AUTHENTICATED
U.S. GOVERNMENT
INFORMATION
GPO

projects awarded Step 1 grant assistance on or before December 29, 1981. The second applies to projects not receiving grant assistance for facilities planning on or before December 29, 1981 and, therefore, subject to the regulations implementing the Municipal Wastewater Treatment Construction Grant Amendments of 1981 (40 CFR part 35, subpart I).

(b) *Projects receiving Step 1 grant assistance on or before December 29, 1981.* (1) During facilities planning, the grantee shall evaluate project alternatives and the existence of environmentally important resource areas including those identified in §6.108 and §6.509 of this subpart, and potential for open space and recreation opportunities in the facilities planning area. This evaluation is intended to be brief and concise and should draw on existing information from EPA, State agencies, regional planning agencies, areawide water quality management agencies, and the Step 1 grantee. The Step 1 grantee should submit this information to EPA or a delegated State at the earliest possible time during facilities planning to allow EPA to determine if the action is eligible for a categorical exclusion. The evaluation and any additional analysis deemed necessary by the responsible official may be used by EPA to determine whether the action is eligible for a categorical exclusion from the substantive environmental review requirements of this part. If a categorical exclusion is granted, the grantee will not be required to prepare a formal EID nor will the responsible official be required to prepare an environmental assessment under NEPA. If an action is not granted a categorical exclusion, this evaluation may be used to determine the scope of the EID required of the grantee. This information can also be used to make an early determination of the need for partitioning the environmental review or for an EIS. Whenever possible, the Step 1 grantee should discuss this initial evaluation with both the delegated State and EPA.

(2) A review of environmental information developed by the grantee should be conducted by the responsible official whenever meetings are held to assess the progress of facilities plan development. These meetings should be held after completion of the majority of the EID document and before a preferred alternative is selected. Since any required EIS must be completed before the approval of a facilities plan, a decision whether to prepare an EIS is encouraged early during the facilities planning process. These meetings may assist in this early determination. EPA should inform interested parties of the following:

(i) The preliminary nature of the Agency's position on preparing an EIS;

(ii) The relationship between the facilities planning and environmental review processes;

(iii) The desirability of public input; and

(iv) A contact person for further information.

(c) *Projects not receiving grant assistance for Step 1 facilities planning on or before December 29, 1981.* Potential Step 3 or Step 2=3 grant applicants should, in accordance with §35.2030(c), consult with EPA and the State early in the facilities planning process to determine the appropriateness of a categorical exclusion, the scope of an EID, or the appropriateness of the early preparation of an environmental assessment or an EIS. The consultation would be most useful during the evaluation of project alternatives prior to the selection of a preferred alternative to assist in resolving any identified environmental problems.

§6.505 Categorical exclusions.

(a) *General.* At the request of an existing Step 1 facilities planning grantee or of a potential Step 3 or Step 2=3 grant applicant, the responsible official, as provided for in §§6.107(b), 6.400(f) and 6.504(a), shall determine from existing information and document whether an action is consistent with the categories eligible for exclusion from NEPA review identified in §6.107(d) or §6.505(b) and not inconsistent with the criteria in §6.107(e) or §6.505(c).

(b) *Specialized categories of actions eligible for exclusion.* For this subpart, eligible actions consist of any of the categories in §6.107(d), or:

(1) Actions for which the facilities planning is consistent with the category listed in § 6.107(d)(1) which do not affect the degree of treatment or capacity of the existing facility including, but not limited to, infiltration and inflow corrections, grant-eligible replacement of existing mechanical equipment or structures, and the construction of small structures on existing sites;

(2) Actions in sewered communities of less than 10,000 persons which are for minor upgrading and minor expansion of existing treatment works. This category does not include actions that directly or indirectly involve the extension of new collection systems funded with Federal or other sources of funds;

(3) Actions in unsewered communities of less than 10,000 persons where on-site technologies are proposed; or

(4) Other actions are developed in accordance with § 6.107(f).

(c) *Specialized Criteria for not granting a categorical exclusion.* (1) The full environmental review procedures of this part must be followed if undertaking an action consistent with the categories described in paragraph (b) of this section meets any of the criteria listed in § 6.107(e) or when:

(i) The facilities to be provided will (A) create a new, or (B) relocate an existing, discharge to surface or ground waters;

(ii) The facilities will result in substantial increases in the volume of discharge or the loading of pollutants from an existing source or from new facilities to receiving waters; or

(iii) The facilities would provide capacity to serve a population 30% greater than the existing population.

(d) *Proceeding with grant awards.* (1) After a categorical exclusion on a proposed treatment works has been granted, and notices published in accordance with § 6.400(f), grant awards may proceed without being subject to any further environmental review requirements under this part, unless the responsible official later determines that the project, or the conditions at the time the categorical determination was made, have changed significantly since the independent EPA review of information submitted by the grantee in support of the exclusion.

(2) For all categorical exclusion determinations:

(i) That are five or more years old on projects awaiting Step 2=3 or Step 3 grant funding, the responsible official shall re-evaluate the project, environmental conditions and public views and, prior to grant award, either:

(A) *Reaffirm*—issue a public notice reaffirming EPA's decision to proceed with the project without need for any further environmental review;

(B) *Supplement*—update the information in the decision document on the categorically excluded project and prepare, issue, and distribute a revised notice in accordance with § 6.107(f); or

(C) *Reassess*—revoke the categorical exclusion in accordance with § 6.107(c) and require a complete environmental review to determine the need for an EIS in accordance with § 6.506, followed by preparation, issuance and distribution of an EA/FNSI or EIS/ROD.

(ii) That are made on projects that have been awarded a Step 2=3 grant, the responsible official shall, at the time of plans and specifications review under § 35.2202(b) of this title, assess whether the environmental conditions or the project's anticipated impact on the environment have changed and, prior to plans and specifications approval, advise the Regional Administrator if additional environmental review is necessary.

[50 FR 26317, June 25, 1985, as amended at 51 FR 32611, Sept. 12, 1986]

§ 6.506 Environmental review process.

(a) *Review of completed facilities plans.* The responsible official shall ensure a review of the completed facilities plan with particular attention to the EID and its utilization in the development of alternatives and the selection of a preferred alternative. An adequate EID shall be an integral part of any facilities plan submitted to EPA or to a State. The EID shall be of sufficient scope to enable the responsible official to make determinations on requests for partitioning the environmental review process in accordance with § 6.507 and for preparing environmental assessments in accordance with § 6.506(b).

(b) *Environmental assessment.* The environmental assessment process shall