

An Overview of the ER Process

The External Review (ER) program provides Servicewide review of other agencies' environmental documents. The program helps ensure that the impacts of external proposals on National Park Service (NPS) resources and interests are considered. NPS review is conducted in accordance with the Department of the Interior (DOI) policy and procedures.

The DOI Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance (OEPC) initiates the review of other agency documents by assigning a control number to each review. OEPC distributes the reviews via email to DOI bureaus and offices.

To coordinate these reviews, the NPS developed a web-based application, Environmental Review Tracking Solution (ERTS) to facilitate the process. ERTS is a module of the larger NPS Integrated Resources Management Applications (IRMA).

The Natural Resource Stewardship and Science (NRSS), Environmental Quality Division (EQD), Environmental Information Management Branch (EIMB) receives the email notification from OEPC for NPS review. The EIMB ER staff circulate the review documents to NPS subject matter experts for their analysis. Comments are entered in to the ERTS system and a final NPS response is submitted directly to the initiating agency or back to OEPC for a consolidated DOI response.

EIMB also coordinates the review of internal DOI bureaus' environmental documents. ER staff scan the Federal Register daily for sister bureau projects of interest to the NPS.

Additional information regarding NRSS employees' roles and responsibilities are outlined in the May 22, 2014 Memorandum: *Policies for External Environmental Review and Internal Document Review* and the August 13, 2019 Memorandum: *Coordination and Communication on External Review and Comments*.