

Group asks court to block White House's NEPA changes

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The Southern Environmental Law Center today asked a federal court to block the White House Council on Environmental Quality from advancing [its proposed changes](#) to rules implementing the National Environmental Policy Act.

The unusual request came as part of an ongoing Freedom of Information Act lawsuit brought by SELC seeking documents related to [CEQ's June 2018 advance notice of proposed rulemaking](#) that had sought suggestions for changes to the NEPA regulations.

SELC argued that the comment period for the proposal — which is currently [set to close on March 10](#), after being open for 60 days — should remain open until CEQ releases the documents related to the prior advance notice.

"The requested injunction is necessary in order to stop CEQ from making unprecedented sweeping changes to the regulations that implement NEPA before it has provided SELC and the public a full and complete opportunity to understand and participate in the rulemaking process," SELC wrote in a motion before the U. S. District Court for Western Virginia.

"This Court must ensure that the longstanding safeguards in place to ensure informed, open, accountable governance do not wither in the darkness as the agency doubles down on closed-door opacity," it added.

A spokesperson said CEQ does not comment on ongoing litigation.

The case is before Judge. Glen Conrad, a George W. Bush appointee.