AGENCY INFORMATION

Agency: Department of the Interior (DOI)

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*If this form is submitted by a Permitting Council member's designee, please provide a delegation memo with the self-assessment submission.

SECTION 1. EXAMPLES OF BP IMPLEMENTATION

While FPISC OED does not require an implementation narrative for each BP category, it encourages each member agency to highlight its successes and challenges for each category. This can be in the form of identifying positive outcomes from implementation of a BP during FY 2020 or from identifying where a BP did not prevent the issue it was intended to prevent and how the agency or Permitting Council may want to consider addressing that. The specific BPs to be reported on are listed in Table 1 of the Fiscal Year 2020 Recommended Best Practices for Environmental Reviews and Authorizations for Infrastructure Projects and in Appendix B. Please note, BP Categories and BPs have been shortened in the dropdowns for ease of use.

Agencies are also encouraged to identify and submit "alternative BPs" that reflect where the agencies have implemented process improvements that meet the statutory BP categories but not one of the specific BPs identified in the FY 2020 BP Report. Alternative BPs should be submitted to FPISC OED by August 28, 2020 for approval before submitting the BP through this form. If your alternative BP has been approved, please choose "Alternative BP" from the "Corresponding BP" drop-down menu below for the appropriate entry.

Please adhere to a word count limit of 200 words per BP example in this section (i.e., if you provide examples of implementation of four BPs, please use four template boxes below for a total word count of 800 words), while thoroughly reflecting your accomplishments and challenges. Provide links and/or citations as appropriate, and provide as many relevant examples as possible. If you would like to provide more than four examples of BP implementation, please contact FPISC OED for a supplemental form.

Best Practice Category: (i) Early stakeholder engagem	Corresponding BP: i.1 Early stakeholder engagem
DOI continues to encourage early coordination among federal agencies, and with applicants and stakeholders to clearly outline the likely requirements for any needed reviews and authorization. Early coordination continues to benefit projects by daylighting issues early in the process before they could potentially delay a project. For example, Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) conducted early coordination with FWS on proposed solar energy for the Moapa Reservation. This early coordination helped BIA evaluate alternate means of construction based on FWS' recommendations before the team got too far in the process.	

Best Practice Category: (ii) Timely decisions for ERA (	Corresponding BP: ii.1 ERA process templates/ c
DOI continues to develop templates and refine existing practices to better support efficient and effective reviews of infrastructure projects that require review by one of DOI's Bureaus. For example, the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) standardized elements of offshore wind project reviews to help improve efficiency. BOEM and NMFS reached agreement on a purpose and need statement template, to improve concurrence on that milestone. In addition, BOEM and NMFS have nearly completed the development of a detailed schedule for the review and authorization of offshore wind facilities. Hundreds of process steps, including touchpoints with NMFS, have been	

Best Practice Category: (iii) Improving coordination	Corresponding BP: iii.1 Standards and protocols
The Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) undertook a full review and update of the agency's protocol guidelines for tribal consultation. The document includes recommendations for tribal outreach, consultation process, and guidance on developing consultation protocol agreements. The guidelines incorporate best practices, including guidance on post-consultation follow-up with tribes and providing written notification of agency decisions and how the consultation informed the agency's decision. The Bureau of Reclamation Working With Indian Tribal Governments – Consultation, Cultural Awareness, and Protocol Guidelines can be found here: https://www.usbr.gov/native/policy/policy_protocol.html	

Best Practice Category: (v) Reducing information coll	Corresponding BP: v.1 Address ERA staff change
BIA maintains a project history and records that can easily be passed to new staff or new team members. Additionally, for some BIA projects, staff from cooperating agencies that have moved within the same agency have maintained at least an oversight role for new staff to help see the project through to a point of comfort for the agency. For example, maintaining the project history and records helped get a BLM staff member that was supporting BIA get up to speed on the Southern Bighorn solar project, to allow that project to get started and proceed as scheduled during FY2020.	

SECTION 2. FAST-41 PROJECT SPECIFIC PERMITTING IMPROVEMENTS/OUTCOMES

This section should highlight examples from specific projects. Please include agency innovations, initiatives, successes, and identification of and resolution to challenges. Agencies are encouraged to report on FPISC OED recommendations from the FY 2019 ARC (See OED Assessment, Part 2).

Please adhere to a total word count limit of 300 words for this section, while thoroughly reflecting your accomplishments and challenges. Provide links and/or citations as appropriate. Provide as many relevant examples as possible in the space provided below.

At the initial stage of the Borderlands Wind Project, the BLM worked with the project sponsor, Borderlands Wind LLC, to secure a contract with a third party contractor to provide the BLM services to support compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act and other environmental laws. While the sponsor executed the contract, BLM was actively engaged in the statement of work, interviewing and selecting the contractor, and giving the contractor direct instruction. The third party contractor did good work for BLM, which helped the project finish ahead of schedule. Further, the BLM added a national project manager to be able to resolve larger issues directly with BLM leadership. This supported quicker resolution of those larger issues.

As another example, the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) also had two national level project staff that coordinated between FPISC, DOI, and staff with the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge on the Cardinal Hickory Creek transmission line project. This additional coordination supported

SECTION 3. PERMITTING PROCESS IMPROVEMENTS (GENERAL)

Please document activities undertaken by the agency in FY 2020 that may be outside the information captured in the two sections above. Examples include challenges addressed or looking to be addressed through actions like: new tracking systems, procedural changes, outreach efforts/information gathering, regulatory changes, and interagency discussions/working groups/agreements/collaboration through the Permitting Council and with other Permitting Council member agencies. This section provides a space to report any new and unexpected challenges with novel solutions developed by agencies. Addressing challenges that were anticipated, then addressed by existing or new BPs can be included in sections 1 and 2.

Please provide a narrative for each process improvement in a separate section below. Please adhere to a total word count limit of 300 words for this section, while thoroughly reflecting your accomplishments and challenges. Provide links and/or citations as appropriate. Provide as many relevant examples as possible in the space provided below.

Since implementation of E.O. 13807 and S.O. 3355, the average time and page length required to complete an EIS has been reduced from over five years and 850 pages to 1.42 years and 155 pages. In addition, senior DOI leadership review time of EISs has been reduced from over a year to just over a few weeks.

DOI has developed an internal NEPA and permit tracking database. This database is used to monitor progress on all DOI-led NEPA projects increasing rigor and decreasing time because of sharpened focus on schedules for NEPA documents. The database also provides a "Red Report" of upcoming milestones for the next 30, 60, and 90 days, which is reviewed with staff on a biweekly basis to ensure early awareness of any issues that could interfere with timely achievement of target milestones.

DOI has also stood up an internal Major Infrastructure Project community of practice that regularly work on major infrastructure projects and FAST-41 projects. Through biweekly internal calls and a central internal Sharepoint site, practitioners are able to increase focus on project management and

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This information has been reviewed by the Permitting Council Member and CERPO, and others as necessary (public affairs, legislative affairs, office of general counsel staff). I understand that this information will be used as submitted in the FPISC Annual Report to Congress and is testimony-ready for use by Administration officials. ☑

Mr. Jim Cason

CERPO Name (or designee)	Signature

SUBMIT

Permitting Council Member Agency Self-Assessment

Agency Input to FPISC's FY 2020 Annual Report to Congress

Section 1 Supplement

Please use this section to supplement Section 1. Examples of BP Implementation. Please submit this document with your Agency Self-Assessment form to FPISC OED by October 14, 2020

Best Practice Category: (vi) GIS and other tools	Corresponding BP: vi.1 Knowledge sharing about
BOR's Upper Colorado Basin and Lower Colorado Basin regions coordinate the development and publication of the Colorado River System Simulation (CRSS) hydrologic modeling tool. This is an ongoing effort in which CRSS is made available to interested stakeholders, including applicants, so they can perform the same analyses conducted by BOR's staff in support of all types of NEPA documents with ties to the Colorado River and/or its tributaries. In FY2020, the tool was used to inform discussions on the Lake Powell Pipeline project. Both the applicant and stakeholders (especially the Colorado River Basin States) are able to use and verify the modeling BOR performs in the CRSS model.	

Best Practice Category: (vii) Training materials	Corresponding BP: vii.1 Provide training about F
DOI worked with FPISC to offer FPISC-led virtual training to staff within DOI and its Bureaus on FAST-41 in April 2020. This training helped increase awareness of the requirements under FAST-41 and supported improved coordination and information sharing among DOI and its Bureaus on infrastructure projects. We were able to reach a wider variety of practitioners by using virtual methods in lieu of in-person training which would have limited participation.	

Best Practice Category: (iv) Increasing transparency	Corresponding BP: Unique to Agency
Because the FINs received in FY2020 for DOI were primarily placed in a "planned" status with CPPs mainly being filled with "TBD," DOI did not have an opportunity to focus transparency efforts on CPPs. Instead, DOI focused on increasing transparency during project reviews since the pandemic restricted travel and in-person gatherings for most of FY2020. During this fiscal year, DOI and its Bureaus have used a variety of technology and new methods to outreach to stakeholders and continue engagement on infrastructure projects while many project staff and stakeholders were unable to travel or attend in-person meetings. In particular, BIA, BOR, BLM, BOEM, and the National Park Service (NPS) used	

Best Practice Category: (vi) GIS and other tools	Corresponding BP: vi.1 Knowledge sharing abou
The Bureau of Land Management is working to develop Data Standards for Land Use Planning and Decision Making that allow land uses to be shown across all plans on the same map. This requires the updating and changing of current data to be in the same format, which is a massive undertaking. This will result in the ability to see what areas are open for what use, and allow for the public to understand trade-offs and opportunity much easier.	

Best Practice Category: (vii) Training materials	Corresponding BP: vii.1 Provide training about F
The Bureau of Land Management hosted both in person and virtually the first Land Use Planning and NEPA academy in FY2020. This allowed for NEPA team members, scientists, managers, and decision makers to engage with Solicitors and NEPA experts and gain insight into how others have streamlined NEPA under Secretary's Order 3355.	

Best Practice Category: (iii) Improving coordination	Corresponding BP: Unique to Agency
The National Park Service (NPS) proactively engaged other Bureaus and DOI on the Alaska LNG project and the valuation of the right of way through Denali National Park to identify parcels. This coordination included NPS reaching out to private partners through BLM and other Bureaus to ascertain effective methodologies and overall project examples for how to value those parcels. By elevating potential issues with the appraisal early on and highlighting previous successes, it helped the federal team work out differences with the project sponsor and appraiser in a timely manner which prevented potential delays and helped the project be completed ahead of schedule.	

Best Practice Category: (i) Early stakeholder engagem	Corresponding BP: i.1 Early stakeholder engagem

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SUBMIT