UPDATE 4/28: The Secretaries of Interior and Commerce have announced that they are revoking the Bush administration's midnight rule on ESA section 7 consultation. They apparently are not revoking the special rule on the polar bear (as they were also authorized to do under the omnibus spending bill). We will have more when the formal decision is released.

The New York Times reports that the Department of Interior has sent revisions to the ESA section 7 consultation rules to the Office of Management and Budget, a preliminary step to publishing the revisions. One of the Bush administration's last-minute regulatory maneuvers was to drastically revise the consultation rules, over strong public and expert objections. Eric explained here some of the problems the Bush revisions pose for conservation. Obama issued a memo in early March essentially allowing federal agencies to ignore those revisions. I explained here why that memo was not enough to solve the problems. In the omnibus spending bill, Congress gave the administration the authority to formally revoke the Bush rules without following the usual lengthy notice and comment procedure. The deadline for using that authority is May 10. With that deadline approaching, it looks like the new administration is ready to act, although it remains to be seen whether the Bush rules will be entirely revoked or only modified.