



United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Washington, DC 20240

September 14, 2023

Memorandum

To: Assistant Secretaries
Heads of Bureaus and Offices
Servicing Human Resources Offices (SHROs)

From: *for* Mark Green
Deputy Assistant Secretary Human Capital and Diversity
Chief Human Capital Officer

Subject: Guidance on Mandatory General Schedule and Schedule C Supervisory Elements
Needing to be Established in Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 Performance Plans and Co-
Stewardship Performance Elements

In addition to being experts in their respective fields, Federal managers and supervisors have a number of regulatory obligations to meet and ethical standards to abide by.

Managers and supervisors covered under [370 DM 430 Performance Management System](#), must have at last one mandatory critical element that addresses the level of performance expected for carrying out various supervisory and/or managerial duties.

In addition to being responsible for appraising employees accurately and consistently, based on their accomplishments and contributions and ensuring that all covered employees receive timely performance plans and appraisals, some positions, because of the unique nature of their job responsibilities, have specific mandates for critical elements to be included in the performance plan (e.g., Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA), Federal IT Acquisition Reform Act (FITARA)), etc. Leaders should be aware of those regulatory requirements and ensure that the mandatory criterion are adequately addressed as a critical element in the supervisor's performance plan.

The [Joint Secretarial Order 3403](#), dated November 15, 2021, ensures that the Department of Agriculture and the Department of the Interior and their component Bureaus and Offices are managing Federal lands and waters in a manner that seeks to protect the treaty, religious, subsistence, and cultural interests of federally recognized Indian Tribes including the Native Hawaiian Community; and to ensure that such management is consistent with the nation-to-nation relationship between the United States and federally recognized Indian Tribes; and, that such management fulfills the United States' unique trust obligation to federally recognized Indian Tribes and their citizens.

On September 13, 2022, the [Interior Department Issued Guidance to Strengthen Tribal Co-Stewardship of Public Lands and Waters](#). The new guidance from the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), National Park Service, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) outlines how each bureau will facilitate and support agreements with Tribes to collaborate in the co-stewardship of federal lands and waters. Additionally, the Departmental Manual at [502 DM 1](#) outlines the co-stewardship responsibilities and policy for the Department of the Interior.

In an effort to further this commitment, Bureaus/Office are requested to identify GS and Schedule C supervisory positions with co-stewardship responsibilities by **October 1, 2023** and submit the report (Attachment 1) to the Office of Human Capital (OHC) Workforce Relations Director [Jennifer Arguello](#) and implement Fiscal Year 2024 mandatory performance element co-stewardship standards, for those identified. If you have questions about the co-stewardship policy or responsibilities, please contact [Matthew Kelly](#), or if you have questions about the co-stewardship standards, please contact [Rachel Brown](#).

The following co-stewardship performance elements have been developed by the Bureaus and Offices and Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE) human resources for your consideration and use:

Critical Element Description: Supports achievement of program strategic goals and initiatives related to co-stewardship within assigned functional areas of responsibility and contributes to the overall accomplishment of DOI Strategic Plan Performance Goal 2.2.5 and 2.2 strategic objective. Develops, implements, and evaluates initiatives in assigned programs to support, maintain and increase co-stewardship practices and agreements. Manages program(s), resolving issues and problems within the employee's control. Monitors all aspects of program(s) for quality, effectiveness, and consistency. Program plans and guidance are responsive to objectives and requirements of the Agency. Policy instructions are appropriately issued and are accurate. Evaluates effectiveness of work and adjusts plans accordingly.

Examples of Performance Standards that could be included by a supervisor:

- Routinely reviews new and existing laws, regulations, and DOI policy and guidance to determine needed changes/modifications and makes appropriate recommendations.
- Develops new and modifies existing Bureau policies and procedures when necessary, and consistently provides clear and accurate information to the supervisor and senior management to obtain necessary approvals.
- Responds to Tribal inquiries and outreach with accurate and timely information. Communicates information in a clear and easy to understand manner and facilitates open dialog with Tribal representatives. Proactively works with Tribal representatives and provides information on ways that Tribal input is used, or, when necessary, why input could not be incorporated. Includes documentation of Tribal treaty rights or other interests in Unit planning and other records, as appropriate.
- When necessary, solicits active participation from or provides information to DOI/Bureau work groups concerned with co-stewardship.
- Routinely develops and implements plans to achieve program objectives and assess/improve work products, services, and processes, and demonstrates measurable results in program accomplishment and improvement to support co-stewardship practices.

- When necessary, performs appropriate research on assigned projects.
- Maintains regular contact with [Name of Tribe(s), Tribal organizations, and/or other agencies involved in co-stewardship] and advises the Bureau program and Unit contacts with updated guidance. Comprehensive guidance is provided on a routine basis through a variety of communications methods including briefings, meetings, teleconferences, emails, training sessions, etc., for technical and administrative purposes.
- Processes program documents (or co-stewardship agreements) within the unit's established goals with no more than 3 exceptions.
- Ensures that reviews are conducted, and reports are filed and submitted within established timeframes.
- Ensures that staff is fully trained in the program areas for which each employee is responsible.
- Ensures that financial payments are made within 30 days of authorization.
- Successfully complete the XXX projects (or co-stewardship agreements) as project/team lead. (List projects with measures).

As a reminder [Guidance on Closing out FY 2023 Performance Appraisals and USA Performance Pilot and Establishing FY 2023 Performance Plans for General Workforce Employees](#), has been issued.

Questions regarding this guidance can be directed to [Jennifer Argüello](#), Director Workforce Relations Director, OHC. Requests for assistance with year-end performance management and awards procedures and next FY performance appraisal establishment should be directed to the SHROs.

Attachment:

Attachment 1: Supervisors with Co-Stewardship Duties Report

CC: Bureaus/Office/SHROs

Attachment 1

Supervisors with Co-Stewardship Duties Report

Bureau/Office Name:	
Servicing Human Resource Office Name:	
Name of Submitting Official:	
Role of Submitting Official:	

Name of Supervisor (Last, First, MI)	Name of Employee (Last, First, MI)	Employee Occupation Series (XXXX)	Employee Position Title (Functional)	Co-Stewardship Elements Implemented previously (Y or N)