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§ 5401. Establishment of Agricultural Council on Environmental Quality

(a) Establishment

The Secretary shall establish an Agricultural Council on Environmental Quality in the Department of Agriculture (hereafter in this chapter referred to as the “Council”). The Council shall be under the direct authority of the Secretary, and shall be responsible for carrying out the provisions of this chapter, and for coordination and direction of all environmental policies and programs of the Department.

(b) Membership

Membership of the Council shall consist of the Secretary, the Deputy Secretary, the Assistant Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment, the Assistant Secretary for Science and Education, other under and assistant secretaries as may be designated by the Secretary, and the Director of the Office of Agricultural Environmental Quality, established in section 5402 of this title, who shall serve as the Executive Director of the Council. The Secretary shall designate a member of the Council, other than the Executive Director, as chair of the Council.

(Pub. L. 101-624, title XIV, §1471, Nov. 28, 1990, 104 Stat. 3619.)

§ 5402. Office of Agricultural Environmental Quality

(a) Establishment

The Secretary shall establish an Office of Agricultural Environmental Quality in the Department of Agriculture (hereafter in this chapter referred to as the “Office”).

(b) Director

The Office shall be administered by a director who shall be appointed by the Secretary. The Director shall be an individual who has demonstrated technical expertise and experience in agricultural and environmental matters.

(c) Staff

(1) Appointments

The Director may appoint such employees as may be necessary to assist the Director in carrying out this section. Such employees shall include individuals who have professional expertise in matters related to environmental

quality, including (but not limited to) agricultural production, water quality, wetland, wildlife conservation, soil conservation, and agricultural chemical usage.

(2) Liaisons

The Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency and the Secretary of the Interior shall detail to the Office upon request of the Secretary, on a reimbursable basis, at least one employee, respectively, with expertise in matters related to agriculture and environmental quality. Such detailed employees shall serve as a liaison for their respective agencies with the Department of Agriculture to assist the Director in carrying out the provisions of this section. The term of the detail shall not exceed 3 years.

(3) Additional staff

Upon request of the Secretary, the head of any Federal agency is authorized to detail, on a reimbursable basis, employees of such agency to the Office to assist the Director.

(d) Duties of Director

(1) In general

The Director shall assist the Council in developing a departmental and agency-specific environmental quality policy statement and implementation plan and an annual agricultural environmental quality report, as specified in section 5403 of this title. The Director shall coordinate and monitor the activities of the Department regarding initiatives and programs related to environmental quality and the interpretation of departmental policies affecting environmental quality. The Director shall serve as a member of the Council and as its Executive Director.

(2) Additional duties

The Director shall also be responsible for—

(A) recommending to the Council environmental protection goals and specific programs, initiatives, and policies that will balance the needs of production agriculture with environmental concerns;

(B) providing advice to the Council on the development, implementation, and review of activities of agencies of the Department to ensure consistency with the Department's environmental protection goals;

(C) coordinating environmental policy within the Department through the program managers, and between the Department and other Federal agencies, regional authorities, State and local governments, land-grant and other colleges and universities, and non-profit and commercial organizations, regarding programs and actions relating to environmental quality;

(D) serving as a coordinator for the Department's data, information, programs, and initiatives dealing with environmental quality;

(E) developing the plans and reports required as specified by this chapter; and

(F) providing such staff as may be necessary to support the activities of the Council.

(Pub. L. 101-624, title XIV, §1472, Nov. 28, 1990, 104 Stat. 3619.)

§ 5403. Environmental Quality Policy Statement

(a) Environmental Quality Policy Statement, implementation plan, and annual report

(1) Policy statement

The Council shall develop an Environmental Quality Policy Statement that identifies goals and objectives for addressing the effects of agriculture on environmental quality. The policy statement shall be based upon an assessment, in accordance with paragraph (2), of the current status and level of effort, in terms of staff and funding, of programs at the Department of Agriculture to evaluate, prevent, and mitigate environmental problems that may result from agricultural production. The policy statement shall be revised at least every 5 years.

(2) Assessment

The assessment under paragraph (1) shall include:

(A) Detailed descriptions of the roles of the involved Departmental agencies.

(B) A description of current efforts to coordinate the individual activities of each of the involved departmental agencies.

(C) Recommendations for precluding any undesirable duplication of efforts within the Department and among the Department and other Federal and State programs.

(D) Specific recommendations for new initiatives in monitoring, research, extension, and technical assistance efforts to address present and potential environmental quality problems.

The assessment may incorporate existing documents and planning processes within the Department.

(b) Implementation plan

The Director, subject to the approval of the Council, shall prepare a plan to implement the Environmental Quality Policy Statement. The plan shall include an assessment of the activities of each departmental agency to mitigate or reduce any negative effects on environmental quality of agricultural policies, programs, and practices under their respective jurisdictions and shall describe in detail new departmental and agency-specific initiatives intended to achieve the goals and objectives of the policy statement. The plan shall be revised at least every 5 years.

(c) Annual environmental quality report

Not later than January 31, 1992, and annually thereafter, the Council, through the Director, shall prepare and submit an annual report to the Congress, other appropriate Federal and State agencies, and the public on the progress being made toward the goals and objectives established in the Environmental Quality Policy Statement. The report shall also include—

(1) a review of the environmental activities and initiatives of the Department during the preceding year;

(2) specific action taken to coordinate the environmental programs of the Department with programs of other Federal agencies and related State programs; and

(3) such recommendations as the Secretary considers appropriate regarding current or additional environmental protection programs, initiatives, or policies that will balance the needs of production agriculture while addressing environmental concerns.

(d) Authorization of appropriations

There are hereby authorized to be appropriated annually not to exceed \$2,000,000 to carry out this chapter.

(Pub. L. 101-624, title XIV, §1473, Nov. 28, 1990, 104 Stat. 3620; Pub. L. 102-237, title II, §201(d), Dec. 13, 1991, 105 Stat. 1847.)

AMENDMENTS

1991—Subsec. (a)(1). Pub. L. 102-237, §201(d)(1), substituted “paragraph (2)” for “subparagraph (B)”.

Subsec. (a)(2). Pub. L. 102-237, §201(d)(2), substituted “paragraph (1)” for “subparagraph (A)” in introductory provisions.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1991 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 102-237 effective as if included in the provision of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990, Pub. L. 101-624, to which the amendment relates, see section 1101(b)(1) of Pub. L. 102-237, set out as a note under section 1421 of this title.

TERMINATION OF REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

For termination, effective May 15, 2000, of provisions in subsec. (c) of this section relating to submittal of annual report to Congress, see section 3003 of Pub. L. 104-66, as amended, set out as a note under section 1113 of Title 31, Money and Finance, and page 49 of House Document No. 103-7.

§ 5404. Good Neighbor Environmental Board

(a) Establishment

The President shall establish an advisory board to be known as the Good Neighbor Environmental Board (hereinafter in this section referred to as the “Board”).

(b) Purpose

The purpose of the Board shall be to advise the President and the Congress on the need for implementation of environmental and infrastructure projects (including projects that affect agriculture, rural development, and human nutrition) within the States of the United States contiguous to Mexico in order to improve the quality of life of persons residing on the United States side of the border.

(c) Membership

The Board shall be composed of—

(1) representatives from the United States Government, including a representative from the Department of Agriculture and representatives from other appropriate agencies;

(2) representatives from the governments of the States of Arizona, California, New Mexico, and Texas; and

(3) representatives from private organizations, including community development, academic, health, environmental, and other non-governmental entities with experience and expertise on environmental and infrastructure problems along the southwest border.

(d) Annual reports to President and Congress

(1) In general

The Board shall submit to the President and the Congress of the United States an annual report on—