

To: Dravis, Samantha[dravis.samantha@epa.gov]
From: POLITICO Pro Energy Whiteboard
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Subject: Trump signs infrastructure executive order

By Annie Snider

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President Donald Trump this afternoon signed an executive order aimed at accelerating the permitting of infrastructure projects, setting a two-year goal for completing the approval process.

"This over-regulated permitting process is a massive, self-inflicted wound on our country. It's disgraceful, denying our people much-needed investments in their community," Trump said at a press conference following a meeting at Trump Tower with his infrastructure advisers.

The text of the order was not immediately available, but Trump said it establishes one lead agency for each major infrastructure project and "holds agencies accountable if they fail to streamline their review process."

He also said it would not undo environmental protections. "If it doesn't meet environmental safeguards, we're not going to approve it. Very simple, we're not going to approve it."

A White House source earlier confirmed that the order eliminates a new flood standard established under the Obama administration requiring federally-funded construction to be built with stronger storms and rising seas in mind. Industry groups have argued the new standard would increase construction costs, but environmentalists and taxpayer advocates say it would save money on disaster recovery. A federal report released last week found sea levels are currently the highest they have been since record keeping began.

Trump signed another executive order in January directing the chairman of the White House Council on Environmental Quality to create expedited procedures and deadlines for environmental reviews and approvals for high-priority infrastructure projects. Earlier this summer he announced a new office within the council aimed at streamlining permitting procedures.

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