

Department of the Interior Departmental Manual

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Series: Departmental Management

Part 301: Major Program Issues and Decisions

Chapter 5: Partnership Policy

Originating Office: Office of Conservation, Partnerships, and Management Policy

301 DM 5

5.1 **Purpose.** This chapter establishes Departmental policy and provides guidance for bureaus and offices in the use of partnerships as they carry out the Department's mission.

5.2 **Scope.** The policy in this chapter applies to all bureau and office activities.

5.3 **Definitions.** The following are definitions of terms as they are used in this chapter.

A. **Partner.** Partner is an umbrella, generic term to refer to individuals, organizations, and other entities interacting in a relationship with the Department, or its bureaus or offices, to achieve a common goal in support of the Department's mission.

B. **Partnership.** Partnership refers to a voluntary and mutually beneficial collaborative relationship between the Department and one or more partners, built on the contributions of each partner and formed to achieve or to assist in moving toward a common goal. Partners bring resources to the relationship that allow the Department, bureau, or office to accomplish objectives that, individually, neither party could achieve. A partnership may involve one partner utilizing another's unique abilities, or it may be a sharing of resources (money, time, knowledge, equipment, etc.) to accomplish short- or long-term objectives agreed upon by all the participating partners. Some partner relationships are informal; others are covered by well-defined agreements or regulations.

5.4 **Authorities.** The Partnership Legal Primer (Primer) references many of the statutory authorities pertaining to partnerships in the Department. It is available at

http://www.doi.gov/partnerships/partnership_legal_framework.html.

5.5 **Policy.** It is the policy of the Department to use partnerships, when appropriate, to enhance the ability of bureaus and offices to carry out the mission of the Department. Partnerships are appropriate when they have benefits such as greater efficiency, improved effectiveness, increased equity and greater public commitment to the Department's mission.

Through meaningful partnerships, the Department seeks to accrue benefits and achieve its public purposes more effectively.

5.6 Objectives.

- A. Conduct all partnerships in full compliance with applicable laws and other authorities, including ethics statutes and regulations.
- B. Engage in partnerships that:
 - (1) Contribute to a public purpose within the Department's mission;
 - (2) Enhance the Department's capacity to achieve mission-related projects, products, and services;
 - (3) Include diverse representation of the communities and stakeholders involved;
 - (4) Focus on mutually agreed upon goals;
 - (5) Share or leverage resources such as money, time, knowledge, equipment, or other in-kind services;
 - (6) Achieve mutually agreeable benefits; and
 - (7) Maintain the integrity and impartiality of the Department, its programs, and its employees.

5.7 Documentation.

- A. Maintain a record of the relationship, whether a formal agreement, meeting notes, or other documentation.
- B. When formalizing or documenting partner relationships, use the correct agreement instrument, in compliance with applicable laws, statutory authorities, and Departmental and bureau policies and guidelines. (Consult 505 DM 2 for guidance on procurement contracts, grants and cooperative agreements.)

5.8 Responsibilities.

- A. Assistant Secretary - Policy, Management and Budget is responsible for:
 - (1) Ensuring Departmental compliance with this policy; and

(2) Overseeing Departmental recognition of successful partnerships through appropriate awards.

B. Program Assistant Secretaries are responsible for:

- (1) Ensuring bureaus and offices comply with this policy;
- (2) Overseeing coordination among assigned bureaus and offices on the implementation of partnerships; and
- (3) Participating in recognition of exemplary partnerships.

C. Heads of Bureaus and Offices are responsible for:

- (1) Ensuring compliance with this policy;
- (2) Developing bureau and office policies and guidance on partnerships as they relate to specific missions and legislation;
- (3) Ensuring that partnerships comply with the applicable authorities; and
- (4) Ensuring that employees are appropriately trained to develop and maintain effective partnerships.

D. Director, Office of Conservation, Partnerships and Management Policy is responsible for:

- (1) Implementing activities identified by the Partners and Cooperation Team;
- (2) Leading the Department's interagency coordination efforts in collaboration and partnering;
- (3) Providing technical assistance and guidance to Departmental offices and bureaus in understanding and implementing partnerships;
- (4) Ensuring the development of tools, training, and procedures that enable the appropriate use of partnerships;
- (5) Executing the partnership award program; and
- (6) Updating and coordinating changes to this policy.

E. Partners and Cooperation Team, sub-team of Management Initiatives Team (see 307 DM 1) is responsible for:

- (1) Providing coordination and oversight on partnership strategies and procedures;

- (2) Ensuring that training, research, and technical assistance on partnering and cooperation are readily available to Departmental employees;
- (3) Advising the Management Initiatives Team on partnership issues; and
- (4) Communicating partnership activities and successes across the Department.