The Challenge of Federal Land Management

- BLM manages more than 245 million acres of public lands; including 700 million acres of subsurface mineral estate.
- The agency’s challenge is:
  - To manage on behalf of all Americans
  - While recognizing the local and regional consequences its decisions may have
  - In conformity with federal laws, regulations, and policies
  - While also accommodating local needs, values, and laws.
The Challenge of Federal Land Management
The Planning Process

What is a Resource Management Plan?

➢ FLPMA requires BLM-administered lands to be managed for multiple use and sustained yield

➢ The Approved RMP provides the overall framework for managing BLM-administered lands
The Planning Process

- Unites FLPMA and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)
- Identifies competing resource uses
- Develops and analyzes alternatives
- Helps meet multiple use and sustained yield requirements

Source: Wyoming Mining Association

Source: BLM Flickr

Source: Brady Owens, BLM Flickr
The Planning Process

Types of RMP Decisions

1. Desired Outcomes – i.e., Goals and Objectives
   a. Often derived from law, regulation, and policy
   b. Provide statements of desired outcomes

2. Allowable Uses and Management Decisions
   a. Intended to achieve goals and objectives
   b. Proactive measures to be taken
The Purpose of NEPA Documents

40 CFR 1500.1(b) and (c)

➢ Inform and involve the public;
➢ Focus on issues that are truly significant (rather than amassing needless detail);
➢ Not better documents, but better decisions that count.
NEPA Process

Environmental Impact Statement Process

1. Publish Notice of Intent
2. Scoping Period
3. Publish Draft EIS
4. 45-Day Public Review of Draft EIS*
5. Publish Final EIS
6. 30-Day Availability Period
7. Record of Decision
8. 30-Day Public Protest/Appeal

*90-day if a RMP amendment is required.

= Public Involvement Opportunities.
CA and Public Participation

**Cooperating Agency**
- Meets with lead agency prior to scoping
- Participates in scoping meetings
- Formulates alternatives with lead agency
- Analyzes Effects
- Reviews preliminary draft
- During comment period, provides comments & participates in public meetings
- Assists lead agency in responding to comments
- Reviews preliminary final

**Other Agencies & General Public**
- Participates in scoping
- Comments on Draft EIS during comment period
- Protest period
Cooperating Agency Workload Points

- Scoping and Outreach to Constituents
- Data Assembly/Review of Pre-NOI materials
- Impact Analysis
- Formulate Alternatives/Suggest methods for resolving concerns
- Public Comment Periods – Review documents/obtain constituent feedback/summarize
Collaboration and Coordination Starts Here

- Environmental Impact Statement Process
  - Publish Notice of Intent
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Streamlining BMPs

Prepare for Success

- Define project purpose and need
- Develop schedule and budget needs
- Identify and secure contracting needs
  - Develop strong and clear Statements of Work with time and page limits in mind
  - Leverage existing contracting vehicles (E.g., NEPA Blanket Purchase Agreement)
- Develop a decision file management system
Streamlining BMPs

Engage Cooperators

- Identify potential cooperating agencies
- Initiate discussions and establish Points of Contact
- Establish MOUs
  - BLM Wyoming IM 2015-013: Designation of State of Wyoming as a Cooperating Agency on all NEPA and Planning Documents
  - Template MOU between BLM and County Commissioners (developed in coordination with WCCA)
  - Other opportunities
Streamlining BMPs
Gather data

- What do we need? What do we have now? Where are the gaps?
- Solicit data to fill gaps where missing or incomplete, or where BLM holds no jurisdiction.
- Conduct surveys if needed.
- Look externally for additional information.
  
  “Data” isn’t just shapefiles and scientific literature
Streamlining BMPs
Conduct pre-NOI public outreach

➢ Internal and External (little “s”) scoping
➢ Conduct public outreach events
   ➢ Listening sessions
   ➢ Open houses or Workshops
   ➢ Website/social media outreach

❖ Think outside the box
Eastern Colorado RMP Story Map

https://blm-egis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=7ff7182ac6444b53b0d5b7b48210bc11
Streamlining BMPs

Reduce pages

➢ Eliminate the redundancy
➢ Incorporation by reference and tier to other NEPA, where appropriate
➢ Issue-based NEPA
➢ Develop preliminary draft chapters (e.g., chapters 1, 2 and 3) pre-NOI
NEPA/Planning Resources

- BLM NEPA Handbook (H-1790-1)
- BLM Planning Handbook (H-1601-1)
- DOI Departmental Manual Part 516, Chapter 11
- DOI NEPA Regulations (43 CFR Part 46)
- CEQ Regulations (40 CFR 1500-1508)
- The National Environmental Policy Act
- BLM Desk Guide to Cooperating Agency Relationships
Questions?

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Photo by: Sam Bruner, BLM Flickr