

Reclamation Manual

Directives and Standards

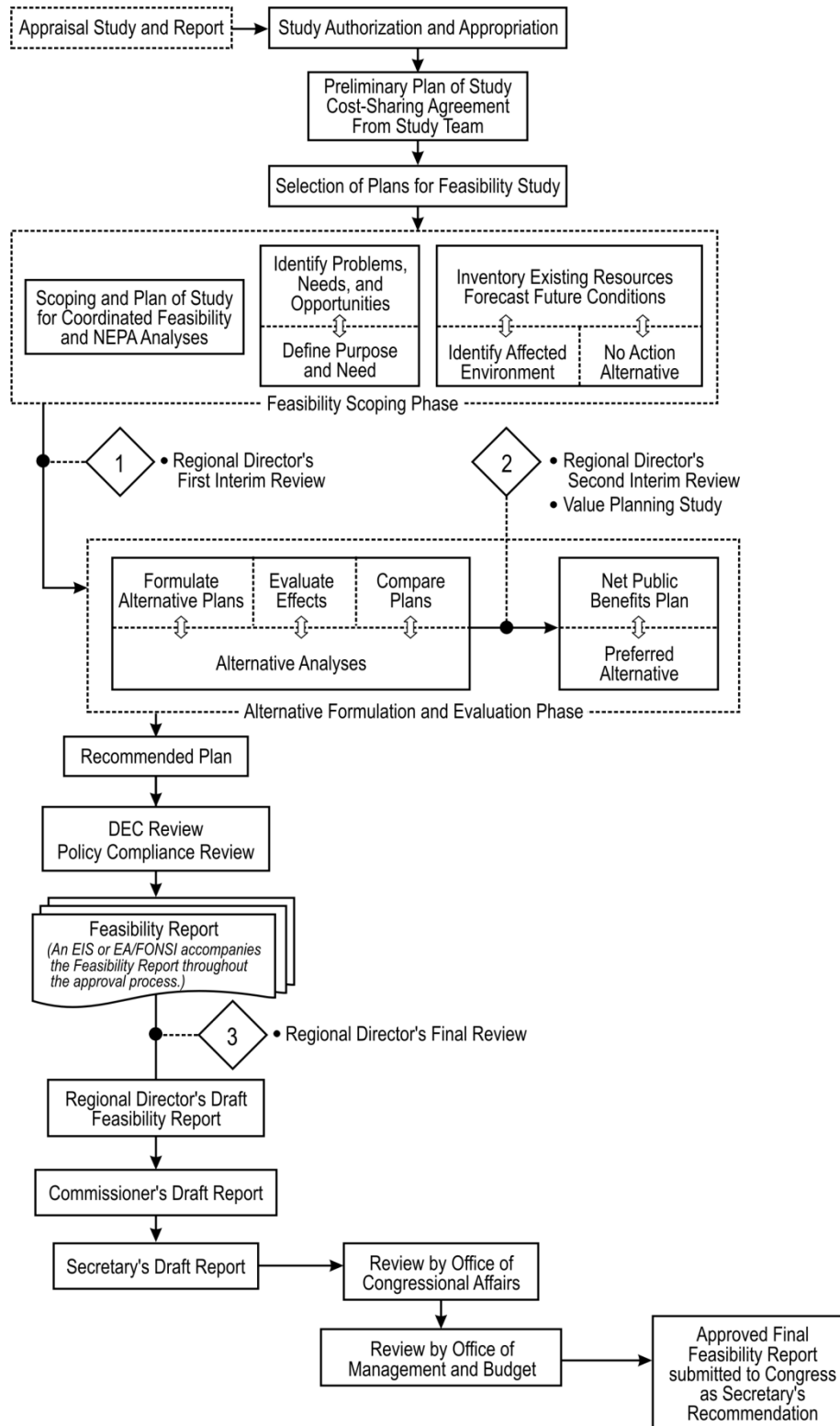


Figure 1. Feasibility Study and Report Approval Process

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Approval Process for Feasibility Reports

The following process describes the steps taken to submit a feasibility study to Congress in order to recommend project authorization, as required by the Reclamation Project Act. The delegated authorities for submitting and approving the feasibility report and associated National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) documents are found in Department Manual (DM) releases, *Program Delegations*, Series 3, 255 DM 1; *Managing the NEPA Process*, Series 31, 516 DM 3; and *Managing the NEPA Process – Bureau of Reclamation*, Series 31, 516 DM 14.

Review by Director, Policy and Administration (Policy Director). The Policy Director reviews the regional director's draft report to ensure that the report and its supporting documentation comply with all Reclamation Manual (RM) releases. The Policy Director ensures that any deviations from applicable Reclamation requirements are approved by the Commissioner or other appropriate approving official as provided for by RM Policy, *Bureau of Reclamation's Directives System - Reclamation Manual* (RCD P03) and RM D&S, *Request for Deviation from a Reclamation Manual Requirement and Approval or Disapproval of the Request* (RCD 03-03). The Policy Director also notifies the Commissioner of the findings of the policy compliance review.

Review by Commissioner. The Commissioner reviews the regional director's draft report and the findings of the policy compliance report to determine if the feasibility report should be recommended to the Secretary of the Department of the Interior (Secretary) for the Secretary's approval, or the approval of a designee with delegated approval authority. The Commissioner also reviews and approves requests for waivers from applicable Reclamation requirements. After accepting the recommendations presented in the regional director's draft report, the Commissioner signs a memorandum transmitting the report (now the Commissioner's draft report) to the Department supporting a recommendation to Congress for authorization of the Recommended Plan.

Review by the Secretary. In coordination with the Department, Reclamation typically transmits the draft report after the Secretary reviews and approves it to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). It is now the Secretary's draft report.

Review by OMB. OMB reviews the report to determine whether the proposed project is consistent with the policies and programs of the President.

Finalize Report. Reclamation finalizes the feasibility report and associated environmental impact statement (EIS) or environmental assessment (EA) / finding of no significant impact (FONSI).

Submit Report to Congress. The Secretary transmits the feasibility report and associated EIS or EA/FONSI to Congress.