



FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION

Implementation of Executive Order 14303 Restoring Gold Standard Science; May 23, 2025

Prepared by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

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Staff of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (Commission) is pleased to report on implementation of Executive Order 14303, Restoring Gold Standard Science, and the Office of Science and Technology Policy's (OSTP) Agency Guidance for Implementing Gold Standard Science in the Conduct & Management of Scientific Activities. The gold standard for science, including data transparency and acknowledgement of scientific uncertainties and assumptions, gives the public faith in scientific enterprise and institutions.

In Executive Order 14303, President Trump declared that all agency heads and employees must adhere to certain rules governing the use, interpretation, and communication of scientific data, unless otherwise provided by or prohibited by law, including:

- a. Prohibiting scientific misconduct or knowingly relying on information resulting from scientific misconduct;
- b. Making certain scientific information publicly available;
- c. Acknowledging scientific uncertainties;
- d. Using scientific information that comports with the applicable standards for policy and legal determinations;
- e. Being transparent about the likelihood of the assumptions and scenarios used;
- f. Applying a "weight of scientific evidence" approach in agency evaluations and decision-making; and
- g. Communicating scientific information in a consistent manner.

The Commission is committed to the use of Gold Standard Science to ensure agency scientific integrity and transparency and that agency decision making is informed by credible, reliable, and impartial scientific evidence. The Commission relies on scientific evidence in its review of applications for proposed energy infrastructure, including interstate natural gas and storage facilities, liquefied natural gas terminals, non-federal hydropower projects, and, to the limited extent established by Congress, certain electric transmission facilities. This information may include engineering and design studies and studies regarding the impacts of project construction and operation on various environmental resources, which are used to develop environmental documents required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The record of a Commission proceeding also may include scientific material, primarily from federal and state agencies supporting proposed conditions under the Natural Gas Act (NGA) and the Federal Power Act (FPA), as well as other laws, such as the Endangered Species Act, the Clean Water Act, and the National Historic Preservation Act. In performing its review, the Commission requires applicants to provide the information necessary to understand proposed projects, but does not itself perform or fund scientific studies, instead



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relying upon evidence placed into the record of proceedings by applicants, other federal and state agencies, and other interested entities.

The Commission acts on applications based solely on information in the record. Material filed with the Commission in a proceeding is – with the occasional exception of privileged material – placed in the Commission’s eLibrary and is available to the public. Thus, all interested entities have the opportunity to review and comment on any scientific or other material in the record. This process helps to ensure that the Commission considers all viewpoints and critiques of material in the record. The Commission also provides opportunities for public comment throughout its review process.

Scientific integrity at the Commission is further ensured by the review processes established by the NGA, FPA, and NEPA. NEPA, 42 USC 4332(2)(D)-(E), requires that agencies ensure scientific integrity and make use of reliable data and resources in its environmental documents. Under the NGA and FPA, once the Commission issues an order regarding an infrastructure project, parties can seek rehearing, giving them the opportunity to challenge any aspect of the Commission’s order, including its treatment of scientific information. Subsequent to rehearing, aggrieved parties may challenge the Commission’s orders in a United States Court of Appeals. This process, including the development of the public record, the Commission’s initial consideration and action on rehearing, and potential judicial review, provides the opportunity for the integrity of the scientific information in the record to be thoroughly reviewed. These statutory constructs ensure that the Commission adheres to the rules governing the use and communication of scientific data set forth in section 4 of Executive Order 14030.

Via its established processes, the Commission shall adhere to the rules governing the use, interpretation, and communication of scientific data, unless otherwise provided by or prohibited by law, as set forth in Executive Order 14303. The Commission’s evaluation of scientific information will be informed by OSTP’s Agency Guidance for Implementing Gold Standard Science.