Vision, Goals, Objectives, and Alternatives
Objectives

- Define vision, goals, objectives, and alternatives within the planning context.
- Describe collaborator roles in development of vision, goals, objectives, and alternatives.
- Write goal and objective statements and alternatives.
- Describe the role of alternatives in the planning process.
- List the steps in the adaptive management process.
Definitions

- **Vision**—expression of long-term desired conditions from an experiential viewpoint.
- **Goal**—broad statement of desired outcomes, usually not quantifiable.
- **Standard**—description of bio-physical conditions regarding healthy sustainable lands.
Definitions (Cont.)

- **Alternatives**—groupings of management actions.
- **Themes**—the general look and feel of an alternative.
- **Objectives**—specific desired conditions for resources, with established timeframes, which are quantifiable and measurable.
- **Management Actions**—activities needed to achieve desired outcomes, including proactive measures and criteria that will be applied to guide day-to-day activities.
Vision

Goal 1 | Goal 2 | Goal 3 | Goal 4 | Goal 5
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Alternative 1 | Alternative 2 | Alternative 3 | Alternative 4 | NA Alternative

Objective 1 — Common to all alternatives
Objective 2 — Common to all alternatives

Obj. 3 | Obj. 4 | Obj. 5 | Obj. 6 | Obj. 7 | Obj. 8 | Obj. 9 | Obj. 10 | Obj. 11 | Obj. 12 | Obj. 13
--- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | ---
Management Action | Management Action | Management Action | Management Action | Management Action | Management Action | Management Action | Management Action | Management Action | Management Action |
Allocations | Allocations | Allocations | Allocations | Allocations | Allocations | Allocations | Allocations | Allocations | Allocations |
Writing a Vision Statement

- Should include partners.
- Jointly developed vision statement makes for a stronger planning process and builds supportive relationships (better “buy in”) early in the process.
- Incorporate proclamations, directives, etc.
- Describe how the planning area should look, feel, sound.
- Include social and economic aspects.

Suggested Activity: develop a vision statement with your partners (see tab for Exercise 7).
Writing Goal Statements

- Should include partners.
- More specific and focused than vision statements.
- Common set of goals for all alternatives.
- Describe desired outcomes, or conditions, of the social, economic, and bio-physical environment.
- Attempt to integrate resources into a handful of goals, rather than having one or more goals per resource.
Role of Collaborators in Developing Vision and Goals

- Who does it?
- How is it done?
- How do you get buy-off?
- What are the benefits and drawbacks?
Incorporating Land Health Standards

- What is a land health standard?
  - An expression of levels of physical and biological condition or degree of function required for healthy lands and sustainable uses, and define minimum resource conditions that must be achieved and maintained.

- Each state has a set of standards for public land health that must be included in the RMP.

- These standards are common to all alternatives.
Definition of a Plan Alternative

A combination of proposed activities, resource uses, management allocations, and management practices designed to meet stated goals.
Contents of a Plan Alternative: BLM Planning Handbook Requirements

- A description of how the alternative meets the plan's goals (e.g., how it relates to the purpose and need).
  - Objectives for each resource
  - Designation of land allocations
  - Allowable, conditional, and prohibited land uses and management actions to achieve stated objectives
  - Land tenure and future land acquisition policies

- Ask your program lead for additional guidance regarding a particular resource or program.

Appendices C, D, & F in BLM Planning Handbook; BLM Manual Sec. 1613 (ACECs)
Elements of a Plan Alternative: Objectives

- May involve partners.
- Should be statements regarding the desired condition of resources addressed.
- Should be quantifiable and measurable.
- Can include established time frames for achievement.
- Can vary among alternatives.
Importance of Objectives

- Objectives drive the composition of the alternative.
- Write S.M.A.R.T. objectives.
  - S = Specific
  - M = Measurable
  - A = Achievable
  - R = Reasonable
  - T = Trackable
- Consider including adaptive management and monitoring within objectives.
- The indicators associated with Land Health Standards are one possible source of objectives.
Elements of a Plan Alternative: Land Allocations

- Generally can be depicted as a line on a map delineating an area with a certain management focus, for example:
  - Special area designations (ACEC, Wild and Scenic River)
  - Open, closed, or limited OHV areas
  - Riparian management areas
  - Areas open mineral leasing with restrictions
Elements of a Plan Alternative: Management Actions

- Management activities or land uses that are:
  - allowed
  - restricted
  - prohibited

- Tie to objectives

- Basis for subsequent implementation and effectiveness monitoring
Elements of a Plan Alternative: Land Tenure

- Identify lands available for disposal.
- List criteria under which land would be acquired.
- Identify proposed withdrawal areas and right-of-way corridors.
- Specify where and when major leases may occur.
Adaptive Management is...

- A learning-based decision process that promotes flexible decision making that can be adjusted in the face of uncertainties as outcomes from management actions and other events become better understood.


Adaptive Management Technical Guide

- What is adaptive management?
- When should it be used?
- How should it be implemented?
- When is it successful?
- Other operational issues
Implementing Adaptive Management

**Set-up Phase** (5 steps)
- Ensure stakeholders are committed throughout the process.
- Identify clear, measurable, agreed-upon objectives.
- Identify a set of potential management actions.
- Identify models that characterize different ideas about how the system works.
- Design and implement a monitoring plan to track resource status and other key resource attributes.
Implementing Adaptive Management

- **Iterative Phase** (4 steps)
  - Select management actions based on objectives, resource conditions, and understanding (decision making).
  - Use monitoring to track system response to management actions.
  - Improve understanding of resource dynamics (assessment).
  - Cycle back to Step 6 (decision making).
Adaptive Management: Relationship to NEPA

- In the EIS, analyze all reasonably foreseeable effects of potential management actions, including adaptive management actions.

- If actions to meet objectives (based on monitoring results) are within range of analysis, then no new NEPA analysis is required.

- If actions to meet objectives are outside the initial EIS analysis, then new NEPA analysis must be done before management actions are implemented.
To Learn More About Adaptive Management

- NTC’s Knowledge Resource Center
  (http://www.ntc.blm.gov/krc/)
  - Adaptive Management Overview & Orientation
    (05/24/07 broadcast, 90 min)
  - Implementing Adaptive Management: Set-up Phase
    (09/27/07 broadcast, 120 min)
  - Implementing Adaptive Management: Iterative Phase
    (11/29/07 broadcast, 120 min)

- DOI Adaptive Management Website
  (www.doi.gov/initiatives/AdaptiveManagement/index.html)

- DOI Adaptive Management Technical Guide
  (http://www.doi.gov/initiatives/AdaptiveManagement/documents.html)
Rules Regarding EIS Alternatives

- Explain why certain alternatives were eliminated.
- Describe alternative ways to meet purpose and need.
- Describe the no action alternative.
- Evaluate and compare alternatives.
- Identify the preferred alternative.
- Identify the environmentally preferable alternative (final EIS only).
- Incorporate mitigation measures for alternatives.
Alternatives Development

- Collaborative input starts informally in the preparation plan stage and more formally from the scoping stage onward.
- Alternative themes may be identified in the preparation plan.
- Alternatives may be suggested during public review of draft (or possibly even the review of the final).

- BLM Planning Handbook: page 20
- BLM NEPA Handbook: Section 6.6
Differences among Alternatives

- Different levels or degrees of protection for each resource and use
- Different approaches to management for each resource and use
- Different mix of allowable, conditional, and prohibited uses in various geographic areas
- Different levels and methods for restoration
Options for Naming Alternatives

- Thematic names (e.g., recreation-oriented alternatives)
- Magnitude and intensity alternatives (e.g., high-yield, low-yield)
- Non-descriptive alternatives (e.g., A, B)

Don’t use names that appear pre-decisional.
How Many Alternatives Are Necessary?

- No specific number of alternatives is required: “a reasonable range.”
- Alternatives must allow a true choice of ways to meet the purpose and need (vision/goals).
- No action alternative must be analyzed with the range of alternatives (typically continuation of existing plan).
No Action Alternative

- Is required by NEPA.

- Probably does not meet purpose and need, goals, objectives.

- Serves as important point of comparison.

- Demonstrates what would happen without a new plan.

- For an RMP, the no action alternative is current management or the existing plan.
Alternatives Eliminated from Detailed Consideration

- Draft Plan/EIS must include explanations for why they were eliminated (usually related to screening factors).
- This explanation becomes an important part of the administrative record.
- BLM NEPA Handbook: section 6.6.3
Factors Used to Screen Alternatives

- Does the alternative meet the purpose and need?
- Does the alternative comply with applicable laws, regulations, proclamations, etc.?
- Does the alternative comply with planning criteria?
- Does the comply with land health standards?
- Is the alternative feasible?
Factors Used to Screen Alternatives (Cont.)

- Can the alternative be monitored?
- Does the alternative include adaptive management?
- Is the alternative supported by collaborators?
- Does the alternative incorporate professional judgment or modeling?