

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

February 5, 2013

Gene L. Dodaro  
Comptroller General  
U. S. Government Accountability Office  
441 G Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20548

Dear Comptroller General Dodaro,

We are writing regarding the National Environmental Policy Act (“NEPA”) of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.) and the federal costs associated with agencies’ compliance, including those reimbursed to federal agencies by third-parties. Specifically, the NEPA process includes the required evaluation of the environmental effects of a federal action or nexus, including its alternatives. Public interest is best served when there is full disclosure of all expenditures associated with any government action. In addition to the federal costs of implementing NEPA, there are also costs associated with NEPA related litigation and delays in regulatory approvals.

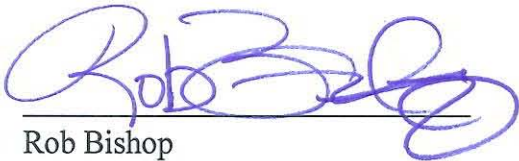
Consequently, we request that GAO provide the below information for the last five fiscal years for the following agencies: the Department of Defense; the Department of the Interior; the Department of Transportation; the Department of Energy; and USDA’s Forest Service.

1. The costs that each agency incurs complying with NEPA in considering or approving resource management plans, permits, or projects;
2. The number and type of NEPA analyses (e.g., environmental impact statements, environmental assessments, categorical exclusion determinations) undertaken by each agency;
3. The number of man hours, or full-time equivalent (“FTE”) hours, and value in terms of costs, spent on complying with NEPA by each agency;
4. The length of time it takes each agency to complete each type of NEPA analysis;
5. The quantity of NEPA litigation to which each agency is a party, the length of time associated with resolution of the litigation, and any delays to permitting and project development.
6. The number and type of additional NEPA analyses undertaken as a result of litigation, and the costs and FTE hours associated with such.


7. The range of potential costs to project applicants associated with preparation of NEPA analyses.
8. The proportion of total costs of a project or permit that NEPA represents. For example, the proportion of costs associated with NEPA for a USDA Forest Service timber sale versus the total costs of sale layout, contract administration, etc.

Thank you for your assistance with this request.

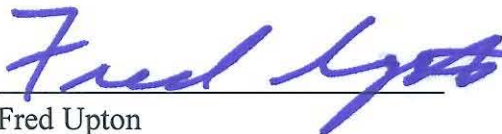
Sincerely,



Rob Bishop  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Public Lands  
and Environmental Regulation



Doc Hastings  
Chairman  
Committee on Natural Resources



Fred Upton  
Chairman  
Committee on Energy and Commerce



Howard P. "Buck" McKeon  
Chairman  
Committee on Armed Services



Bill Shuster  
Chairman  
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure