

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**

**NATIONAL CENTER FOR HEALTH STATISTICS, CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL,  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
and  
U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**

**INTEGRATING HUMAN HEALTH STATISTICS AND EARTH SCIENCE  
INFORMATION**

**PURPOSE.** This agreement commits the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) and the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) to collaboration in support of research, data collection, and joint studies intended to integrate data and information from both agencies in a way that will help reveal relationships between human health and environmental factors. The goal of this joint effort is to develop and distribute high quality scientific information needed to manage the environment and protect human health. Scientific products developed through these collaborative efforts will be widely distributed to decisionmakers, regulatory agencies, other scientists, and the general public. The joint products will present scientific facts and will not contain policy conclusions or recommendations.

**AGENCY ROLES.** The NCHS is the Federal Government's principal vital and health statistics agency. The scope of responsibilities of the NCHS covers the full spectrum of health issues from birth to death, including overall health status, lifestyle and exposure to unhealthy influences, the onset and diagnosis of illness and disability, and the use of health care. The USGS is the Nation's principal earth science agency; it conducts research and provides geologic, topographic, and hydrologic information needed to manage natural resources and to promote the general health, safety, and welfare of the people of the United States. The missions of both agencies involve data collection and analysis, data dissemination, research, technical assistance in the United States and foreign countries, and cooperative programs with State, national, and international organizations.

**FUNCTIONS.** This agreement will foster collaboration and joint activities as described below:

1. Facilitate the exchange and use of information between the agencies by providing technical assistance, consultation, and advice on the acquisition, appropriate use, and limitations of information holdings in each agency.
2. Using geographic information systems and other appropriate technology, identify and document diseases and human health issues that may be related to environmental factors such as water quality and to processes involving the solids, liquids, and gases in the Earth's crust. Both naturally occurring and anthropological conditions will be considered.
3. Plan and conduct joint research projects, investigations, and special studies to develop and distribute specialized maps, statistics, reports, and data bases that integrate human health statistics and earth science information. These products will document or compare human health conditions and statistics for a wide variety of environmental factors. As appropriate, the maps and publications resulting from such joint efforts will be jointly authored by NCHS and USGS scientists.
4. Designate scientists and other experts to participate on advisory committees and in meetings, as needed, to share expertise and support the purposes of this agreement.
5. **AUTHORITY:** This agreement is made under the authority contained in Sections 304 and 306 of the Public Health Service Act and 31 U.S.C. Section 1535 and 1536.

6. All participants in activities resulting from this MOU will adhere to appropriate legislative mandates and to both the USGS and NCHS policies regarding the confidentiality of data. The confidentiality provisions of the PHS Act (42 USC 242m), the Privacy Act of 1974, and the applicable policies and procedures of NCHS, as specified in the NCHS Staff Manual on Confidentiality and appropriate NCHS Staff Manual Guides, will be followed in carrying out work under this agreement to ensure against direct or indirect disclosures of information.

**REVIEW PROCEDURES.** NCHS and USGS will review each other's reports when they contain data or interpretations based on information provided under this agreement or related activities. Such reviews will be completed, and comments will be returned to the respective authors within 30 days of the receipt of the written request.

**FUNDING.** Readily available data, reports, and other information will be exchanged consistent with existing policies regarding cost recovery for routine information dissemination. In general, each agency will fund its own participation in collaborative efforts within available resources. Costs for publishing joint reports will be shared, as appropriate and as mutually agreed in writing. For special requests, projects, technical assistance, or information requiring more extensive resources, funds may be transferred between agencies on a case by case basis, as agreed in writing, in advance of the work.

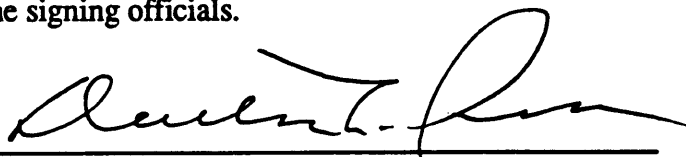
**DESIGNATED AGENCY CONTACTS.** Requests for assistance, advice, and information will be made through the designated agency contacts that will have primary responsibility for implementing and coordinating interagency activities in support of this agreement. The designated contacts are as follows:

Chief, Statistical Technology Staff  
National Center for Health Statistics  
3700 East-West Highway  
Hyattsville, Maryland 20782

Telephone: 301/436-7904

Chief, Office of Water Data  
Coordination  
U.S. Geological Survey  
417 National Center  
Reston, Virginia 22092  
Telephone: 703/648-5014

**EXPIRATION.** This agreement will continue in effect until it is withdrawn by mutual consent of the signing officials.



Dallas Peck, Director  
U.S. Geological Survey  
Department of the Interior

Date: JAN 7 1992



Manning Feinleib, M.D., Dr. P.H.  
Director, National Center for Health Statistics  
Department of Health and Human Services

Date: 2/11/92