



United States Department of the Interior
OFFICE OF THE SOLICITOR
Washington, D.C. 20240

February 28, 2025

Memorandum

To: Assistant Secretaries
Bureau and Office Heads

From: Gregory Zerzan, Senior Advisor, exercising the delegated authority of the Solicitor

Subject: M-Opinion Review

M-opinions, issued pursuant to 209 DM 3, constitute legal interpretations that are binding on all Department officials, until such time as they are repealed or modified by either the Secretary, Deputy Secretary, or the Solicitor. Under the prior administration, numerous M-opinions were issued that reflected the prior administration's views of applicable law with respect to a variety of regulatory actions, decisions, and policy guidance. However, these interpretations may not reflect the best interpretation of applicable law and may conflict with current policy priorities.

Accordingly, it is appropriate to conduct a thorough review of the M-opinions issued in the last administration. To allow for the requisite legal and policy review, I have determined that each M-opinion issued between January 20, 2021, and January 20, 2025 (M-opinions numbered M-37065 through M-37084) shall be placed under a "Suspension Review." With respect to the individual M-opinions covered by this memo, the Suspension Review period shall last until the individual M-opinion has been reviewed and a determination has been made as to whether that M-opinion should be reinstated, modified, or revoked. During the Suspension Review period, no unit of the Department of the Interior should rely on those M-opinions as authoritative and binding without first consulting with the Office of the Solicitor for guidance.

You should ensure awareness within your organizations of the Suspension Review period and the implications thereof regarding reliance on these M-opinions. Upon completion of the review of each individual covered M-opinion, you will be notified of the resulting determination and should disseminate it as appropriate within your organization. During the review period, you should remain cognizant of the applicable contents of the covered M-opinions and promptly consult the Solicitor's Office in any case in which a covered M-opinion may materially influence a relevant decision.