



Department of Energy
Washington, DC 20585

January 7, 2013

MEMORANDUM TO: Secretarial Officers and Heads of Field Organizations

FROM: Gregory H. Woods *GHW*
General Counsel

SUBJECT: Coordinating Schedules for NEPA Documents with Program
and Project Schedules

Secretary of Energy Steven Chu, in his June 12, 2012, memorandum for Heads of Departmental Elements, highlighted the importance of integrating National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) compliance with program and project management. To follow up on the Secretary's memorandum, I have outlined below steps to ensure greater attention to developing schedules for preparing environmental impact statements (EISs) and environmental assessments (EAs) that are fully coordinated with programmatic and project schedules.

The DOE NEPA Order (DOE O 451.1B) requires internal scoping procedures for EAs and EISs, including the development of a schedule. The Order also requires each Secretarial Officer and Head of Field Organization to prepare and make public an Annual NEPA Planning Summary that provides the planned cost and schedule for any EIS expected to be prepared in the next 24 months and any EA expected to be prepared in the next 12 months.

The DOE Order for Program and Project Management for the Acquisition of Capital Assets (DOE O 413.3B) requires that by Critical Decision 1 (CD-1) there must be a complete "National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Strategy" including a determination of the level of NEPA review (e.g., EA or EIS) required by DOE O 451.1B. These planning tools should be used to ensure that programmatic schedules and expectations take full account of NEPA obligations, while NEPA schedules fully reflect programmatic needs.

As you may know, the Office of NEPA Policy and Compliance maintains a website (<http://energy.gov/nepa>) that provides monthly updates on Schedules for Key EISs and a comprehensive EA/EIS Status Chart, based on information provided by program NEPA Compliance Officers and NEPA Document Managers. Over the past year, more than half of the key EISs have not had a schedule for completion.

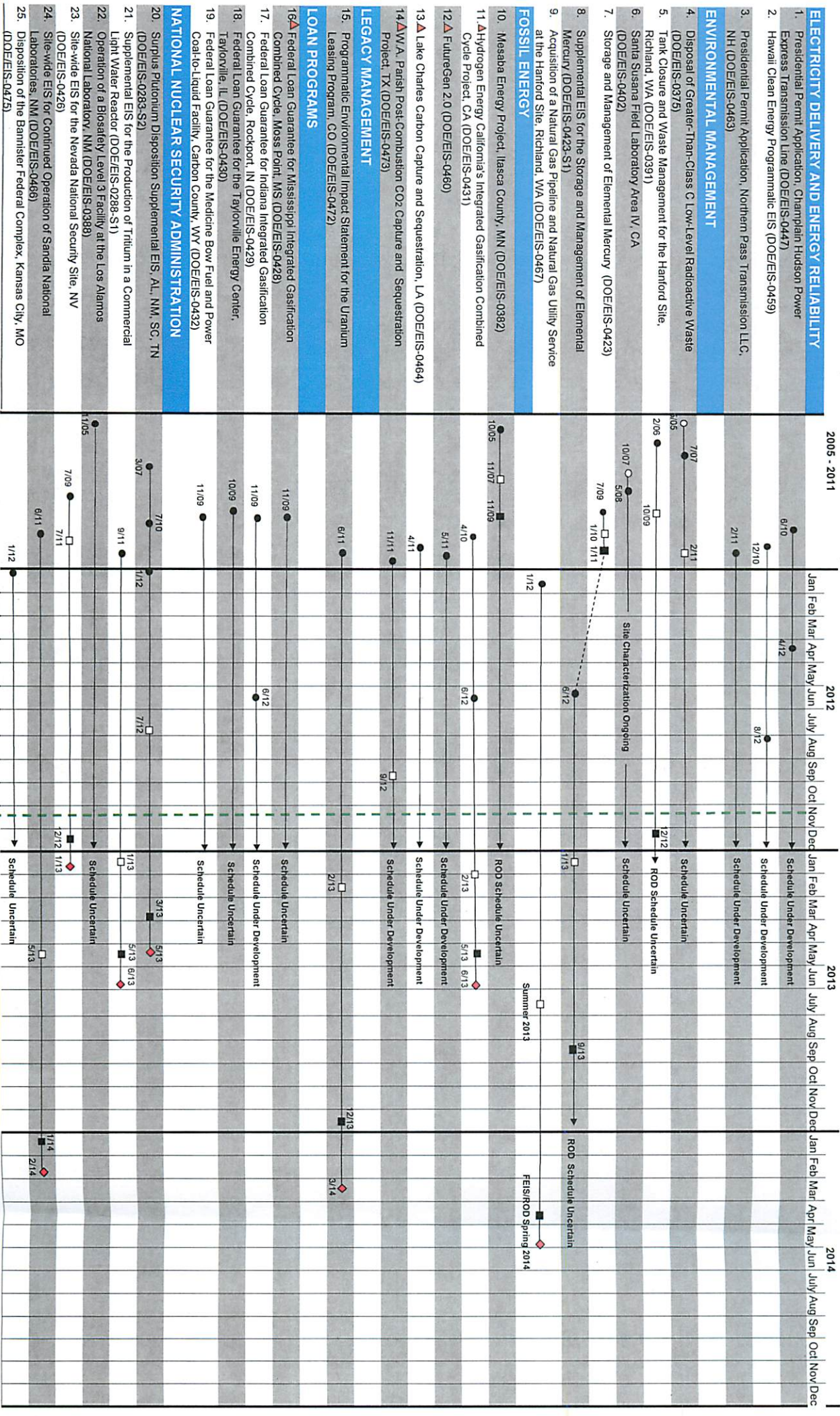
This indicates that increased senior management attention to NEPA planning and integration with project management is needed. I encourage you to review the monthly updates of Schedules for Key EISs (November 2012 edition attached) to ensure that your program needs are being met and that the provisions of the NEPA Order are being addressed. In addition, I request that each EIS Notice of Intent submitted to me for approval or consultation be accompanied by an EIS schedule that reflects input from all involved organizations. Similarly, when a draft EIS is submitted for approval or consultation, it should include an updated schedule for completion. I recognize that schedules may change for good reasons, and this memorandum is not intended to constrain management's ability to propose and implement such changes; rather, its purpose is to ensure that proper coordination is taking place.



Ultimately, our goal is to ensure timely, high-quality NEPA reviews. Suggestions for additional steps that could be taken to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the DOE NEPA compliance process are welcome.

Attachment

SCHEDULES OF KEY ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENTS*



Office of NEPA Policy and Compliance, GC-54 (202-586-4800)
 *Does not include Power Marketing Administrations Environmental Impact Statements

Legend

- Advance Notice of Intent (ANOI)
- Notice of Intent (NOI)
- Draft EIS (DEIS)
- Final EIS (FEIS)
- ◆ Record of Decision (ROD)
- ▲ Recovery Act