

>>Announcer: Welcome to the latest Planning/NEPA Forum on regional mitigation. And now, the host of your program, Cathy Humphrey.

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

>> C. Humphrey: Good morning in the west. Good afternoon in the east. Welcome to our latest Planning/NEPA Forum! I understand we have some non-BLM folks participating with us today. We appreciate you being able to join us.

This broadcast is the first in a series of programs on mitigation. On today's show, we're going to focus on regional (offsite) mitigation and then on January 30, 2014, we'll discuss local mitigation.

For BLM employees, if you didn't already register for the broadcast in DOI learn, please send me your name so that you can have an opportunity to give us feedback through Metrics that Matter. As you know, with your input, we can improve our broadcasts so that we can better meet your needs.

The reference material that we refer to on this program has been posted to the Knowledge Resource Center, or KRC, page and that includes the draft Regional Mitigation Manual Section. We've got some CEQ and other guidance on there, lots of information, the power points there on the web site. So I'm hoping that the people that are listening on the listen-only bridge, I hope you went to the KRC and found the power points because it will make the presentations a lot better for you. Now, the easiest way to find that KRC page is by doing a web search for NTC KRC mitigation.

As with our other broadcasts, you can FAX or e-mail or text your questions. You can do that any time during the broadcast, then we'll answer them in the Question and Answer period. However, if you want to call us on the phone, we'll only open the lines for phone calls during the Question and Answer period and that will be toward the end of the program. If you do call us, it is really best if you step out of the room because if you're in the room with the TV, there's echoing and feedback. And please don't forget to tell us your name and where you're calling from.

So if you want to write down the numbers now, here's the contact information. You can see it on your screen. The FAX number is 602-906-5701. If you e-mail or text us, the address is [blm\\_tc\\_telecast@blm.gov](mailto:blm_tc_telecast@blm.gov). And the phone number to call in is 877-862-5346. Okay.

Let's just get right into it. I would like to introduce our panel, starting with Gloria Tibbetts. Gloria joins us from Battle Mountain, Nevada where she serves as the project manager and NEPA coordinator for two EIS mining projects, an EIS landscape restoration project, and countless EA projects. She worked in planning and development for several years at the local and city level before joining the BLM in 2010. Hi, Gloria.

>> G. Tibbetts: Hi. Thanks for having me.

>> C. Humphrey: Next, we have Mike Dwyer. Mike is a project manager in the Ely District in Nevada. He works primarily on energy projects and for the past year or so, he served as the Nevada

project manager for the Solar Regional Mitigation Planning Project. Mike has been with the BLM since 1978. In his spare time, Mike served as an adjunct professor at the University of Nevada Las Vegas where he teaches courses in environmental science and natural resource policy. Great to see you, Mike.

>> M. Dwyer: Thanks, Cathy. Good to be here.

>> C. Humphrey: And our last panelist here in Phoenix is Jim Perry. We're lucky to have Jim with us. He's a senior natural resource specialist in the Washington Office's Division of Fluid Minerals. He was a team lead on the development of the BLM's regional mitigation policy that we'll be talking about today. Jim's devoted a lot of the past 35 years of his career to identifying and teaching better ways to mitigate environmental impacts. Jim, it is good you could be with us from Washington.

>>J. Perry: Thanks, Cathy. It is great to be here and to share these important new concepts.

>> C. Humphrey: And then Gordon Toevs was supposed to be with us live from Washington but he was called away unexpectedly this week. So fortunately for all of us, he taped his presentation in advance. I would like to introduce him anyway.

Gordon is part of the Renewable Resources and Planning staff in the Washington Office and leads the Inventory, Assessment, and Monitoring Strategy for the BLM. His recent work efforts have focused on developing monitoring strategies for terrestrial and aquatic resources, herd management areas, and sage-grouse habitat. He's a member of the team that led the development of the Dry Lake Regional Mitigation Strategy which you'll hear about later. He's currently working on the Solar Management Plan.

Okay. So next, I would like to move to Washington, D.C. where Kerry Rodgers is standing by. Kerry is the senior NEPA specialist in the BLM Washington Office's Division of Decision Support, Planning and NEPA. She joined the BLM in 2010 as an air resource specialist in D.C. Kerry worked on the draft Mitigation Manual as well as mitigation of air emissions from federal oil and gas development under an interagency Memorandum of Understanding. Kerry previously worked as an environmental lawyer at both a private law firm and for several federal agencies and she directed a law school environmental law clinic. Kerry, it is great that you're able to be with us.

>> K. Rodgers: Hi, Cathy, I'm pleased to join you.

>> C. Humphrey: Okay. So that's our panel that's here with us. Next what I would like to do is hand it over to Neil Kornze, the Principal Deputy Director of the BLM. Although he couldn't be with us today, he was able to record a short message for us.

>> N. Kornze: Good morning. Or perhaps good afternoon depending on where you are today. I want to welcome all of you and thank you for attending this important forum on the future of regional mitigation in our planning and NEPA work at the BLM.

I want to start by relating to you Secretary Jewell's six priority areas for the Department of the Interior. As you will see, your participation today will help advance the BLM's efforts to meet several of the priorities. They are:

1. Celebrating and enhancing America's great outdoors.
2. Strengthening tribal nations.
3. Powering the future.
4. Engaging the next generation.
5. Assuring a sustainable water supply. And
6. Building a landscape-level understanding.

Today's broadcast will touch on several of these, most apparently on empowering the future, building the landscape-level understanding, and celebrating and enhancing America's great outdoors. With this new policy, we will continue to help secure America's energy both environmentally and economically.

With the release of the BLM's Regional Mitigation Manual in June, we established our policy on taking the landscape level approach to offsite mitigation priorities. Instead of reviewing offsite mitigation measures on a case-by-case basis and project sites, we'll explore opportunities to preplan mitigation across jurisdictions and across regions. In doing so, we'll help protect and conserve some of our most important natural resources.

Today, you will hear about how to do some of the following:

- Anticipate future offsite mitigation needs and pre-identify potential sites for projects;
- Prioritize potential mitigation sites and measures for multiple benefits across large landscapes;
- Consider mitigation opportunities on both BLM lands and non-BLM lands;
- Identify mitigation opportunities that will be effective and durable;
- Ensure that science and high-quality information are the basis for considering mitigation opportunities; and finally,
- Exploring the potential for mitigation opportunities to benefit multiple resources through a single action.

The opportunities we will now have as a result of this policy are fairly exciting. For example, mitigation may include contributing labor or funding for wildlife habitat improvement projects, removing unnecessary infrastructure, or purchasing conservation easements, or creating new Areas of Critical Environmental Concern.

This regional-scale planning perspective will enhance the BLM's ability to mitigate resource impacts, increase our permitting effectiveness and provide greater security to applicants, to our partners, and to the greater public. It is an exciting time to be undertaking this work. I'm confident that this new approach will be crucial to moving us in the right direction. What you learn and discuss today will play a key role in strengthening our management and care of the nation's public lands and resources.

As we implement the new policy, I look forward to hearing about the results of your work. Again, thank you. I wish you all the best for a successful and exciting forum.

>> C. Humphrey: Thanks, Neil. That was a great way to kick us off. It is always good to be reminded of how our efforts tie into the department's priorities.

So, over the next 90 minutes or so, you're going to hear us talking about -- we'll go over the terminology that's used in regional mitigation, we'll go over the NEPA and CEQ guidance. We'll overview the interim policy for regional mitigation. We'll present you with a framework on how to begin a regional mitigation strategy and we'll discuss how to overcome some typical challenges. And then we've got an interesting case study for you from Nevada where a regional mitigation strategy has been developed. Then finally, after -- in about an hour and a half, it will be your turn to ask questions and as with our other broadcasts, we got some questions in advance so we'll answer them until you start calling in, or texting, whatever.

Now that you know about what we'll be talking about, I would like to get started.