THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR

WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM

To: Solicitor
Inspector General
Assistant Secretaries
Heads of Bureaus and Offices

AUG 26 2003

From: Secretary Gale A. Norton

Subject; Improving Environmental Compliance and Performance through Environmental Management Systems

This memorandum commits the Department of the Interior to implement Environmental Management Systems (EMS) and directs Departmental Bureaus and offices to implement such plans by the required implementation date of December 2005. EMS provides a systematic framework to identify and address environmental impacts of our activities, ensures compliance with regulatory requirements, and provides opportunities for continuous environmental improvement and innovation, thus promoting effective and efficient Government-wide operations. It was developed as a result of the President's initiative to make the Federal Government lead by example in its environmental responsibilities.

The President's Management Council has directed Federal agencies to work together to improve their overall environmental compliance and performance. EMS implementation provides opportunities for partnerships to occur and to expand the Department of the Interior's ability to promote healthy lands and thriving communities. The DOI is fully committed to reducing adverse environmental impacts to public lands and natural resources and to enhance compliance. Departmental Bureaus and offices should encourage innovation and creativity in meeting environmental challenges and also harness 21st Century technology to improve our responsibilities and to minimize our environmental impact. Through a process of continuous improvement, the EMS encourages ways to be innovative, adaptive and flexible in sustaining a healthy environment.

In support of the President's initiative, I am directing the EMS implementation by departmental Bureaus and offices in all departmental facilities nationwide, where applicable. While I expect all Bureaus and offices to have the EMS's in place well before the required implementation date of December 2005, as required by Executive Order 13148 (Greening the Government Through Leadership in Environmental Management), I am pleased that many of our Bureaus and offices are already on their way toward the EMS implementation.

An EMS Council has been established within the DOI to aid in Department-wide EMS implementation. The Council is chaired by the Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance (OEPC). That Office can assist Bureaus and offices in this endeavor and other areas as well. Their telephone number is (202) 208-3891.