

CHAPTER 5 CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) land use planning activities are conducted in accordance with National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) requirements, Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations, and the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) and BLM policies and procedures implementing NEPA. NEPA and the associated laws, regulations, and policies require BLM to seek public involvement early in, and throughout, the planning process to develop a reasonable range of alternatives to proposed actions and prepare environmental documents that disclose the potential impacts of proposed actions and alternatives. Public involvement and agency consultation and coordination, which have been at the heart of the planning process leading to this draft environmental impact statement (EIS) and preferred resource management plan (RMP), were achieved through *Federal Register* notices, public and informal meetings, individual contacts, media releases, planning bulletins, and the project planning website.

The formal scoping period for the Little Snake Field Office (LSFO) began with the publication of the Notice of Intent (NOI) in the *Federal Register* on November 18, 2004, which officially announced BLM's intent to prepare an RMP and associated EIS for the LSFO. During the scoping period, BLM announced the commencement of the planning process, invited the submittal of ideas and comments regarding the management of the LSFO, and conducted public scoping meetings. The notice invited the participation of the affected and interested agencies, organizations, and members of the general public in determining the scope and significant issues to be addressed in the planning alternatives and analyzed in the EIS. Additional public involvement was solicited to help identify issues to be addressed in developing a full range of land management alternatives (see Table 5-1 for a list of public involvement, coordination, and consultation events). This chapter describes this public involvement process as well as other key consultation and coordination activities undertaken for the preparation of a comprehensive Draft EIS for the LSFO.

Table 5-1. Public Involvement, Coordination, and Consultation Events

Date	Location	Type
November 17, 2004	Craig, Colorado	Neighboring Agency Coordination Meeting
January 4, 2005	Steamboat Springs, Colorado	Public Scoping Meeting
January 5, 2005	Craig, Colorado	Public Scoping Meeting
January 6, 2005	Maybell, Colorado	Public Scoping Meeting
January 6, 2005	Craig, Colorado	Cooperating Agencies Meeting
June 23, 2005	Craig, Colorado	Cooperating Agencies Meeting
August 17, 2005	Craig, Colorado	Cooperating Agencies Meeting
April 4, 2006	Craig, Colorado	Cooperating Agencies Meeting
April 19, 2006	Craig, Colorado	Cooperating Agencies Meeting
July 26, 2006	Craig, Colorado	Cooperating Agencies Meeting
August 17, 2006	Lakewood, Colorado	Cooperating Agencies Meeting
September 11, 2006	Craig, Colorado	Cooperating Agencies Meeting

5.1 CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

Federal laws require BLM to consult with certain federal and State agencies and entities and Native American tribes, (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] 1502.25) during the NEPA decisionmaking process. BLM is also directed to integrate NEPA requirements with other environmental review and consultation requirements to reduce paperwork and delays (40 CFR 1500.4-5).

5.1.1 Native American Consultation

As part of the scoping process, BLM sent letters to tribal governments on October 14, 2004, requesting information for the RMP/EIS and inviting their coordination and participation in the RMP revision process. The planning process requires consultation with Native American tribes to develop strategies for managing and protecting recognized traditional uses and areas of cultural and religious significance. BLM received one response from the Southern Ute Indian Tribe. Four Native American tribes who have cultural and historical ties to lands administered by the LSFO were identified. These are—

- ❑ Shoshone Tribal Council
- ❑ Ute Mountain Tribal Council
- ❑ Uintah and Ouray Tribal Council
- ❑ Southern Ute Indian Tribe.

In addition to consultation with tribes under the American Indian Religious Freedom Act (AIRFA) required under NEPA, tribes were consulted further as part of the scoping process. The internal review version of the Draft RMP/EIS was sent to the four tribes in April 2006. In addition, LSFO followed up with a phone call on November 13, 2006. The Draft RMP/EIS was sent to the tribes concurrently with its release to the public.

5.1.2 Fish and Wildlife Consultation

To comply with Section 7(c) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, BLM consulted the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) early in the planning process. USFWS provided input on planning issues, data collection and review, and alternatives development.

BLM consulted the USFWS to develop the Draft Biological Assessment, which will be published concurrently in October 2006.

5.1.3 Neighboring Agency Coordination

A meeting was held on November 17, 2004, with agencies that have common boundaries with the LSFO, including the Rawlins, Rock Springs, Vernal, and White River BLM field offices, Dinosaur National Monument, Browns Park National Wildlife Refuge, and the Colorado Department of Natural Resources. Issues and concerns with boundary management were discussed, including travel management, greater sage-grouse, fire, visual resources, wild horses, livestock grazing, threatened and endangered species, special designations, wildlife, invasive species, vegetation, water quality, and access to private and State lands.

5.2 COOPERATING AGENCIES

Cooperating agency status provides a formal framework for governmental units—local, State, tribal, or federal—to engage in active collaboration with a lead federal agency in the planning process. In

principle, a cooperating agency shares the responsibility with the lead agency for organizing the planning process.

The LSFO requested cooperating agency status for the Little Snake RMP planning process from the following agencies or entities:

- Moffat County
- Routt County
- Colorado Department of Natural Resources (including the Colorado State Land Board, Colorado Division of Wildlife, and Colorado State Parks)
- National Park Service
- USFWS
- U.S. Forest Service (USFS)
- City of Craig
- City of Steamboat Springs
- U. S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resource Conservation Service
- Town of Hayden
- Town of Oak Creek
- Town of Yampa

These entities were invited to participate because they had jurisdiction by law or could offer special expertise. Moffat County, the Colorado Department of Natural Resources, the USFWS, Juniper Water Conservancy District, and the City of Steamboat Springs accepted and signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with BLM. This MOU outlines responsibilities of the cooperating agencies, and resources they can contribute to the planning effort. Coordination and consistency for this planning effort were primarily accomplished through the assistance of the cooperating agencies formally involved in the project.

5.3 COORDINATION AND CONSISTENCY

According to the BLM RMP guidance found in 43 CFR 1610, BLM RMPs and amendments must be consistent, to the extent practical, with officially approved or adopted resource-related plans of State and local governments, other federal agencies, and tribal governments, as long as the guidance and RMPs are also consistent. BLM RMPs must also be consistent with the purposes, policies, and programs of FLPMA and other federal laws and regulations applicable to public lands, including federal and State pollution control laws (see 43 CFR 1610.3-2 [a]). If these other entities do not have officially approved or adopted resource-related plans, then BLM RMPs must, to the extent practical, be consistent with their officially approved and adopted resource-related policies and programs. This consistency will be accomplished as long as BLM RMPs incorporate the policies, programs, and provisions of public land laws and regulations, and federal and State pollution control laws (see 43 CFR 1610.3-2 (b)).

Table 5-2 summarizes coordination actions taken by various federal, State, and local agencies for the RMP development process. County and town, State agency, and other federal agency plans for neighboring areas or cross-jurisdictional purposes are also further discussed in the following sections. The plans discussed in the following sections should be consulted, as applicable, during the development of the RMP.

Table 5-2. Key Coordination Actions

Agency	Coordination/Responsibility
FEDERAL AGENCIES	
DOI	
USFWS	Reviews actions affecting threatened or endangered species of fish, wildlife, or plants (Section 7 consultation, coordination, and review).
U.S. Geological Survey (USGS)	Reviews LSFO RMP/EIS for consistency with USGS planning.
National Park Service (NPS)	Reviews LSFO RMP/EIS for coordination with NPS planning.
Bureau of Reclamation (BOR)	Coordinates mineral leasing and other activities that affect lands administered by the BOR. Reviews the LSFO RMP/EIS for consistency with BOR planning.
USDA	
USFS	Coordinates mineral leasing and other activities that affect lands administered by USFS. Reviews the LSFO RMP/EIS for consistency with USFS planning. Coordinates and cooperates with EPA and Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) on monitoring and collecting air quality data.
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) Wildlife Services	Coordinates annual management plan for animal damage control activities on public lands.
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY	
Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)	Coordinates with BLM, USFS, and CDPHE on monitoring and collecting air quality data. Reviews air quality monitoring data. Files <i>Federal Register</i> notices.
STATE AGENCIES	
State of Colorado	Participates in the environmental analysis and documentation process by providing information concerning environmental issues for which the State of Colorado has jurisdiction by law or special expertise. Provides information from State records on matters including, but not limited to, LSFO RMP/EIS project impacts on air quality and Class 1 air sheds, fish and wildlife, domestic livestock grazing, social and economic impacts, minerals, and State of Colorado permitting requirements. This information includes a focus on restoration activities in which the State has identified water bodies impaired by pollutants for which BLM, through best management practices, can provide positive benefits and improvements.
CDPHE	Coordinates management of water quality, development of monitoring for visibility standards and guidelines, and collection of air quality data. CDPHE administers the NPDES program, issues permits for surface discharge in the State, and sets the water quality standards for water bodies within the State.
Colorado State Land Board	The State Land Board's mineral section manages the exploration and development of coal, oil and gas, and other minerals and oversees and evaluates nonrenewable resources, and manages all mineral leases and the Board's mineral revenues.
Colorado Department of Natural Resources, Division of Forestry	Coordinates forest management of prescribed fire and wildland fire.
Colorado Department of Natural Resources, Division of Wildlife	Coordinates vegetation treatment projects, wildlife habitat management, big game herd objectives, and Special Status Species.
Colorado State Parks	Administers and manages State parks, including the facilities on the Yampa River.
Colorado Department of Transportation	Coordinates transportation planning and highway access.

Agency	Coordination/Responsibility
Colorado Geological Survey	Data sharing
Colorado Historical Society, Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation	Consults on compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act in accordance with the National Programmatic Agreement as implemented in the Colorado Protocol to that agreement.
NATIVE AMERICAN TRIBES	
Shoshone Tribal Council Ute Mountain Tribal Council Uintah and Ouray Tribal Council Southern Ute Indian Tribe	Consultation under NEPA and AIRFA
COUNTY AGENCIES	
Moffat and Routt Counties	Participate in environmental analysis and documentation by providing information on environmental issues for which each specified county has jurisdiction by law or special expertise. Provide information on LSFO RMP/EIS project impacts on domestic livestock grazing and on social and economic impacts specific to each county.

5.4 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Public participation in the BLM planning process includes a variety of efforts to identify and address public concerns and needs. Public involvement assists the agencies in—

- Broadening the information base for decisionmaking
- Informing the public about the RMP/EIS and the potential impacts associated with various management decisions
- Ensuring that public needs and viewpoints are understood by BLM.

5.4.1 Scoping Period

The public is provided a scoping period to identify potential issues and concerns associated with the RMP/EIS. Information obtained by BLM during public scoping is combined with issues identified by the agencies to form the scope of the EIS. Knowing the scope and the significance of issues allows for an accurate and timely environmental analysis. The scoping process is also designed to encourage public participation and to solicit public input.

A NOI was published in the *Federal Register* on November 18, 2004, to formally announce that the BLM LSFO was preparing an RMP and associated EIS. The notice invited participation of affected and interested agencies, organizations, and members of the public in determining the scope and significant issues to be addressed in the planning alternatives and analyzed in the EIS. The notice also included information on the scoping meeting schedule and notification of the opportunity for the public to provide input and help identify resource issues and concerns, management alternatives, and other information that could assist the LSFO with determining future land use decisions. The scoping period ended on January, 31, 2005; however, BLM considered additional issues brought forward during the planning process.

5.4.1.1 Scoping Notice

The official 60-day scoping period began when a public scoping notice was prepared and mailed to federal, State, and local agencies; interest groups; and members of the general public on November 18,

2004. The notice invited the public to participate in the scoping process and to submit input on identifying resource issues and concerns, management alternatives, and other information valuable in determining future land use decisions for the Little Snake RMPPA. The scoping period ran from November 18, 2004 through January 31, 2005. Also included with the scoping notice was information on the LSFO management area, background information on the planning process, as well as preliminary planning issues and planning criteria.

5.4.1.2 Scoping Meetings

Public scoping meetings were held in Steamboat Springs, Craig, and Maybell, Colorado, on January 4, 5, and 6, 2005, respectively. During the three scoping meetings, a total of 98 people registered their attendance. The meetings were structured in an open house format, with BLM specialists available to provide information on and respond to questions or issues regarding livestock grazing, mineral and gas development, and other resource areas. Comments from the public were received during the scoping meetings and throughout the scoping period by mail, fax, and e-mail.

A total of 921 comment letters were submitted, and 478 specific comments and issues were received during the scoping period. Comments were sorted into the following 14 topical categories: access, travel and transportation, cultural resources and paleontology, fire general comments, lands and realty, livestock grazing, minerals and energy, recreation, social and economic values, soil, water, and air (including water and air quality), special management designations (including wilderness), vegetation (including upland and riparian management and forestry), wild horses, and wildlife habitats and fisheries management (including Special Status Species). The majority of comments fell into the special management designations (including wilderness) and wildlife habitats. The *Little Snake RMP Scoping Report* (BLM 2005), which can be viewed at <http://www.co.blm.gov/lspa/rmp/rmp-docs.htm>, provides a summary of the comments.

5.4.2 Community Consultation

Community-based planning is an effort by BLM to better engage communities and cooperating agencies in decisions that could affect the health and well-being of the communities and landscapes they value and depend on for economic viability, as well as for recreational and aesthetic purposes. Community-based planning is not intended to be a transfer of BLM decisionmaking authority, but an opportunity for communities to fully participate in the BLM planning process.

The Northwest Colorado Stewardship (NWCOS) is a key participating body in this planning effort and is an independent, community-centered stewardship group (see Table 5-3 for a list of NWCOS events). NWCOS was established in April 2003 with the mission of fostering a working relationship among a diverse range of interests, and empowering the affected public to have a more significant role in the federal land management agencies' decisionmaking processes. NWCOS is a community group independent of BLM or any agency.

Table 5-3. Northwest Colorado Stewardship Events

Date	Location	Type
September 23, 2004	Craig, Colorado	Full NWCOS Meeting
October 30, 2004	Craig, Colorado	Full NWCOS Meeting
December 7, 2004	Craig, Colorado	Full NWCOS Meeting
December 21, 2004	Craig, Colorado	Full NWCOS Meeting
January 25, 2005	Craig, Colorado	Full NWCOS Meeting

Date	Location	Type
February 16, 2005	Craig, Colorado	Full NWCOS Meeting
March 16, 2005	Craig, Colorado	Full NWCOS Meeting
May 18, 2005	Craig, Colorado	Full NWCOS Meeting
May 31-June 1, 2005	Craig, Colorado	NWCOS Subcommittee Meeting
June 15, 2005	Craig, Colorado	Full NWCOS Meeting
July 6-7, 2005	Craig, Colorado	NWCOS Subcommittee Meeting
July 19-20, 2005	Craig, Colorado	NWCOS Subcommittee Meeting
July 26, 2005	Craig, Colorado	Full NWCOS Meeting
October 12, 2005	Craig, Colorado	Full NWCOS Meeting
October 19, 2005	Craig, Colorado	NWCOS Subcommittee Meeting
November 9, 2005	Craig, Colorado	Full NWCOS Meeting
November 30, 2005	Craig, Colorado	Full NWCOS Meeting
December 7, 2005	Craig, Colorado	Full NWCOS Meeting
January 11-12, 2006	Craig, Colorado	Full NWCOS Meeting
February 1-2, 2006	Craig, Colorado	Full NWCOS Meeting
February 15-16, 2006	Craig, Colorado	Full NWCOS Meeting
March 30, 2006	Craig, Colorado	Full NWCOS Meeting
April 27, 2006	Craig, Colorado	Full NWCOS Meeting

5.4.3 Newsletters and Mailing List

BLM prepared a scoping newsletter and sent it to the individuals and entities on the Little Snake project mailing list and posted it on the project website. The mailing list includes federal, State, and local government agencies, tribal government representatives, organizations, special interest groups, and individuals who have expressed an interest in the RMP planning process. Scoping meeting and public hearing attendees could request to be added to the mailing list; however, others could also add their names to the project mailing list through the project website or by contacting BLM.

5.4.4 Project Website

The Little Snake RMP/EIS project website, <http://www.co.blm.gov/lspa/rmp/index.htm>, serves as a virtual repository for announcements, bulletins, and RMP-related draft and final documents. Documents are posted as .pdf files to ensure accessibility to the widest range of users. The website also provides the public the opportunity to send requests to be added to the project mailing list to receive periodic bulletins and announcements.

5.4.5 Future Public Participation

Public participation efforts will be ongoing throughout the remainder of the Little Snake RMP planning process. One substantial part of this effort is the opportunity for members of the public to comment on this Draft EIS during the comment period. The Final EIS will respond to all substantive comments received during the 90-day comment period. The Record of Decision (ROD) is issued by BLM after the release of the Final EIS, the Governor's Consistency Review, and the Protest Resolution.

5.5 DISTRIBUTION LIST

5.5.1.1 Tribal Governments

- Shoshone Tribal Council
- Ute Mountain Tribal Council
- Uintah and Ouray Tribal Council
- Southern Ute Indian Tribe

5.5.1.2 Local Governments

- Moffat County
- Routt County
- Rio Blanco County
- City of Craig
- City of Steamboat Springs
- Town of Hayden
- Town of Oak Creek
- Town of Yampa
- Town of Maybell

5.5.1.3 Colorado State Agencies

- Governor's Office
- Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment
- Colorado State Land Board
- Colorado Department of Natural Resources, Division of Forestry
- Colorado Department of Natural Resources, Division of Wildlife
- Colorado State Parks
- Colorado Department of Transportation
- Colorado Geological Survey
- Colorado Historical Society, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

5.5.1.4 Members of Congress (House and Senate)

- Senator Wayne Allard
- Senator Ken Salazar
- Representative Bob Beauprez
- Representative Diana DeGette
- Representative Joel Hefley
- Representative Marilyn Musgrave
- Representative John Salazar
- Representative Tom Tancredo
- Representative Mark Udall

5.5.1.5 DOI (Non-BLM)

- Bureau of Indian Affairs
- Bureau of Reclamation
- National Park Service
- Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance

- ❑ Office of Surface Mining
- ❑ USFWS
- ❑ U.S. Geological Survey

5.5.1.6 Non-DOI Federal Agencies

- ❑ Environmental Protection Agency
- ❑ Federal Highway Administration
- ❑ USDA
- ❑ USFS
- ❑ Natural Resources Conservation Service
- ❑ U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- ❑ U.S. Department of Energy

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