

## NEPA Analysis Process: Introduction

C. Humphrey: Welcome to the NEPA Analytical Process Course. This is the second in our series of online NEPA courses and resources. The first course is called NEPA Concepts, and it provides an overview of the National Environmental Policy Act and the Council on Environmental Quality regulations.

As you probably know, it's a prerequisite for this course, and it can be accessed through our DOI Learn. If you'd like more information, look at the Resources tab on the left of your screen.

For the next couple hours, you're going to learn the basic steps of the NEPA process. We're just going to focus on the analytical process, not the documentation requirements, because those are covered in the NEPA Handbook and in some other classroom courses.

Be sure that you have all your course materials that you need before starting this course so you get the most out of it. You'll need your Participant Guide, you'll need your 2008 BLM NEPA Handbook, you'll need one or more NEPA documents, finished or not, doesn't really matter, but preferably ones that you've worked on so that you're familiar with them. And, of course, you need something to write with.

If you don't have a copy of the handbook or the Participant Guide, then go to that Resources tab on the left of your screen and you can download it before proceeding with the course.

Now, let's talk a minute about how to take an online course. These tips can be found if you look at page 2 of your Participant Guide. You can read along, look at them later. As you know, obviously it's different taking an online course than a classroom course. One of the best things about taking an online course is that you have control over your environment. You have control over the day and the time of day you take the class. You have control over how long you participate. And to some extent you might have control with whom you watch the course.

Let's talk about the learning environment. If you're watching it with a group of people, you'll probably be in a conference room. If you're watching it alone, you might either be at your desk at work or you might be at home. Whether you're alone or with a group, you need to make sure that everybody knows you're taking the class and you should not be bothered.

Turn off all your cell phones. Turn off your other distractions. Put up a "do not disturb" sign. Get comfortable. Make sure that you can see and hear the screen. Use headphones so you don't disturb your neighbors. And if you're watching with a group of people, please keep your side conversations to a minimum. You may not be interested

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in what we're saying or you may already know it all, but the person next to you might be interested. So,shhhhhh...

Now, be sure to pick a day and a time of day when you're fresh and alert so that the information can soak in. Because, as you know, this can be heavy stuff, and we want your mind to be sharp.

If you miss something, all you need to do is just stop the video and watch it again. If you need to think about something, all you need to do is stop the video and think about it. That's the beauty of online learning. You have control.

Alright, let's get started. This course is based on Chapter 6 of the 2008 BLM NEPA Handbook. That chapter is called NEPA Analysis. This information applies to both EAs, which is Environmental Assessments, and EISs, Environmental Impact Statements. Your instructors today will discuss purpose and need, scoping, issues, proposed action, developing alternatives, affected environment, and environmental consequences.

We've included quite a few exercises in this course so you can practice what you've learned. And as you know, the amount of effort you put in will determine what you get out of this class.

Now, the course objectives, upon completion of this course, these are the things you should be able to do:

You should be able to describe the steps of the NEPA process. That's pretty easy.

And you should be able to conduct a basic level of NEPA analysis if you do the exercises.

All three of our instructors contributed to the BLM NEPA Handbook. They know what the handbook says. They know why it says what it says. And they know how it came to say what it says.

First we have Richard Hardt. He's an ecologist for the Eugene District in Oregon. He has been with the BLM since 1994 and he's worked on some aspect of NEPA since then. Hi, Richard.

R. Hardt: Hi, Cathy. It's a pleasure to be here.

C. Humphrey: Jolie Pollet is the Planning and Environmental Coordinator for the BLM's Alaska State Office. She's been with the BLM since 1998. Prior to being in Alaska, Jolie worked for the BLM in Oregon and Utah. Thanks for coming down, Jolie.

J. Pollet: Hi, Cathy. Thanks for including me today.

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C. Humphrey: Meagan Conry, she's the District Planning and Environmental Coordinator for the Roseburg District in Oregon. She's been with the BLM since 2004. She started her career in the Washington Office. Nice to see you, Meagan.

M. Conry: Thanks for having me down here, Cathy.

C. Humphrey: All right. Those are your instructors. Let's get started.