 days after the date of assignment, report to the Bureau of Land Management Field Managers in the office to which the employee is assigned;
(B) be responsible for all issues relating to the jurisdiction of the home office or agency of the employee; and
(C) participate as part of the team of personnel working on proposed energy projects, planning, and environmental analyses.

(d) Field offices

The following Bureau of Land Management Field Offices shall serve as the Pilot Project offices:

(1) Rawlins, Wyoming.
(2) Buffalo, Wyoming.
(3) Miles City, Montana.
(4) Farmington, New Mexico.
(5) Carlsbad, New Mexico.
(7) Vernal, Utah.

(e) Reports

Not later than 3 years after August 8, 2005, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report that—

(1) outlines the results of the Pilot Project to date; and
(2) makes a recommendation to the President regarding whether the Pilot Project should be implemented throughout the United States.

(f) Additional personnel

The Secretary shall assign to each field office identified in subsection (d) any additional personnel that are necessary to ensure the effective implementation of—

(1) the Pilot Project; and
(2) other programs administered by the field offices, including inspection and enforcement relating to energy development on Federal land, in accordance with the multiple use mandate of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.).

(g) Omitted

(h) Transfer of funds

For the purposes of coordination and processing of oil and gas use authorizations on Federal land under the administration of the Pilot Project offices identified in subsection (d), the Secretary may authorize the expenditure or transfer of such funds as are necessary to—

(1) the United States Fish and Wildlife Service;
(2) the Bureau of Indian Affairs;
(3) the Forest Service;
(4) the Environmental Protection Agency;
(5) the Corps of Engineers; and
(6) the States of Wyoming, Montana, Colorado, Utah, and New Mexico.

(i) Fees

During the period in which the Pilot Project is authorized, the Secretary shall not implement a rulemaking that would enable an increase in fees to recover additional costs related to processing drilling-related permit applications and use authorizations.

(j) Savings provision

Nothing in this section affects—

(1) the operation of any Federal or State law; or
(2) any delegation of authority made by the head of a Federal agency whose employees are participating in the Pilot Project.


References in Text

The Clean Air Act, referred to in subsec. (c)(1)(C), is act July 14, 1955, ch. 360, 69 Stat. 322, as amended, which is classified generally to chapter 85 (§ 7401 et seq.) of this title. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 7401 of this title and Tables.

The National Forest Management Act of 1976, referred to in subsec. (c)(1)(D), is Pub. L. 94–588, Oct. 22, 1976, 90 Stat. 2949, as amended, which enacted sections 472a, 521b, 1600, and 1611 to 1614 of Title 16, Conservation, amended sections 500, 515, 516, 518, 576b, and 1601 to 1610 of Title 16, repealed sections 476, 513, and 514 of Title 16, and enacted provisions set out as notes under sections 476, 513, 528, 594–2, and 1600 of Title 16. For complete
classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title of 1976 Amendment note set out under section 1600 of Title 16 and Tables.


**Codification**

Section is comprised of section 365 of Pub. L. 109–58. Subsec. (g) of section 365 of Pub. L. 109–58 amended section 191 of Title 30, Mineral Lands and Mining.