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**Date:** February 20, 2008

**Subject:** NEPA Activities Business Process Reengineering

**To:** Regional Foresters, Station Directors, Area Director, IITF Director, Deputy Chiefs and WO Directors

Last fall, our agency team completed the NEPA Feasibility Study and we have subsequently considered its recommendations to streamline NEPA processes. Options included Business Process Reengineering and competitive sourcing. After careful consideration, however, we will not pursue these options at this time. Rather, we will focus energies toward completing other efficiency-gaining efforts including Washington Office-Regional Office-Northeastern Area Transformation. These ongoing efforts will increase agency effectiveness in the near future. At a later time, we will revisit recommendations from the NEPA Feasibility Study. We, however, expect local managers to consider the Feasibility Study as they seek to increase NEPA efficiencies.

Several significant factors prompted this decision. Language in the recently-enacted Omnibus Appropriations Act directed that we not use any funds for further competitive sourcing activities. At a time when we are in the midst of ongoing Transformation efforts and the continuing transition to the Albuquerque Service Center, we want to avoid additional disruption and confusion that could come with overhauling our critical NEPA processes.

Recognizing that NEPA processes are at the heart of our decision-making, it is important that we retain a strong linkage between Forest Service employees and those analytical procedures. It remains important, however, for us to seek long-term strategies to improve NEPA efficiency. I appreciate the comprehensive analysis and informative data in the Feasibility Study. It serves as a foundation for future work. Results from the Study—coupled with open communication—will help us identify and analyze best strategies for streamlining NEPA processes in the future. For now, we will move forward with ongoing efforts to increase efficiency. Please accept my thanks for your involvement. Moreover, I am grateful to our employees for their support and candor. I look forward to discussing this topic on a regularly-scheduled National Leadership Team teleconference.

*/s/ Abigail R. Kimbell*  
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