

Advocacy Comments on Interior’s Notice “National Environmental Policy Act: Implementing Procedures; Addition to Categorical Exclusions for U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.”

On July 29, 2013, the Office of Advocacy (Advocacy) filed public comments with the Department of the Interior (Interior) in response to the Notice entitled *National Environmental Policy Act: Implementing Procedures; Addition to Categorical Exclusions for U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service*. Comments can be viewed at www.sba.gov/advocacy.

- On Monday July 1, 2013, the Department of the Interior published a notice announcing a proposed categorical exclusion from the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The exclusion would allow the Fish and Wildlife Service to add species to the list of injurious wildlife under the Lacey Act. Species listed under the Lacey Act are prohibited from being imported into the U.S. or transported across State lines.
- Small businesses contacted Advocacy concerned that the thirty-day comment period was insufficient time in which to consider all potential effects of such a far-reaching exclusion.
- Small businesses relayed to Advocacy that the notice stated that there would be no or little adverse impact. This exclusion would allow listings without compliance with NEPA requirements of an Environmental Assessment or Environmental Impact Statement, thus potentially prohibiting small businesses from engaging in commercial trade of wildlife without a showing of environmental harm.
- Advocacy has asked that Interior extend the comment period for sixty days and consider the concerns of small businesses before moving forward with this proposal.

For more information, visit Advocacy’s website at <http://www.sba.gov/advocacy> or contact Kia Dennis at 202-205-6936.