



# Oglala Sioux Tribe

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Office of the President  
JOHN YELLOW BIRD STEELE

June 26, 2002

Horst Greczmiel  
Associate Director for NEPA  
Executive Office of the President  
Council on Environmental Quality  
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Mr. Greczmiel:

It is my understanding that in the fall of 2001 a summer intern, Ms. Ethel Branch, conducted a phone survey with the Tribe's Environmental Protection Program Director, Kim Clausen-Jensen concerning the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). It is my understanding that NEPA is an environmental law for the people to keep them informed on issues and projects being done by the federal government. I understand that there is more to NEPA than what I will be addressing. What needs to be understood is that almost all of the actions in Indian country and more specific, on the Pine Ridge Reservation are federal actions, which then kicks in the NEPA process. As you are aware, tribes work closely with a number of federal agencies. For example, the Indian Health Service provides what is known as individual services, which are basically water and sewer services to individuals. Since these are federal actions, then NEPA needs to be complied with. The fact that we must address the NEPA on such small scale projects, cost money - money that could be used by the project, and time - time that our people must go without water or sewer. This is just one of the many problems or barriers that we must address.

One of the problems that we have identified is that the agency that is taking the action must prepare the NEPA documents. We feel that they are able to guide the document to the conclusion that they want. Most of the projects have a pre-determined conclusion meaning that the Record of Decision has already been made and that they are just going through the motions because they have to. It seems that it would be a conflict of interest for the agency conducting the action, be responsible for NEPA compliance.

In summary, it is the tribe's belief that although NEPA sets up guidelines, most agencies have developed their own process. Not all of the agencies are consistent; each have their own way of dealing with NEPA, which creates confusion.

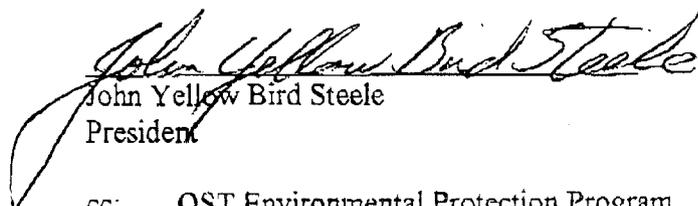
I would like to thank you for contacting the tribe concerning NEPA. If we can be of any further assistance please contact me at (605) 867-5821 or Kim Clausen-Jensen at (605) 867-5236.

CQ455

Horst G. Greczmiel  
June 26, 2002  
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Sincerely,

OGLALA SIOUX TRIBE

  
John Yellow Bird Steele  
President

cc: OST Environmental Protection Program

CQ455

**OGLALA SIOUX TRIBE**  
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**SEND TO:**

Company Name: <b>NEPA TASK FORCE</b>	Date: <b>9-19-02</b>
Attention:	From: <b>Kim Clausen</b>
Office Location: <b>Salt Lake, UT</b>	Office Location: <b>Pine Ridge</b>
Fax Number: <b>801-517-1021</b>	Phone Number:

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