

Scoping Process

Objectives



- Describe the requirements for, and process of, the scoping phase in planning.
- Describe and discuss types of scoping opportunities.
- Describe how to organize and evaluate scoping comments.
- Write an effective scoping report.

Definition of Scoping

"Process by which lead agencies solicit input from the public and interested agencies on the nature and extent of issues and impacts to be addressed and the methods by which they will be evaluated."

(Source: CEQ Scoping Guidance; April 30, 1981)



Steps in the Scoping Process

- Initiate scoping through preplanning.
- Identify studies and experts needed.
- Conduct scoping process for public and interested agencies.
- Develop scoping report; craft issue statements.
- Refine approach to environmental analysis, studies, experts, timelines, and interdisciplinary team as appropriate.

Scoping Guidance

- FLPMA: Section 202(c)(9)
- CEQ regulations: 40 CFR 1501.7
- BLM planning regulations: 43 CFR 1610.2, 1610.4-1
- BLM Planning Handbook: page 19, Appendix A
- BLM NEPA Handbook: page 38

Legal Requirements and Guidelines for Scoping

- FLPMA and BLM planning regulations
- NEPA
 - Invite federal, state, local, and tribal agencies and organizations to participate.
 - Solicit information from the public.
- CEQ Handbook: *Collaboration in NEPA*
- Special outreach required
 - Low-income and minority communities
 - Tribal agencies (Face-to-face meetings are essential.)

Also see CEQ website for scoping guidance.

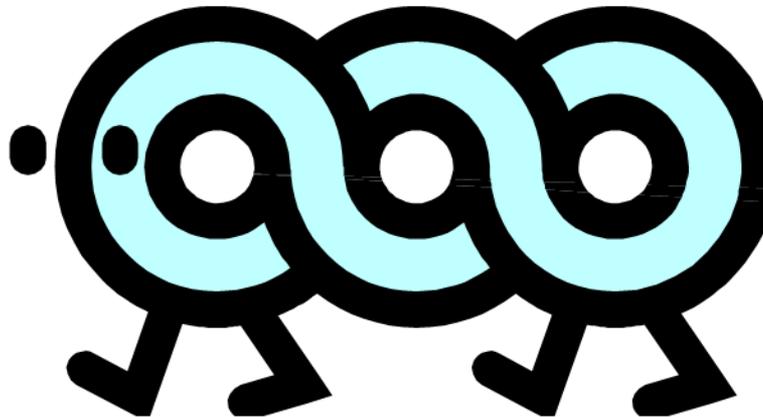
Environmental Justice during Scoping

- Identify low-income & minority groups (target groups).
- Identify areas that may have disproportionately high and adverse impacts on target groups.
- Develop proactive outreach program to involve target groups.
- Provide translation as necessary.
- Use local media of target groups.
- Go to target group communities.

Scoping Is an Ongoing Process

"Scoping is not an event or meeting. It continues throughout the planning for an EIS, and may involve a series of meetings, telephone conversations or written comments from different interested groups."

(CEQ Scoping Guidance)



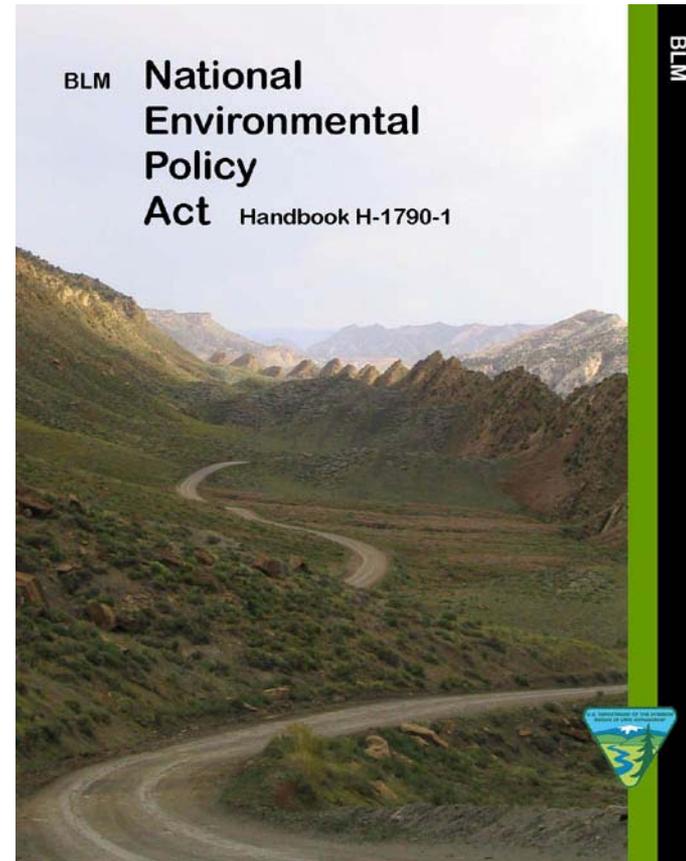
Notice of Intent (NOI)



- Publishing an NOI is a NEPA requirement.
- It is the first formal step in an EIS process.
- Publish soon after determining an EIS is needed.
- BLM planning regulations also require notice to the public, governments, tribes, and those who request related plans.

Notice of Intent - References

- CEQ NEPA Regulations:
40 CFR 1501.7
- BLM NEPA Handbook:
Sections 9.1.2 and 13.1
- BLM Planning Handbook,
page 18
- Also check current BLM
Instruction Memoranda
and Information Bulletins.



Required Contents of a Notice of Intent

- Description of the purpose and need
- Preliminary issues and planning criteria
- Draft proposed action and possible alternatives
- Proposed scoping process (time and location of meetings if possible)
- BLM contact person name and address



Important Aspects of a Notice of Intent

- Use clear and neutral language.
- Reflect agency policy.
- If details are not yet developed, include clear explanation of why not.
- Washington office review may be required (check current policy).
- Be aware of triggers for publishing a revised NOI.



NOI Publication Locations

- Required: Federal Register
- Desirable
 - Local newspapers
 - Internet
 - Mail to organizations and interested parties



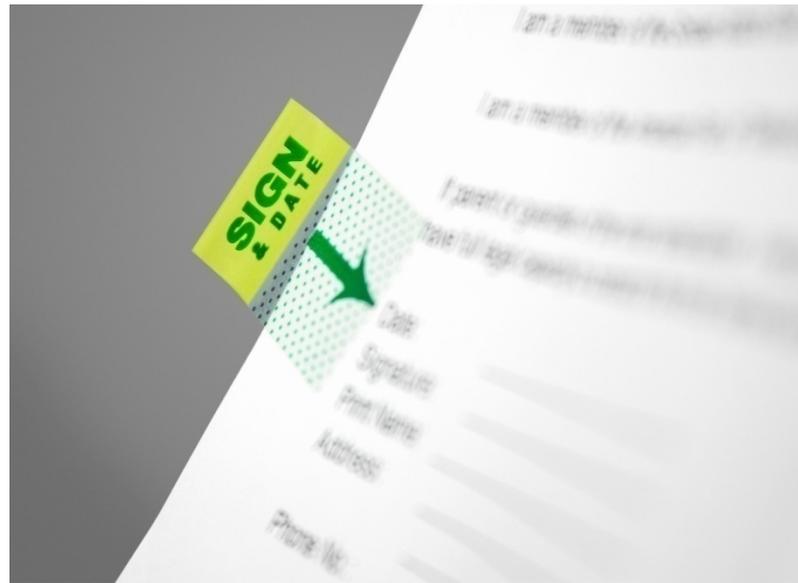
Questions



- What types of scoping meetings or other methods have you found to be most successful to get people involved?
- How did your method vary based on the type of group involvement you wanted?

Organizing Scoping Comments

- Categorize by planning issue.
- Create a "considered in other parts of the planning process" category.



Writing a Scoping Report

- Summarize issues.
 - Describe differences among opinions of respondents.
- Summarize demographics of respondents.
 - Organization/agency, city, state, etc.
- Include issues not to be addressed further, and why.
- Include:
 - Draft planning criteria
 - Data summary/data gaps
 - Summary of future steps in the planning process
- BLM Planning Handbook: p 19 and Appendix F-2

Using a Scoping Report for Subsequent Planning Phases

- Use report to refine work plan and priorities.
 - Select team members and experts.
 - Finalize technical studies.
- Use report to refine content of EIS.
 - Additional reasonable alternatives
 - Additional impacts to be evaluated
- Use scoping report to identify key stakeholders and interests.