

§ 452.06

the attendance and testimony of witnesses and the production of relevant papers, books, and documents.

(h) *Information collection.* The information collection requirements contained in §452.05 do not require approval by the Office of Management and Budget under 44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*, because it is anticipated there will be fewer than ten respondents annually.

§ 452.06 Parties and intervenors.

(a) *Parties.* The parties shall consist of the exemption applicant, the Federal agency responsible for the agency action in question, the Service, and intervenors whose motions to intervene have been granted.

(b) *Intervenors.* (1) The Administrative Law Judge shall provide an opportunity for intervention in the hearing. A motion to intervene must state the petitioner's name and address, identify its representative, if any, set forth the interest of the petitioner in the proceeding and show that the petitioner's participation would assist in the determination of the issues in question.

(2) The Administrative Law Judge shall grant leave to intervene if he determines that an intervenor's participation would contribute to the fair determination of issues. In making this determination, the Administrative Law Judge may consider whether an intervenor represents a point of view not adequately represented by a party or another intervenor.

§ 452.07 Separation of functions and ex parte communications.

(a) *Separation of functions.* (1) The Administrative Law Judge and the technical staff shall not be responsible for or subject to the supervision or direction of any person who participated in the endangered species consultation at issue;

(2) The Secretary shall not allow an agency employee or agent who participated in the endangered species consultation at issue or a factually related matter to participate or advise in a determination under this part except as a witness or counsel in public proceedings.

(b) *Ex parte communications.* The provisions of 5 U.S.C. 557(d) apply to the

50 CFR Ch. IV (10-1-98 Edition)

hearing and the preparation of the report.

§ 452.08 Submission of Secretary's report.

(a) Upon closing of the record, the Administrative Law Judge shall certify the record and transmit it to the Secretary for preparation of the Secretary's report which shall be based on the record. The Secretary may direct the Administrative Law Judge to reopen the record and obtain additional information if he determines that such action is necessary.

(b) The Secretary shall submit his report and the record of the hearing to the Committee within 140 days after making his threshold determinations under §452.03(a) or within such other period of time as is mutually agreeable to the applicant and the Secretary.

§ 452.09 Consolidated and joint proceedings.

(a) When the Secretary is considering two or more related exemption applications, the Secretary may consider them jointly and prepare a joint report if doing so would expedite or simplify consideration of the issues.

(b) When the Secretaries of the Interior and Commerce are considering two or more related exemption applications, they may consider them jointly and prepare a joint report if doing so would expedite or simplify consideration of the issues.

PART 453—ENDANGERED SPECIES COMMITTEE

Sec.

453.01 Purpose.

453.02 Definitions.

453.03 Committee review and final determinations.

453.04 Committee information gathering.

453.05 Committee meetings.

453.06 Additional Committee powers.

AUTHORITY: Endangered Species Act of 1973, 16 U.S.C. 1531, *et seq.*, as amended.

SOURCE: 50 FR 8130, Feb. 28, 1985, unless otherwise noted.

§ 453.01 Purpose.

This part prescribes the procedures to be used by the Endangered Species

Committee when examining applications for exemption from section 7(a)(2) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended.

§ 453.02 Definitions.

Definitions applicable to this part are contained in 50 CFR 450.01.

§ 453.03 Committee review and final determinations.

(a) *Final determinations.* Within 30 days of receiving the Secretary's report and record, the Committee shall grant an exemption from the requirements of section 7(a)(2) of the Act for an agency action if, by a vote in which at least five of its members concur:

(1) It determines that based on the report to the Secretary, the record of the hearing held under § 452.05, and on such other testimony or evidence as it may receive:

(i) There are no reasonable and prudent alternatives to the proposed action;

(ii) The benefits of such action clearly outweigh the benefits of alternative courses of action consistent with conserving the species or its critical habitat, and such action is in the public interest;

(iii) The action is of regional or national significance; and

(iv) Neither the Federal agency concerned nor the exemption applicant made any irreversible or irretrievable commitment of resources prohibited by section 7(d) of the Act; and,

(2) It establishes such reasonable mitigation and enhancement measures, including, but not limited to, live propagation, transplantation, and habitat acquisition and improvement, as are necessary and appropriate to minimize the adverse effects of the proposed action upon the endangered species, threatened species, or critical habitat concerned. Any required mitigation and enhancement measures shall be carried out and paid for by the exemption applicant.

(b) *Decision and order.* The Committee's final determinations shall be documented in a written decision. If the Committee determines that an exemption should be granted, the Committee shall issue an order granting the exemption and specifying required miti-

gation and enhancement measures. The Committee shall publish its decision and order in the FEDERAL REGISTER as soon as practicable.

(c) *Permanent exemptions.* Under section 7(h)(2) of the Act, an exemption granted by the Committee shall constitute a permanent exemption with respect to all endangered or threatened species for the purposes of completing such agency action—

(1) Regardless of whether the species was identified in the biological assessment, and

(2) Only if a biological assessment has been conducted under section 7(c) of the Act with respect to such agency action. Notwithstanding the foregoing, an exemption shall not be permanent if—

(i) The Secretary finds, based on the best scientific and commercial data available, that such exemption would result in the extinction of a species that was not the subject of consultation under section 7(a)(2) of the Act or was not identified in any biological assessment conducted under section 7(c) of the Act, and

(ii) The Committee determines within 60 days after the date of the Secretary's finding that the exemption should not be permanent.

If the Secretary makes a finding that the exemption would result in the extinction of a species, as specified above, the Committee shall meet with respect to the matter within 30 days after the date of the finding. During the 60 day period following the Secretary's determination, the holder of the exemption shall refrain from any action which would result in extinction of the species.

(d) *Finding by the Secretary of Defense.* If the Secretary of Defense finds in writing that an exemption for the agency action is necessary for reasons of national security, the Committee shall grant the exemption notwithstanding any other provision in this part.

§ 453.04 Committee information gathering.

(a) *Written submissions.* When the Chairman or four Committee members decide that written submissions are necessary to enable the Committee to