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DEC 27 2016

**TECHNICAL BULLETIN**

No. 2016 - 09

**SUBJECT : ADOPTING THE HANDBOOK ON LAW ENFORCEMENT FOR PROTECTED AREAS**

Pursuant to Republic Act No. 7586, otherwise known as the National Integrated Protected Areas System (NIPAS) Act of 1992 and the DENR Administrative Order No. 2008-26 or the Revised Implementing Rules and Regulations of the NIPAS Act, and in order to provide guidelines to effectively implement laws, rules and regulations in protected areas, the attached Handbook on Law Enforcement for Protected Areas is hereby adopted.

**Section 1. Objective.** The Handbook aims to provide protocol and procedures for the DENR and inter-agency/multi-sectoral collaboration in the conduct of law enforcement in protected areas under the National Integrated Protected Areas System.

**Section 2. Scope.** The Handbook shall apply to law enforcement activities in protected areas under the NIPAS. This shall be used in conjunction with other related operations manuals and field guides on biodiversity conservation and protection such as the Wildlife Law Enforcement Manual and Coastal Law Enforcement Manual.

All environmental laws such as but not limited to, those concerning the protection, conservation and sustainable use of wildlife, forests, waters and aquatic resources, pollution control including compliance to the Philippine Environmental Impact Statement System shall be enforced in protected areas.

**Section 3. Creation of Protected Area Law Enforcement Team.** The Regional Director upon the recommendation of the PAMB, may create the Protected Area Law Enforcement Team composed of the following:

- a. Chief, Enforcement Division as Team Leader;
- b. PASu as the Coordinator;
- c. PASu staff, as appropriate;
- d. Enforcement staff each from the Regional Office, concerned PENROs and CENROs;
- e. LGU representatives involved in law enforcement/deputized ENR Officers at the provincial, municipal/city and barangay levels. Provided, that the barangay LGU representative shall come from hotspot barangays; and
- f. Representatives from pertinent law enforcement agencies such as NBI, PN, PCG, PNP, PNP-MG and other government enforcement agencies in the locality.

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**Section 4. Responsibilities of PA Law Enforcement Team.** The Protected Area Law Enforcement Team shall have the following core functions:

- a. Spearhead the enforcement of environmental laws within the protected area in accordance with the Handbook and other pertinent protocols and guidelines;
- b. Prepare and implement the operational plan on PA law enforcement;
- c. Spearhead capability-building, coordination and networking initiatives on PA law enforcement;
- d. Coordinate with the DENR Legal Division in the monitoring of the progress of environmental law enforcement, the Legal Division should be an integral part of the coordination; shall work closely with the Protected Area Superintendents; and prosecute case until intervention of a prosecutor in the case;
- e. Coordination with other law enforcement agencies such as the Philippine National Police, National Bureau of Investigation, Philippine Navy, Philippine Coast Guard and Punong Barangays;
- f. Evaluate the progress of environmental law enforcement in the PA; and
- g. Recommend to the PAMB and DENR appropriate policies and institutional support to strengthen PA law enforcement.

**Section 5. Reporting.** The Protected Area Law Enforcement Team shall report to the DENR Regional Director who shall assume overall control and supervision over enforcement activities within all protected areas in his/her region of jurisdiction. The Team shall closely coordinate their activities with the Chiefs of the Enforcement and Legal Divisions of the Regional Office.

As the Over-all Team Coordinator, the PASU shall report to the PAMB the results of enforcement activities as part of the agenda of regular or special PAMB meetings, as may be appropriate. The PASU shall also submit the results of such enforcement activities including the Team's recommendations to the Regional Director who shall then be responsible for transmitting the report to the Office of the Secretary thru the Field Operations Office and the BMB.

**Section 6. Assistance of the Special Prosecutors.** The PAMB Chair through the PASU shall coordinate with the Special Prosecutors designated by the DOJ pursuant to Section 19 of RA 7586, for assistance in filing of environmental cases to the Office of the Prosecutor or the Municipal Trial Court Judge and for the actual prosecution of violations of laws, rules and regulations in protected areas. The Special Prosecutors shall determine the probable cause to pursue the filing of the appropriate case by the PASu/DENR.

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**Section 7. Fund Allocation.** The Regional and Field Offices shall allocate necessary funding for PA law enforcement and related activities, including the operations of the Protected Area Law Enforcement Team.

**Section 8. Effectivity.** This Technical Bulletin shall take effect immediately and shall be circulated for the information and guidance of all concerned.



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Director