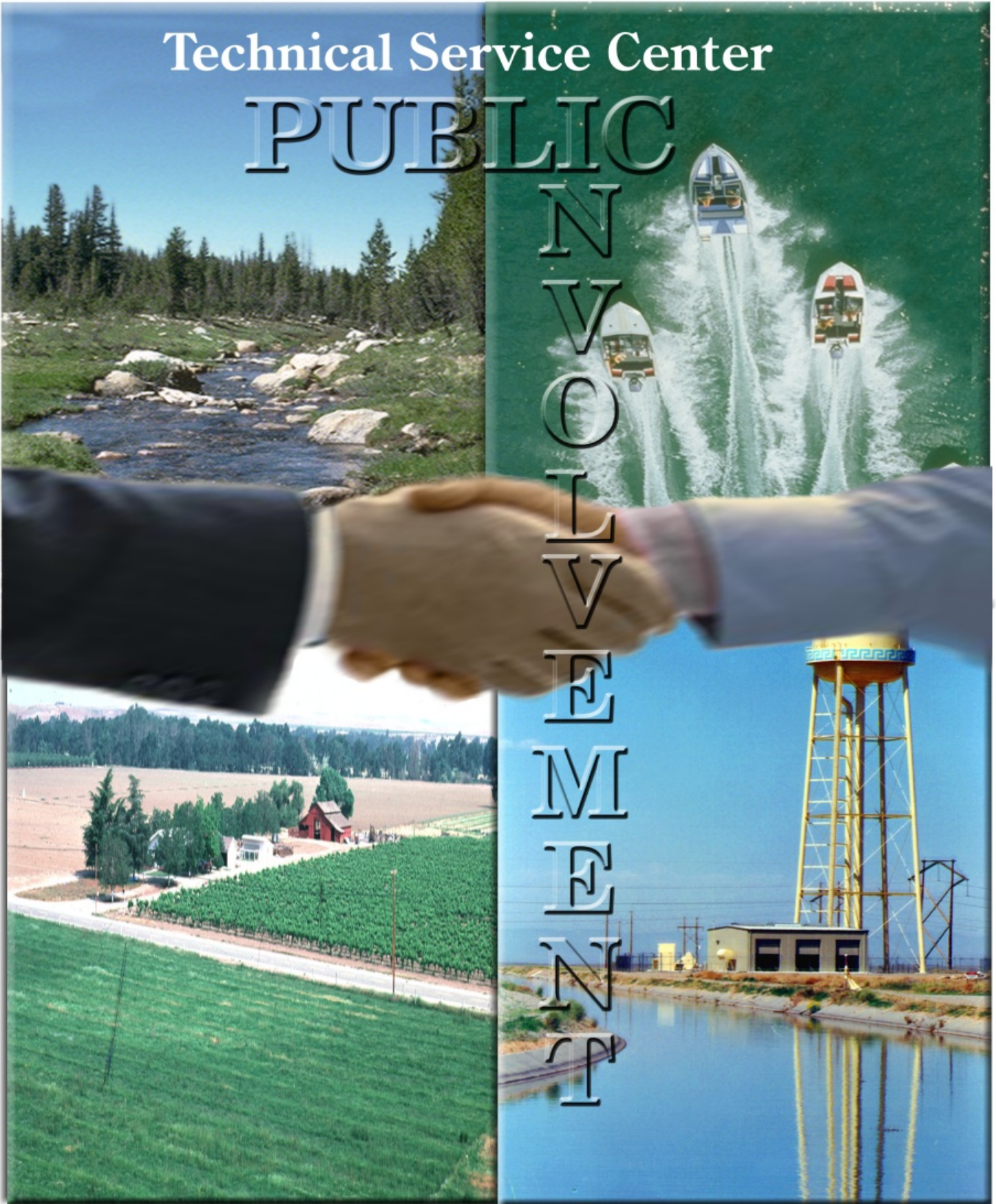# Technical Service Center

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Bureau of Reclamation
Department of the Interior

2001

Public Involvement Manual

United States
Department of the Interior

Bureau of Reclamation

Technical Service Center

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About This Manual

As part of the Technical Service Center's Manuals and Standards Program, the Public Involvement Manual is designed for team leaders, managers, contractors, and public involvement practitioners—in short, anyone in the government who works with publics or who manages any activities that would affect or interest people.

Part 1 is for all readers (including managers, staff, team members, team leaders, decisionmakers, and practitioners). Part 1 provides a general overview of public involvement and shows its roles and functions within Reclamation's programs, projects, and activities.

Part 2 is for those directly responsible for public involvement activities. This is a more indepth practitioner's[1] guide. The first three sections of Part 2 help develop general approaches and strategies:

> *Purpose—Why Do Public Involvement*
> *Roles—Who Does What*
> *Mindset—How to Approach Public Involvement*

The five following sections concentrate on the practical aspects of setting up and running a public involvement program or project:

> *Decision Process—When to Do What*
> *Tailoring—How to Set Up a Specific Public Involvement Program*
> *Planning—How to Write and Use a PI Plan*
> *Implementing—How to Do the Work*
> *Overseeing— What to Do When Someone Else is Doing the Work*

The public will be involved in your activities—sooner or later. The question is: Are you prepared?

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[1] Practitioners are those specialists responsible for public involvement. In small projects, a team leader or private entity may choose to do the public involvement tasks. In this case, they are also practitioners.

The last section provides a "reality check" to monitor the program's effectiveness and adjust tasks and techniques:

Keeping Track—How to Ensure Your Program Works

Throughout this manual, we will refer readers to other well written sources. This manual uses fictional names of publics, issues, and species.[2]

Part 3 provides a list of further resources and the policies and guidance on public involvement in the *Reclamation Manual* and *Departmental Manual*. These sources provide guidance for specific public involvement techniques, conflict resolution, and decision processes. The Technical Service Center maintains a shelf with these sources. Some of these sources are also available in the Reclamation Service Center library.

As the works are easily available, we decided to include these by reference rather than to reinvent the wheel. We emphasize areas that are not as well covered (e.g., planning strategies, roles, and oversight responsibilities).

For more information on public involvement or this manual, contact the Technical Service Center public involvement specialists listed in table 1.

Table 1.—Resource Management and Planning Group		
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[2] Names for places and people are from Larsen, D., 1993. *Marble Springs*. Eastgate Systems, Watertown, Massachusetts.

Contents

Contents

Tables

Figures

Attachments

Attachment A—*Departmental Manual* 301, *Public Participation in Decisionmaking*

Attachment B—*Reclamation Manual* Policy and Directives and Standards
—   Public Involvement (CMP PO-03 and CM- 04)
—   Social Assessment
—   E-mail as Official Records

Attachment C—The Public Meeting Survival Guide

Attachment D—Summary of Strengths and Weaknesses of Needs Assessment Techniques
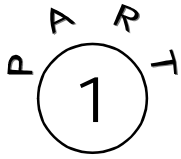
Manager and Staff Summary of Public Involvement

Public involvement (PI) is an integral part of the way Reclamation does business. Reclamation uses public input and follows an open, fair, and honest decisionmaking process to fulfill its mission. Three basic reasons for actively involving people in our decision processes are:

> **Every Government action is to enhance the quality of life of its citizens.**
> **Hans Bleiker**
> *Citizen Participation*

- **To meet needs.**—Reclamation is here to serve the American public. To succeed and to fulfill our mission, we must work with the people affected by our actions. We must interact with a wide range of publics to know their interests. By working with Reclamation's customers, stakeholders, and other interested and affected people, we can achieve mutual objectives among participants. This is the only way our projects will be successful.

- **To get things done.**—Reclamation cannot solve problems alone. We need to work with many partners and publics. To get support, we must develop consent[1] among participants with widely divergent and competing interests. Without this support, our programs and projects will neither be funded nor implemented.

- **To comply with the law.**—Various laws and regulations that govern Reclamation's activities are based on the assumption that participation by affected publics in the decision process is not only a good business practice, but is also the most appropriate course of action for a democratic government. These mandatory instructions include:

> **Reclamation managers at all levels are responsible for obtaining and considering public input in decisions.**

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[1] Note that building consent (developing enough agreement so that participants will not stop your process) is a more realistic goal than building consensus (developing a wide, universal level of approval and support). See discussions on consent in the *Decision Process Guide* <http://www.usbr.gov/guide> and in Hans Bleiker's *Citizen Participation*.

— National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969

— *Departmental Manual* 301, *Public Participation in Decisionmaking* (in attachment A)

— *Reclamation Manual* CMP *Public Involvement Policy* (CMP P0-03 and Directives CMP-04 in attachment B)

The *Reclamation Manual*'s policy and directives on public involvement define the purpose, objective, and scope of Reclamation's public involvement efforts; establish responsibility and accountability for public involvement; and set forth systematic processes. We suggest that all decisionmakers, managers, and staff working with public involvement read the policy and directives.

To fulfill the needs and requirements for public involvement, resources must be planned and committed. These resources, including time, staff, and money, need to be planned into our programs so we can incorporate public involvement proactively and avoid reacting to public and political "surprises."

This discretionary guidance suggests approaches to successfully solve resource management problems by consciously considering the people we serve.

Purpose of This Public Involvement Manual

This discretionary manual on public involvement is based on the legal and regulatory requirements and provides practical guidance to fulfill the letter and spirit of these requirements.

The manual's overall purpose is to assist Reclamation employees, stakeholders, contractors, and others to work together in effective decision processes. The manual is designed to be used in conjunction with the *Reclamation Manual* policy and directives on public involvement and the resources referenced in Part 3. We strongly recommend that you seek out experienced practitioners for advice.

What Public Involvement Is

Public involvement is a planned, flexible, and open way for affected publics to find out about and participate in Reclamation decision processes. It centers around effective, open exchange and communication among stakeholders, partners, agencies, organizations, and all the various publics who are either affected or concerned. This is a consultative process—we provide information to the publics, team members, managers, and decisionmakers, and we get information from them. Enough communication takes place so that all parties can reach informed conclusions and implement positive solutions.

To be effective, public involvement must operate within a larger Reclamation program or project, not in isolation with independent goals.

Because public involvement means inviting publics to participate in the solution, it differs from public relations, information, or education. However, these functions are related and work together. Public involvement uses public education and information to elevate the affected publics' understanding of technical aspects. These efforts are not to impart a thorough knowledge of a discipline, but rather to ensure that participants and decisionmakers have enough background to understand the tradeoffs and make informed choices. The level of detail provided should be commensurate with the needs and interests of the affected publics. (For example, people need to understand how hydrologic water budgets were used, their results, and their accuracy. However, people do not need to become hydrologists and learn all the technical details.)

Establishing rapport and credibility gets more done in the long term.

Public involvement is inextricably linked within the decision process. To do effective public involvement, we must first understand the decision process. It is essential to define what the decision process will be—and it is almost always different in each program or project. Decision analysis provides ways to describe how the process works. (See the *Decision Process Guide* for decisionmaking and decisionmakers.)

Everything we do is based on the purpose and need for the project.

Public involvement practitioners need to consider a program's purpose, needs, and goals to determine what activities will most effectively:

• Get information to affected and interested publics

• Encourage input from these publics

• Identify the publics' issues and concerns as well as potential effects of the program.

Who Are the Publics?

We must vigorously communicate our actions so we don't miss someone who should or needs to be involved.

"Publics" include everyone out there. While you can't reach every person in the world (and not everyone is interested), you must make an effort to involve people who:

• Might be (or who believe they might be) impacted by an action (e.g., streamflow changes may affect white-water boaters, fishermen, industrial workers, and urban dwellers). Consider:

   ✔ Location (e.g., people who live near or around the project or in the watershed)

   ✔ Economics (e.g., people who could gain or lose economically)

   ✔ Water use (e.g., people who use the resources for recreation, livelihoods, or education)

• Are interested in the resources (e.g., someone who values free-flowing rivers, family farming, or pristine air). These people may not live in the area. Consider:

   ✔ Wilderness values (e.g., recreation areas, free-flowing rivers)

   ✔ Animal values (e.g., endangered species)

   ✔ Historic values (e.g., historic sites and structures)

✔ Social values (e.g., family farming, ethnic communities)

✔ Religious values (e.g., Native American sacred sites)

Publics can be individuals, groups, communities, organizations, tribal governments, other governmental entities, etc. The above publics are not the only participants in the decision process. Other participants include those who:

• Are required to be involved in a decision (by jurisdiction or technical expertise)

• Advise and influence the decision

• Facilitate the decision process

What Public Involvement Does

Public involvement tailors information to inform, rather than to sell a proposal.

Public involvement identifies the people affected by and involved in the decision process. Public involvement efforts use communication and participation to:

• Establish long-term relationships to solve problems beyond the immediate program

• Help us serve our customers

• Enhance our effectiveness in knowing what is important

• Promote balanced decisionmaking by considering all groups and issues

• Ultimately reduce program costs by avoiding wasted effort

• Minimize litigation and disputes through knowledgeable, informal negotiation

- Build credibility and understanding of our actions

- Increase success and consent through partner and stakeholder involvement

Public involvement centers on direct contact with the publics related to a specific Reclamation program or project. Ideally, this process starts when Reclamation first considers a project and continues throughout the project. If the public involvement effort starts after initial analyses and planning, input (e.g., scoping in the NEPA process) must begin as soon as possible. Much of the initial work can be accomplished before starting the formal contacts with the public. This is done through informal discussions with partners and stakeholders as well as interviews with internal staff who may have been working in the area.

The information required from a formal NEPA scoping process is a good example of the preliminary input needed from all affected and interested publics and stakeholders (e.g., irrigators, environmental groups, local communities). Enough information must be presented to the public to describe in general terms the program or project being considered. Be sure to show how your program fits within the larger scale (e.g., watershed, river basin, or ecosystem) of related actions and effects. Gather input with a variety of techniques (e.g., meetings, workshops, open houses) and analyze the input to identify various groups and their issues and concerns. Results are usually documented in a scoping report as input to both:

- The action plan (the overall plan of study)

- The PI plan (the detailed plan of how public involvement activities will be conducted and how they will fit within the action plan)

The information gathered in the initial scoping phase forms the foundation for the PI plan,[2] which, in turn, is the first step in preparing the action plan. The PI plan identifies key phases for activities and specific techniques to foster an exchange of information with both internal and external participants.

The approach and tasks must be tailored to the specific project or program and the context in which the team will be working. To establish rapport and make contact with area residents and stakeholders, carefully select a range of techniques applicable to the area and context. In some instances, specific forms of consultation are required (e.g., government-to-government relationships with Native American tribes relating to Indian Trust Assets, or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service coordination relating to endangered species).

Tailoring the PI plan to the needs and goals of the larger program maintains internal consistency. The PI plan, while flexible, will designate responsibility for specific tasks among partners in the project or program. This plan helps avoid confusion as it identifies who will do what when. If the larger program is modified, the PI activities must be altered to accommodate the changes.

Commitment to carry out these tasks is vital for the ultimate success of the project or program.

As tasks are accomplished, data will be analyzed and the resulting information used in the decision. Actions must be documented as a record of a fair, open, and rational decision process. Include this documentation in the final report (e.g., the consultation and coordination chapter in an environmental impact statement).

People want a fair decision process. Making it open and visible is the best way to achieve this.

The Bottom Line

Public involvement provides the way to tune our efforts to the needs and goals of the people we serve. A well-thought-out approach to working with publics is needed in everything Reclamation does.

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[2] See Part 2, *Planning—How to Write and Use a PI Plan*.

We cannot abdicate the responsibility for public involvement.

Further, it is required. Reclamation retains responsibility for the adequacy of the public involvement process—whether or not public involvement activities are delegated to another partner or consultant.

Ensure that statements of work and plans for public involvement are written and overseen by an experienced public involvement practitioner.

Public involvement is more than good business—it is essential to accomplish our mission. Committing to effective public involvement:

- Enhances coordination
- Builds consent
- Facilitates communication

In short, it creates a community capable of solving not only the immediate issues in the program, but also other critical issues facing us.
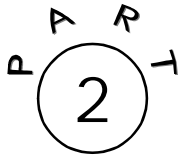
Guidance for the Practitioner

Purpose—Why Do Public Involvement?

Today, government programs are highly scrutinized. Anyone can stop your process through conflicts, delays, congressional inquiries, court orders, etc. To build and maintain successful solutions, Reclamation must have the consent of the people affected. People must agree that an action will sufficiently benefit the affected people, and the Nation as a whole, to allow Reclamation to take action. A public involvement practitioner needs to coordinate between the various interests and ensure their input is used in the decision process.

This section can help you develop a personal "mission" statement to determine why your job matters.

Reclamation manages water resources for the economic and environmental benefit of the American public. The American public comprises a wide variety of interests, groups, and people who are affected by our actions in different ways. These groups do not agree on what should be done.

We must work with the people we serve to meet their needs.

Public involvement practitioners establish rapport and work with diverse affected publics to serve as the crucial bridge between Reclamation's decisionmakers, teams, and publics.

The public involvement process:

- Identifies the affected and interested publics
- Informs these publics
- Obtains input
- Analyzes comments
- Provides information from the publics to the team and decisionmakers
- Tells the publics how their input is being used

This process must be reasonable, sensible, and responsible in the context of the particular project or program.

Many public involvement programs and manuals recognize the need for input by the publics being served and the need to establish procedures for listening to various publics. However, we must go to the next step to ensure the affected publics participate meaningfully in our decision processes. The publics' efforts are crucial for successful processes and solutions.

Public involvement practitioners do not win popularity contests.

This is not to say that Reclamation relinquishes decisionmaking. While we recognize how our decisions affect various publics, Reclamation is ultimately responsible for making the decisions under its authority and mission. It is not Reclamation's role to please everyone or any particular public.

Public involvement's role is to:

• Enhance the potential for the overall project or program to succeed

• Develop public understanding and knowledge so publics can comment

• Identify and assist in resolving conflicts

• Provide input from publics to team leaders, members, and decisionmakers for consideration in the decision process

Reducing the benefits to dollars and cents helps put the value of the public involvement program into perspective.

Public involvement programs save time and money over the long run. Consider the monetary costs of NOT doing public involvement by asking: What would happen if the project were delayed and stopped? Public involvement can provide the communication and build the consent needed to help ensure the project goes ahead and solves the real problems. You may want to point out other intangible benefits such as:

• Improved working relationships to help other projects in the area

• Better communication to learn about other projects and actions that may affect your project and your analysis of cumulative effects

• Better understanding of the purpose and needs, which leads to a more effective solution

Roles—Who Does What

Responsibilities

This section explains what the practitioner does and how these actions fit in the overall program.

The *Reclamation Manual* (CMP-04-01 Section 5) provides a basic guide to roles and responsibilities for Reclamation's public involvement. Ask yourself: Who is doing what? When? What do I need to do or communicate?

(Quote from Reclamation Manual, Public Involvement Directives, CMP-04-01 Section 5)

A. Within the purview of their work, all Reclamation employees are responsible for public involvement when they interact with any publics (including other Federal, state, tribal, and local governments, other outside organizations, and individuals). Program- and project-specific enabling legislation and authorities for Reclamation activities carry with them the authority for appropriate public involvement activities.

B. Managers, team leaders, and decision makers will, as appropriate, consider and incorporate public involvement early in decisionmaking processes for Reclamation actions. Managers will also be responsible for keeping team leaders

and others informed about their public discussions and negotiations so that public participation programs may be based on complete and current information and provide a consistent message to the public. As decision-makers, managers will ensure that public concerns are considered in their decisions. Team leaders and program managers will be directly responsible for considering this input in their activities.

C. Practitioners are specialists within the multidisciplinary team who provide unique knowledge, expertise, and skills in identifying publics and issues, facilitating, and communicating. They will be responsible for carrying out public involvement, including keeping abreast of the state-of-the-art approaches and tools, planning, executing, documenting, and keeping the publics and decision makers informed.

D. Team members, analysts, and staff will incorporate public involvement into their Reclamation activities. Work and program responsibility assignments will also carry the responsibility for ensuring that public input is considered and recorded. Contacts with individuals and groups in areas of expertise are considered public involvement activities.

Information flows

On small projects and programs, the team leader may carry out public involvement activities; however, it is usually best to assign an individual with special expertise and training to fulfill this function or to provide guidance or assistance.

Roles and actions further depend on the team. Remember to plan for internal coordination. The team provides information, analysis, and reports, while the team leader and decisionmakers provide the direction, tone, and focus. To provide useful information to the team and decisionmakers, practitioners need information from:

- **Managers** about political realities, negotiations, partnerships, agreements, and decisions already made in this and other related projects and programs.

- **Team leaders** about the overall context of actions, functions, and the action plan for the program to ascertain how to work with them and within the larger project or program.

- **Other team members** about how public concerns may be affected within their area of expertise (e.g., technical causes of a problem, interactions among resources, potential impacts from alternatives). If they are working directly with publics (e.g., a biologist with environmental groups, a hydrologist with irrigation districts), they need to find out about those groups' concerns. Team members can also let you know if many people have asked them questions. This information is helpful for anyone planning public involvement activities.

  Ask team members to jot down specific concerns or ideas (e.g., there are lots of kids on logging roads on weekends, so please avoid running trucks on Saturday and Sunday) so the team can use the information. Keep these jottings as part of the record.

> **As a public involvement practitioner, you are in a position to encourage people to talk to each other and to help ensure they have the right information. Coordination is essential.**

Team members play a vital role in public involvement and need information from you for their counterparts and constituencies. For example:

- **Managers** need to inform political constituents (Congress, political interest groups, etc.).

- **Team leaders** need to inform managers and sometimes politicians and publics.

- **Team members** communicate directly with technical counterparts and publics (e.g., biological opinions, recreation needs).

Public involvement practitioners' general roles

Be upfront. Talk to anyone, any time.

Good public involvement helps facilitate partnerships and relationships to effectively work not only on the current, specific issue, but on other related and future issues within the problemshed.[1]

Often, publics, team members, and managers view public involvement as working with the media only. While working with the media is a part of the job, practitioners work with a wide variety of groups to promote high levels of communication, understanding, and support for workable solutions.

The practitioner's participation is, to a large extent, determined by the project or program and team functions. While you must take some initiative, you cannot act alone. A public involvement practitioner's role on a team differs from that of other technical practitioners, as the following functions show.

Understand diverse communities

You will interact with unique, varied groups and communities (e.g., minority communities, Native American tribes, other government agencies, and water user and environmental groups). See *"Tailoring the Program—How to Set Up a Specific Public Involvement Program"* for more about diverse communities.

Advice: Do not rely on stereotypes, but talk with each community separately. A mining community may actually see themselves as primarily farmers, placing more importance on their small plots rather than their major source of income. Let communities tell you what is important.

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[1] A problemshed is the overall context and content of the problem (somewhat similar to a watershed).

Serve as the bridge

You are the go-between for diverse publics and technical team members. Practitioners ensure that all perspectives are considered and communication is effective among all parties. Maintain a balanced perspective between internal and external views. Often, this means bearing news others do not want to hear, playing the "devil's advocate," and talking with the program opponents. It is important to establish your place within the team and not become isolated.

Practitioners are sometimes tempted to yell, "Don't shoot the messenger!"

Advice: Do not become the pawn of a single group, constituency, project sponsor, or the party line. Ensure that everyone hears all the other viewpoints.

Translate information

The job of a public involvement practitioner is to provide information to decisionmakers, team members, and management in relevant terms useful to compare alternatives and make decisions. Much of this information may seem like common knowledge to some participants—yet may be foreign to others in the process.

Frequently, you will be translating ideas to help Washington-based decisionmakers understand values held by local communities and subcultures. At the same time, you need to help local publics understand political realities.

Likewise, practitioners ensure technical information is translated in terms relevant to the people affected. For example, if the toxicologist reports dangers from heavy metals from a mercury mine, the practitioner works with the toxicologist to ensure that these risks are put into context. This way, people who may not be aware that they've been at risk see how the program affects them—or people may appreciate the relative size of the risk. Risk communication compares statistics (e.g., there is a better chance of getting struck by lightning than winning the lottery) .

Practitioners translate among cultures and subcultures within program areas to foster a common understanding. For example, groups may value wildlife for various reasons (e.g., the spiritual value of animals, the dollar value of hunting, and the biological value of endangered species habitat), but all of these values are valid. The practitioner frequently explains how the same term may mean different things, depending on divergent perspectives.

Advice: Focus on the purpose and audience. Ask: Who needs what information and how they will absorb it? How can that information be conveyed in the context of their culture and values?

Find paths

Sometimes people can deal with an individual more readily than a faceless bureaucracy. Your role may be to personally establish rapport. Often, this must be done where there have been past disagreements. For example, federal agencies may have been involved in conflict or litigation with state or local governments, and you may be asked to regain access and cooperation before your program can proceed.

While on the payroll of the agency, we have an obligation to the public to ensure they are involved and heard—sometimes in disagreement with individuals within the agency. This becomes very important since the overall success of public involvement may hinge on how people feel they were treated in the process, regardless of whether they win or lose on their issues.

Advice: Work on a one-to-one level. Listen. Innovate to find communication channels—especially with informal leaders.

Advise decisionmakers and team leaders

Advise decisionmakers and team leaders of the publics' concerns. Although the decisionmakers will make the final decision, you need to remind them that a variety of viewpoints have validity. For example, the Highway Department may not be asking for a new lane simply because they want a wider highway and you have construction funds. Data may show that without the lane, construction traffic will cause gridlock and safety hazards at the site.

> **If public involvement comes in late in the decision process, describe where you are in the decision process and what has happened so far.**

Advice: Do not dismiss concerns merely because they are "political." Continuous interactive communication will open up the "black box" of political games and help prevent power plays based on misunderstandings and second guesses. (See "Work with Politics" in *"Mindset—How to Approach Public Involvement,"* page 2-24.)

Facilitate

Facilitators work like oil between steel gears (the tricky part is not getting ground up between the gears). They resolve conflicts by helping groups with different interests work together. Even groups that appear to be in competition can agree on common goals. For example, irrigators and environmental groups can find solutions to conserve water for drought conditions **and** instream flows.

Advice: Look for common ground in sharing resources. Find ways to get to the same underlying goals without trampling beliefs, values, or needs. (See "Analyze Perceptions" in *"Mindset—How to Approach Public Involvement,"* for a practical model of belief systems, page 2-14.)

Help keep the team process going

Concentrate on what can go forward, rather than what is mired in conflict or lawsuits. You will frequently assist the team leader in internal team and external partnership processes, including:

- Analyzing the process to determine what information and activities are needed

- Briefing other team members and participants on the status and progress of the process

- Tracking what is done with public input

> **Advice:** Use alternative dispute resolution processes (See Reclamation's *Conflict Management Handbook*) to reach as many agreements as possible. If something is in litigation, work with solicitors closely to determine what is held up and what can proceed. Proceeding on as much as possible enhances your credibility and shows Reclamation's level of commitment.

How to be a public involvement practitioner

Knowledge, skills, and abilities

Social scientists approach problems with a human perspective. They determine "how it functions"—not "why it isn't working according to a standard, plan, or specification."

Public involvement practitioners come from many different backgrounds. A degree in the social sciences (e.g., sociology, psychology, economics) helps one understand communities and potential impacts. This academic training also provides the analytical background needed to process the information given. Experience in government decision processes, journalism, socioeconomic analyses, computer decision modeling, etc., is also very helpful. You must also be able to:

- **Communicate** effectively in diverse arenas (technical, political, and cultural). This includes receiving information (verbal and nonverbal) and presenting information (written and verbal).[2]

- **Work with people.**—People operate differently. Some team members and publics rely on analysis; others on feelings. Some ponder actions; others act quickly. You need a working knowledge of personality types and the ability to work with varying individuals, communities, and cultures.

- **Think on your feet.**—Facilitation, decision process analysis, and communication require constantly evaluating and modifying presentations.

Think fast. Act slow.

Basic things to keep in mind

If people consistently adhered to predictable patterns, then public involvement would be simple and straightforward. However, the complex interactions of values, needs, emotions, and information change constantly. Be aware of your:

- **Professional integrity**.—Sincerity is almost impossible to fake. If you don't have it, find another line of work. Public involvement professionals must go beyond a nine-to-five attitude. It takes personal time and effort to attend meetings, understand issues, and establish rapport.

- **Adaptive approach**.—Tailor your approach to the situation. Following formulae or cookbooks will not work—every situation is unique. Programs and actions vary with:

  — People
  — The way they interact
  — Their communities

There are many ways to get to the same end goal. The actions taken in a public involvement program depend on what individual practitioners bring to the job.

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[2] There may be other requirements (e.g., speaking Spanish).

— Their previous experiences (e.g., boom-and-bust cycles, floods)
— Relationships (e.g., feuds, family, partnerships)
— Places to communicate (e.g., church gatherings, town meetings)

However, you can identify underlying trends and patterns.

- **Process analysis**.—The process resembles a meandering brook more than a concrete canal. You must be conscious of the process as it is happening, organize comments and ideas into the appropriate stages and steps, and explain what is going on to team leaders, team members, and other participants.

Effective public involvement practitioners

If an organization or a person lacks credibility, people will not support the program. Like old-fashioned virtue, credibility is hard to maintain and easy to lose. However, effective public involvement practitioners can help ensure the programs' and processes' credibility by:

- **Maintaining objectivity.**—Allow people and groups to be what they are. Don't try to change them or assume that they are something they are not. You must be aware of the concerns of all groups, rather than championing any single issue or group.

- **Avoiding assumptions.**—Assuming people will react in a certain way provides a dangerous sense of security. Frequent reality checks with publics will help you keep from slipping into placid, false views.

Public involvement doesn't solve everything.

- **Developing patience.**—Things will go wrong. Conflicts, delays, and political reactions require patience and tact to avoid escalating the problem and to build trust and credibility. You don't want to react to everything as a crisis. Staying calm provides an atmosphere of reason to focus on solving problems.

Mindset—How to Approach Public Involvement

The *Reclamation Manual* policy (CMP-04) contains Reclamation's public involvement philosophy. To comply, public involvement practitioners must develop a world view or mindset that focuses on multidirectional communication and solving problems through consent.

Working with a dynamic context is one of the keys to successful public involvement. Practitioners need to understand the program's area, circumstances, and situation. Adopting a one-size-fits-all approach is suicide. Check assumptions with reality and adapt.

Practitioners develop, hone, and use professional judgment to continually analyze the situation and make adjustments. Try to be a dispassionate observer—both of Reclamation's decision process and of the participants. This viewpoint provides the necessary distance to determine where the public involvement program is going, how public involvement relates to the overall program, and what needs to be done for a successful program.

Develop and adapt an overall approach

Using your analysis of the particular situation and the mindset of a fair, open, and honest process, hammer out a general approach to each particular public involvement program. Do this at the beginning of the program and work with the team leader and key publics. Get the approach approved by the decisionmakers. The general approach forms a basis for the ground rules of the process. (See "The Foundation" in the *Decision Process Guide*.)

This general approach also provides the rationale and tone for future public involvement decisions throughout the program. A PI plan will document and map not only this general approach, but specific actions. (See "*Planning—How to Write and Use a PI Plan,*" page 2-49, for recommendations on developing public involvement programs.) The 1980 *Public Involvement Manual*, Chapter 7, "Designing a Public

This section provides an overall philosophy and approach to public involvement planning, programs, and actions. The mindset provided is practical, not theoretical.

Dynamic changes are the rule—not the exception. You may need to change quickly in the middle of a meeting or adapt gradually over years.

A public involvement program is a coordinated series of actions to exchange information throughout the process.

Involvement Program," provides general principles, thought processes, and advice on integrating the program within the larger decisionmaking process.

Create an overall strategy for your particular program. What issues are likely to occur? Who would be involved? A "basic policy" ahead of time can help you in the midst of a sudden crisis and minimize unnecessary tangents. You can focus on creating a fair, open process that melds with the overall program to meet the purpose and needs.

Analyze perceptions

Public involvement practitioners also analyze the different perspectives of groups throughout the process.[3] Needs, values, and beliefs drive people's emotions, thought processes, and actions. Public involvement practitioners uncover these world views to:

- Understand how people perceive impacts
- Predict expectations, priorities, and actions
- Understand how groups interact
- Build consent without sacrificing beliefs or needs
- Coordinate actions

For example, a rancher needs water to irrigate a pasture to feed her cattle. She believes that the cattle are vital to the economic strength of the Nation. Thus, she values water and the cattle highly. This is not just another job, it is a calling. She and other ranchers actively work to ensure that agricultural water supplies are an issue. They perceive threats and negative motives (The Feds are just out to get our water . . .). Actions (e.g., a meeting, survey, or proposal) feed this perception, which then strengthens the urgency of the need for water. The more values are threatened, the stronger they become. This feedback loop then colors other actions.

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[3] See the 1980 *Public Involvement Manual*, chapter 5, for a discussion of various publics. Chapter 6 covers publics, level of interest, and participation. See the *Decision Process* website (http://www.usbr.gov/guide/particip.htm) for a discussion of levels of participation and awareness.

By the same token, an environmentalist needs anadromous fish to survive in a particular river reach to ensure that species are not destroyed. He believes that a diverse range of species and untouched wilderness is vital to the survival of natural resources, beauty, etc., for the Nation. Thus, he values water and instream flows highly. This is not just another cause, it is a calling. He and other environmentalists work actively to ensure that instream flows are an issue. They perceive threats and negative motives (This used to be a vibrant stream, and now people are just destroying it . . .). Actions (e.g., a meeting, proposal, policy change, or title transfer) feed this perception, which then strengthens the urgency of the need for water. This feedback loop interacts with other perceptions and influences other actions.

These examples are, of course, too simple. The rancher also values wildlife; the environmentalist also values having a job. Further, other programs and actions come into play. Cattle or fish may be threatened by disease, urban growth, etc., which may be only tangentially related to your program. The public involvement practitioner uses professional judgment to determine participant needs and values to build a foundation for consent.

Briefly, you can diagram a theoretical construct[4] of the relationships between actions and input and a person's belief system (figure 1).
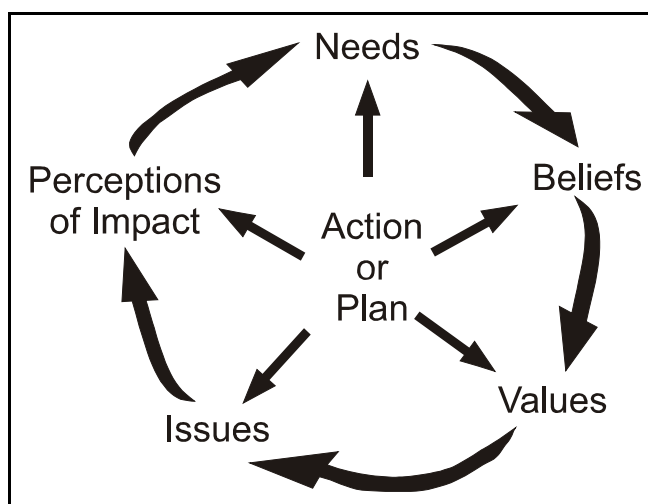
Figure 1.—Our actions and input depend on our beliefs.

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[4] Please note that this is a practical paradigm—not an academic treatise.

Needs for groups and individuals (as explained by Maslow[5] and others) often seem so self-evident that people seldom say anything about them. People use their experiences and considerations of fairness (what ought to happen, how things ought to be done) to form belief systems about how needs are met. These beliefs, in turn, form the basis for values. These needs, beliefs, and values lie under the surface. If they are spoken of at all, it is in the form of: "Everyone KNOWS that this is important."

Rather, people will speak of issues or concerns. These issues will be viewed within the context of your program or program. (How does what you are doing affect my concern?) Groups and individuals perceive impacts from alternatives and act on these perceptions to influence or provide input into the decision process.

The difficulty with this model is that it reflects reality and, thus, is not a one-time, linear progression. External input, resulting from actions within the program or external actions, changes needs, which affect beliefs, values, issues, etc. For example, an advertisement or editorial from a group opposing the program or a proposal for a new shopping mall may change the context of your water program. Far more importantly, the feedback loop of human experience continually modifies the dynamics of each element as people see the results of their actions. These feedback loops may even extend back to the formation of beliefs (e.g., if we line the canals, then the district doesn't need so much water for cattle; if we provide better habitat or better temperature control, we don't need so many instream flows for green-backed trout). Thus, enlightened officials can act to change beliefs about how and what role the federal government plays to meet needs.

This model will help provide a way to understand human dynamics so we can always focus on building consent to solve real-life problems, concerns, and issues. Understanding the needs and beliefs which underlie a statement of issues can help point the way to compromises (e.g., the

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[5] Maslow's pyramid describes people's needs as ranging from subsistence (the most basic need) to self-actualization. (See Maslow, A., 1954. *Motivation and Personality*. Harper and Row, New York.)

stated issue may be water rights, the underlying need may be for an irrigated pasture, and a compromise may be reached through water banks, water conservation, etc.). Thus, a good statement of problems and needs goes farther in solving the problem than an extremely detailed plan of action. However, both will probably be necessary.

Analyze participation

You can't dictate how groups or people will participate in a decision process. They participate because something they value will benefit or be threatened. How much they participate depends on how aware they are of the situation and what can be done, how strongly it affects or might affect their values, and how much time and energy they have to spare after meeting their basic survival needs (e.g., work, children, family). People may devote more or less time as other events in their life allow. You need to understand the perspective of all groups and accept the validity of their perceptions.

Ask participants what's important. Pay attention to what they say and how they say it. Translate their words into relevant terms for your program. Do a reality check to ensure you've properly represented their views.

Assume that views are valid within the context presented.

A clear understanding of each participant's involvement is based on their perception of needs, impacts, and issues. The more people perceive that an action will impact them or that their values are at stake, the more they will participate. The more participation, the more expectations, potential for conflict, and the need for education rise. Likewise, the more threatened people feel, or the less time they have to work on an issue, the more likely they are to stop you with a lawsuit.

Table 2 shows several levels of concern and corresponding levels of awareness, expectations, and participation. Try to design public involvement programs to provide the most information and opportunities for involvement balanced with respect for people's time and resources.

Table 2.— Ascending relationships among concern, awareness, expectations, and participation			
Level of concern (perception of impact)	Awareness of process	Expectations	Participation
Personally threatened	Take time to search out information	Should have a voice in the process	Organize to ensure interests are not impacted
Potentially impacted	Listen, read summary	Open, fair process that pays attention to concerns	Actively involved (meetings, etc.) as long as process is fair
Not concerned; assume not impacted	Passive	Expect to be informed of impacts	Passive as long as there aren't any personal impacts

If groups or people do not feel that your process is fair and open or that it will meet their needs, they may act outside the process (e.g., get national or state legislation, sue through the courts, or sabotage) to gain an advantage for their cause. We must provide credible assurance that the process is indeed fair and open without being vulnerable to manipulation. Try to get everyone involved; do what you say you will do; and build trust and relationships early, throughout, and for the long term. Working together with groups to solve problems by paying attention to their concerns helps everyone avoid adversarial activities which cause conflict.

Reclamation programs are frequently conducted in already polarized situations where adversarial activities themselves have become the basis for conflict, and people have lost sight of the original problem. By focusing on the problem rather than tit-for-tat reprisals, you can facilitate resolving disputes. We also recommend using alternative dispute resolution techniques (see Reclamation's *Conflict Management Handbook*). However, you must be very careful not to become a party or an object of the dispute.

Perceptions are often based on emotional values and beliefs rather than technical analysis. It is much easier to rally around a quick soundbite or image than it is to understand a complex relationship based on scientific,

technical inquiries. Do what you can to promote overall, balanced views. Provide insight and perspectives from all participants and try to show the true complexities of the situation.

Set priorities within the program

Knowing where a program lies in the overall scheme of Reclamation's concerns, mission, and actions is essential. This priority will determine the availability of resources, drive the schedules, and influence the level of scrutiny and controversy.

The program's overall priority depends on:

• The Administration's and Reclamation's priorities (Are municipal or industrial needs stressed? Or are endangered species and watershed management more important here?)

• Tasks competing for funding and time (Which is more important and timely—water conservation or water reuse?)

• Level of public awareness and concern (How much media and other attention has the program received?)

• Scope of the program (Is this going to affect several watersheds? Or are you focusing on one small canal?)

Overall program priority

Determine which Reclamation programs have priority by communicating with decisionmakers, looking at budget allocations, and reading mission statements and call letters for future fiscal year budgets. Use professional judgment to estimate and keep track of the overall program's place.

As workloads and internal goals vary, priorities will also vary among team members, work groups, and supervisors. Work with your supervisor and

Not everything can be The ABSOLUTE Number One TOP priority—and get done:

One level-one priority will get done

Two level-one priorities may be a little late

Three level-one priorities or more may never get done until someone straightens out which goes first.

team leaders to determine which efforts require which level of priority and resource commitment. Timing and scheduling are paramount.

Make sure you articulate clearly what can and cannot be done. Examine the interrelationships among tasks.

Carefully state when and what types of supporting resources and expertise may be needed to stay on schedule. If team members or decisionmakers delay providing key information, make it clear why dependent tasks cannot be accomplished without that information. Work with the team leader to revise the schedule.

Public involvement priority

Further exercise judgment to figure out what is and is not important for public involvement within the scope of the larger program. This will determine where to put the public involvement effort and resources. Look at:

Potential impacts.—The more impacts, the greater the priority and potential conflict. This will influence the breadth, depth, and intensity of the public involvement effort.

Decisionmaker needs.—Focus on what the decisionmakers need to know and understand to make an effective, workable decision. This will streamline the public involvement program and effort to get the most important input. For example, knowing how water quality impacts the flowers in the State Capitol garden won't tell decisionmakers what they need to know for reservoir operations decisions.

Existing data.—Knowledge of previous efforts can help the team and participants focus on what more needs to be done. Summarize, rather than reinvent, making sure that the summary is relevant to the program.

Community needs.—Special community needs such as government-to-government consultation, minority media, and conflicts will take more effort in a public involvement program. Determine which needs have priority and what can be done. Coordinate with the team leader.

The importance of public involvement within the program needs to be clearly explained to and understood by the team leader and decisionmakers to ensure the resources are available. Explaining the rationale behind the priorities will help focus the efforts on addressing the program's purpose and need.[6]

Track and cope with other programs and priorities

While your program may seem to be the most important thing to you, it is not so important to many of the publics, agencies, participants, and other Reclamation personnel. You must make the effort to find out how your program fits in with participants' overall goals and values.

Public involvement is like juggling eggs over concrete—don't let anything fall.

Participants, groups, agencies, decisionmakers, and politicians have different missions, interests, and goals. Thus, widely differing priorities

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[6] The Bleiker Life Preserver (Institute for Participatory Management and Planning, 1995) provides an excellent outline for explaining rationales:
1. There is a serious problem.
2. We are the right ones to deal with it.
3. We recognize the consequences.
4. This is a fair, open way to handle it.

weave a complex, flying tapestry of goals, values, resource allocations, and actions. To get a good overall picture:

- **Communicate**.— What is most important to you? To your group? To the community? How does this action fit in?

- **Look at past and current actions**.—Where are groups spending their time, money, and energy? What are their end results?

You must keep track of "who's on first" and "what's on second." This can range from some scratched notes to a full-blown sociogram or table of groups and priorities, depending on the number of groups, other activities vying for their attention, and complexity of your program.

You must adapt your strategy to the situation (which may take time and ingenuity). You can cope with other priorities in many ways:

Reclamation cannot solve everything.

Consider quitting.—Sometimes, many groups in a community have pegged your program as a low priority because their goals and values are not being met or they have valid and rational reasons for believing that there is no significant problem or that you are not the right entity to deal with the problem. If this happens, spend time with groups and determine if it is valid and rational to continue. You may have to advise decisionmakers and managers on possible options for quitting:

- Redefine the problem and purpose.

- Find some other agency or organization who does have a role and work with that group.

- Pick up our marbles and go home.

Change priorities.—Groups or individuals may not understand the potential consequences of your action. The program or project may be too complex or impacts may be too far in the future or too subtle to take the time to grapple with now. (Finding time to go to the dentist is easy when you have an excruciating toothache; setting time aside for routine cleanings is hard.) You may be able to educate publics about the potential impacts and the consequences of not taking action now. Further, you might tie this to their priorities by specifying impacts. For example, if they are concerned about increasing their business sales, show how poor water quality could slow growth in the area.

Work within the participants' and Reclamation's priorities.—A low priority does not mean that you have to stop all work. Rather, work is fitted in on a catch-as-you-can basis between other, more important tasks. This means that you may need short, frequent, quick updates to explain the major features of the problem, actions taken, and proposed solutions. You will need to carefully plan the level of participation, type of input, and amount of consent that is absolutely necessary for the program to work. Work with the team leader to determine the necessary minimum level of input (What do we absolutely have to know about issues, concerns, and options?) and consent (Do we just need a reasonable assurance people are not concerned about this, or do we need active support to ensure that our organizational or physical solution will continue to work?).

Find others who can help.—Solving problems relies not only on tacit consent not to stop the program, but on active, ongoing community

Priorities change over time.

support. Investigate other groups whose priorities may be more in line with the program and who are interested, willing, and available. The publics may not come to you—seek them out. Knock on doors, follow up leads, and ask around. The team leader, manager, and public involvement practitioner work together to identify publics and partners.

The more participants and involvement, the more resources and funding are required. We can build support by recognizing other priorities and working within the larger contexts of Reclamation's and participants' actions.

Work with politics

Recognize political realities and power relationships as part of the public involvement and decision processes. These cannot be ignored, but they don't run the program. Work with decisionmakers to keep political leaders informed of what you are doing. The *Decision Process Guide* Overview explains how to deal with politics, agendas, and hidden agendas.

Be prepared for changes

Change is really the only constant in the decision process. You need periodic adjustments:

"There is many a slip twixt the cup and the lip."

- **Goals and Values.—**What potential changes might affect your program? What effect are educational efforts having on the values and belief systems? Are there changes in the program's original purpose, or any conflicts? How do these affect the goals?

- **Conditions.**—What outside parameters have changed? What has been done? What decisions have been made? Determine how these changes influence the public involvement activities (What new information do you need to get and to provide? How has this changed participation and expectations?). With the team leader, map out how you will address these changes and adjust the PI plan accordingly.

- **Communication.**—When you have a problem and see communication is not working, determine the causes and change the approach and techniques.

Contingency plans are often needed so you can be prepared for decisions and changes. For example, what will you do if the environmental assessment becomes an environmental impact statement? How will you handle go/no go decision points? What if a drought plays up the need for water supplies or uncovers cultural resources? What about flooding? Coordinate directly with the team leader.

Recognize overall constraints

This section explains some overall constraints you need to be aware of. If they apply to your specific action, you will need to explore them further. Seeking detailed training will help you and Reclamation comply with federal constraints that affect public involvement. Table 2 in the public involvement directives in the *Reclamation Manual* lists other laws that relate to public involvement. The laws site (http://www.usbr.gov/laws) lists most of the laws that affect Reclamation's actions.

Paperwork Reduction Act.—The Paperwork Reduction Act (updated in 1995) (5 CFR 1320) is designed to ensure that the American public is not overwhelmed with information requests from the government. The act defines a "collection of information" as asking for identical items of information from 10 or more persons. This definition includes forms, interviews, reports, surveys, questionnaires, regulations, or any similar document requiring the public to submit identical items of information. Before collecting this information from the public, you must have the approval of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). This takes at least 5 months. Reclamation's Information Collection Officer, Directives and Paperwork Management Group, D-7924, can help you determine if your activities need approval and help you get that approval**.**

Federal Advisory Committee Act.—The Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) of 1972 (Public Law [P.L.] 92-463) regulates the role of public advisory committees in government decision processes.[7] This law helps ensure that committees:

- Are properly established and authorized
- Provide advice that is relevant, objective, and open to the public
- Act promptly to complete their work
- Comply with reasonable cost controls and recordkeeping requirements

To find out how to establish a FACA committee, determine if your groups come under FACA, or ask about complying with the FACA, contact Reclamation's Directives and Paperwork Management Group, D-7924.

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[7] See the FACA Public Participation Meeting Place (http://policyworks.gov/ org/main/mc/linkit.htm) for more information on FACA.

Freedom of Information Act.—The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) (5 USC 552, P.L. 104-231) requires federal agencies to provide copies of most records to the public when requested. Records subject to these requests and the procedures for providing these records are explained in the law, the Department of the Interior's regulations, and Reclamation's procedures. Work with the FOIA Officer (D-7924, Property and Office Services) to handle requests. See http://www.usbr.gov/foia for Reclamation FOIA information and links to other sites.

Privacy Act.—Privacy Act (5 USC 552a, P.L. 93-5795) may restrict access to records which contain personal information (e.g., social security number, home address, and phone number). The Privacy Act may also apply to data gathered from individuals in surveys and interviews. Should you get inquiries about such records, refer them to your local Privacy Act Officer (D-7924, Property and Office Services).

Public involvement practitioners may keep lists of contact names or mailing lists. Be aware that these may be requested under FOIA, but Privacy Act restrictions may apply. The key is to protect individuals who request anonymity. When developing and maintaining lists, ask people if they want to be on the list, and, if so, are they willing to have their name or other information released. If not, keep a separate personal list of people who want to remain anonymous. The act also specifies requirements for Privacy Act data storage and security.

Decision Process—When to Do What

Public involvement process (from a practitioner's perspective)

This section explains in detail how to fit public involvement into the overall decision process.

Please note that public involvement is NOT a step-by-step, linear progression. It has an interactive, continual feedback loop with many groups. Activities are simultaneous and interdependent (e.g., getting information, building consent, reporting input). This is not a mystic black box—although it changes constantly. For example, a community may at first strongly oppose water metering as an invasion of privacy. A public involvement program to educate groups on the need for water conservation and the effectiveness of water metering in conserving water may change the attitudes and context. Groups may now focus on how to conserve water (including water metering as a component). Figure 2 demonstrates these relationships:
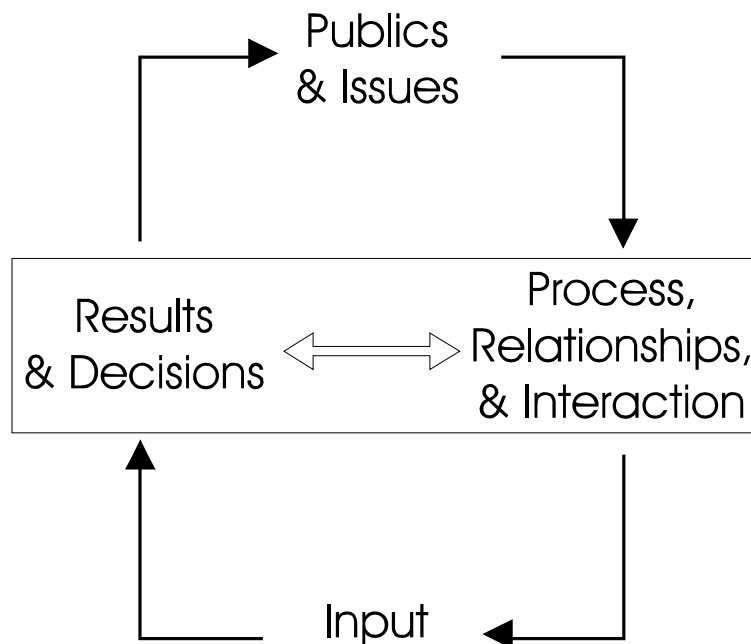
Figure 2.—Feedback loop for publics, processes, input, and results.

Public involvement and the decision process

The *Decision Process Guide* provides a paradigm for reaching decisions in the government. We recommend applying this process for decisions within public involvement.

Table 3 shows a blueprint of a public involvement process, with actions that tie directly to nonlinear steps described in the *Decision Process Guide*. This table briefly lists the goals for each step and provides a framework for gathering and disseminating information. We recommend reading the table while referring to the steps in the guidebook to provide a detailed view of public involvement actions and input within the decision process.

This process is not a straightforward, linear progression of communication. More than one step will be covered in any one discussion—and discussions with different groups will cover different steps. Changes will also require revisiting steps. For example, new players need to be informed of needs and actions. Issues and conditions may change. Interactions may be at different levels of intensity and effort at various stages of the program (e.g., initial scoping, reviews, construction, or operation).

This table is presented to stimulate thought and to show the complexity and interrelationships of public involvement.

It is not a "cookbook" or a checklist.

You need to keep track of participants' knowledge, expectations, and level of awareness of the process to lead groups to the next stage. A solid understanding of the decision process, the overall program process, and public involvement's role will provide the framework to gather and

Table 3.—Public involvement actions in the decision process

When (program steps)	Purpose/tasks	Questions to ask, actions to take	Information to provide	Who	Where/how
Foundation (initial scoping)	Determine background and setting	What is important to this community?	Decision authority and boundaries	Local office personnel who have worked in the area	Informal meetings in their office
	Identify issues, publics	What have been controversial community issues? How does this community compare with similar geographical, cultural, and political areas? What is different?	Same as above	Long term community residents	In their neutral setting away from interruptions
	Identify contacts	Who or what groups were involved in previous actions and how?	Same as above	Residents and office personnel	Casual setting
	Establish initial contact and credibility	Establish rapport.	Experiences on similar programs	Community leaders, residents, and office personnel	Casual, informal setting
		Who are knowledgeable people on issues related to this action?	Decision authority and boundaries	Community leaders	Informal setting
	Identify individual concerns	What is important to you about this community?	Same as above	All respondents	Informally in a neutral setting
1. Need	Establish credibility	Show you are interested in their concerns. Say, "I need you to help me understand what is important here."	Reclamation's previous actions in the area	All respondents	Discussions with individuals or groups of like-minded individuals
	Identify and clarify issues	What are the major issues and concerns among people here?	Reclamation's priorities and mission	Individuals who know the community (including local federal employees)	Formal and informal meetings
	Identify publics	What groups have been active in raising issues and finding solutions?	The decision boundaries	Same as above	Same as above
	Identify needs (problems)	Are there specific problems that need to be solved in the community?	Same as above	Same as above	Same as above
	Identify current thinking on solution	Has anyone suggested a solution to the problem(s)? How far along are they in resolving the problem(s)?	Same as above	Same as above	Same as above

When (program steps)	**Purpose/tasks**	**Questions to ask, actions to take**	**Information to provide**	**Who**	**Where/how**
2. Goals/ Objectives (purpose)	Establish boundaries of action	What can our study or authorization accomplish to meet the area and Nation's needs?	Decision authority and boundaries, decisionmaker objectives	Reclamation's team leader or management	At the initial briefing
	Focus discussion of issues	What and who will be affected by the problem and proposed solutions?	Same as above	Local leaders and knowledgeable individuals	After broadly explaining the proposed action
	Create visibility and acceptability	Does the proposed action meet the needs of the affected publics?	Same as above	Local work group	Clarify these needs as the team develops
	Focus on relevant needs	Which of the needs can the proposed solutions address?	Same as above	You and the team leader	Clarify these needs as the program develops
	Define federal goal and role	Are there larger goals outside of the community?	Same as above	Team	At the beginning of the action and at team meetings
3. Resources and Constraints	Find out what resources you can use to do the job	What is available? What are you willing to do?	Need and purpose of the program	Own agency partners, other agencies	Informal inquiry/formal commitments
	Discover constraints	What are the limits of our authority?	Same as above	Management	Formal correspondence
		Are there local (state) constraints or requirements (e.g., California Environmental Quality Act, water rights)?	Same as above	Partners, others working in the area, other federal, state, and local agencies	Early informal contact followed by formal communication
	Examine previous actions and agreements	Are there other programs, policies, agreements, or treaties affecting our actions?	Same as above	Team leaders, management, other agencies, tribal governments	Formal, documented inquiries

Table 3.—Public involvement actions in the decision process

Table 3.—Public involvement actions in the decision process					
When (program steps)	**Purpose/tasks**	**Questions to ask, actions to take**	**Information to provide**	**Who**	**Where/how**
4. Options	Determine expectations	What is anticipated from the program?	Program limitations, purposes, and resources	Concerned and involved groups	Formal and informal discussions
	Identify options already considered	Have there been proposals made in the past?	Sponsors and concerned citizens and groups	Other agencies and local staff	Same as above
	Generate as many options as possible	Are there options which need to be considered?	Not all options will be implemented	All interested groups	Informal discussions
	Discover option endorsement or rejection	Are there options which have support or opposition from groups or individuals?	Program purpose and limitations	Local staff, other agencies, group leaders	Informal meetings without interruptions
	Determine and learn from previous and ongoing public involvement effort's successes and failures	What contact have we (or other federal agencies) had in the area earlier?	How your program differs from previous efforts	Publics and agencies you are working with	Formal and informal contacts
	Find out strengths and weaknesses	Why were these efforts successful or limited?	Same as above	Same as above	Informal contacts
	What techniques are being used in the area by successful groups?	Is there a technique which has caused problems in the local area?	Limitations on your program, federal limitations on surveys, etc.	Same as above	Same as above
	Identify potential partners and help	Can we work through local groups?	How your program differs from previous efforts	Local groups and Reclamation staff	Informal meetings

Table 3.—Public involvement actions in the decision process					
When **(program steps)**	**Purpose/tasks**	**Questions to ask,** **actions to take**	**Information to provide**	**Who**	**Where/how**
5. Screening Criteria	Identify factors	What factors need to be considered?	Unique aspects and purpose of program	Sponsors, stakeholders, publics, and staff	Formal and informal meetings
	Determine criteria already applied that may influence evaluation	What were the criteria or factors that led to opposition or support of previous alternatives?	Same as above	Stakeholders, Reclamation staff, and managers (including direct and indirect decisonmakers)	Informal and formal meetings
	Identify constraints on local situation (e.g., California Environmental Quality Act, County land use plan, etc.)	What state or local regulations apply?	Purpose and limitations of program or project	State and local agencies, local Reclamation staff	Formal meetings
	Identify national or policy constraints on program (e.g., NEPA, Wild and Scenic Rivers, etc.)	What national, departmental, Reclamation, or other federal agency policies or regulations apply to the program?	Specific nature of program or projects	Program managers and technical staff of Reclamation and involved agencies	Same as above
	Identify funding constraints	What funds are available for specific activities?	Budget and planning information	Stakeholders, managers, all involved parties	Formal and informal meetings
	Determine if acceptability poses fatal flaws	Are there options which are not acceptable to stakeholders or decisionmakers?	Option descriptions	Stakeholders, technical specialists, and decisionmakers	Informal and formal meetings
	Clarify authority limitations	Who has the authority to move ahead or stop activities? What will be the result of eliminating an alternative that is the pet project of a given public, manager, or politician?	Project status and authorities	Stakeholders, managers, and involved agencies	Formal meetings

	When (program steps)	Purpose/tasks	Questions to ask, actions to take	Information to provide	Who	Where/how
6.	**Alternatives** (program or project)	Establish relationships among options	Are there compatible options? Are there conflicts among options?	Scope of program or project	Team members, technical specialists, and stakeholders	Formal and informal meetings
		Identify relationships among groups (e.g., jurisdictional disputes or agreements)	Are there group interactions which may require clarification or affect the relationships among options?	Reclamation's role in program	Stakeholders, management	Formal and informal meetings
		Identify actions by others which may affect combining options (e.g., power conservation or private development may eliminate need for power facility)	Are there alternatives to our program being implemented by others?	Reclamation's role in relationship to other actions	Stakeholders, management	Formal meetings
7.	**Evaluation**	Determine if preselection is a potential problem	Has an alternative been preselected or rejected by a stakeholder?	Fatal flaws of options from Step 5, Screening Criteria	Management, stakeholders	Informal meetings
		Find out if an option changes in acceptability if it is part of an alternative	In combination with other options, is there a change in the acceptability of an option?	Option analysis	Management, stakeholders, technical specialists	Informal meetings
		Determine weights and tradeoffs	What is most important to you? What is more important (e.g., cost or quality)?	Evaluation criteria selected by technical team, indicators, and analysis	Stakeholders, technical specialists, decisionmakers	Informal meetings
		Do an internal reality check to identify program and context changes	Has there been any change in the program or project?	Progress report on Reclamation's role	Management	Informal or formal meeting
		Benefits/costs	What is the most beneficial alternative to the people being served?	Evaluation of costs and benefits to stakeholder, publics	Technical team, management, stakeholders	Formal written input to technical document

Table 3.—Public involvement actions in the decision process

Table 3.—Public involvement actions in the decision process

When (program steps)	Purpose/tasks	Questions to ask, actions to take	Information to provide	Who	Where/how
8. Selection	Develop commitment to act on selection	Is management or the decisionmaker committed to selection?	Selection documentation	Managers and decisionmakers	Formal request for commitment
	Build on proactive trust and credibility	Publish decision	Selection announcement and rationale	All stakeholders and affected publics	Distribution to all affected publics and stakeholders
					Required and nonrequired media announcements
	Identify show stoppers	Are there any actions which will be taken by stakeholders which will impede or advance the program?	Proposed action	All stakeholders	Informal and formal discussions
9. Implementation	Identify commitment by stakeholders to take action necessary to implement action	What actions are stakeholders taking as part of their commitment?	Expected actions	All stakeholders	Formal and informal contacts with key decisionmakers
	Identify who is affected	Who is being affected by implementation of the program or project?	Program activities	All affected publics and stakeholders	Informal discussion on their turf or at implementation sites
	Determine if solution functions as intended	How is the program affecting people?	Program activities	Affected publics	Informal and formal program reviews
	Identify changes in participants' roles	Who is implementing the program?	Reclamation role	Stakeholders	Formal and informal program activity discussions held both onsite and offsite
10. Monitor and Adapt	Identify potential changes in service area population needs	What are the needs of the population being served? Is the program meeting those needs?	History of program as needed	Affected publics and stakeholders	Formal and informal customer service evaluations
					Formal and informal program result reports
	Identify potential changes needed in program	What changes in the program would improve service to customers?	Evaluation of potential changes	Same as above	Same as above
	Identify threshold for considering changes	Are the potential benefits worth the change?	Commitment to existing program	Same as above	Same as above
	Determine if program changes meet intended purpose	What changes have occurred in the program?	Original program	Managers, stakeholders, and affected publics	Same as above
	Determine if continuing program is justified	Is the program still fulfilling a worthwhile purpose?	Original program	Same as above	Same as above

disseminate information. Analyze this information and share it with managers, team leaders, and team members to:

- Keep the team, team leader, and participants focused on the process, the purpose, and meeting the program needs

- Update new participants and decisionmakers

- Document the process

You can use this table as a guide to reflect the types of information to give and get and the people and settings which are probably most appropriate. This can serve as a starting point for a contract, memorandum of understanding, or scope of work to reflect the information and support needed to solve problems. The list of tasks in each step can provide the framework needed for a detailed contract to spell out actions the contractor or responsible party will do—and what the results of those tasks will be. *Overseeing—What to Do When Someone Else is Doing the Work*, page 2-74, has more information on contracting and working with partners.

This section provides details on how to prioritize your actions and work effectively within a limited budget and timeframe.

Tailoring the Program—How to Set Up a Specific Public Involvement Program

Time, funding, and staff availability will ultimately drive what you can and can't do in a public involvement program. The more you understand the program, the community, and the expectations, the more you can work with team leaders and managers to prioritize actions. Less public involvement up front may mean more controversy and difficulties later on. Determine the scope of work by making these tradeoffs clear.

Techniques,[8] information, and actions in any given public involvement program depend on the community. Start with the mindset that affected publics are in the best position to interpret what is important in their lives and community.

The following subsections dovetail. As you talk with team managers and people in the area, communication strategies, past history, and levels of risk and trust emerge. It becomes obvious which groups are interested in what, and who is key. You can begin to see how the community will relate to the program and to establish a rapport needed to build credibility and future communication lines.

Determine your specific role

Talk to the team leader first to get an understanding of the program or project and expectations. You may need to inform the team leader about public involvement and your capabilities.

Other partners and participants who will be directly involved in public involvement activities will also need to establish their roles and responsibilities.

The public involvement practitioner plays many parts in a study—the role is never the same twice. To tailor your role to the team and program or project on a particular study:

- Ask yourself, "What can I do?"

- Ask the team leader, "What results do you want from the public involvement program?"

Roles work best when egos are left out. Focus on objective purposes and approaches.

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[8] Techniques are covered in Reclamation's 1980 *Public Involvement Manual*, chapters 18-22; the *Decision Process Guide Toolbox* (http://www.usbr.gov/guide/toolbox.htm); and other resources listed in Part 3, *Tools and Resources*.

- Determine, "What am I allowed to do?"

Use this information as a basis for reality checks with the team leader. It may be necessary for your supervisor to clarify your availability for the tasks required. This will ensure that you, your supervisor, and the team leader have the same understanding.

The public involvement practitioner's role in any program depends on several factors:

Team leader and manager expectations.—These decisionmakers determine your role (from arranging public hearings only to being involved in every phase of the program). They shape the team process to ensure that all the necessary analyses are done and team members work together to efficiently determine a workable solution. They orchestrate analyses (e.g., social, cultural, economic) and oversee the team's coordination with publics and technical counterparts.

Do not assume you know the answers or you may be playing the wrong tune.

However, your particular knowledge and experiences can provide valuable insights. If you feel an approach will not work to solve the problem, you can present other arguments. Carefully and logically show how a different approach will work to effectively fulfill the purpose of the overall project or program. If decisionmakers, managers, or team leaders still object to the suggested public involvement program, see if you can adapt their approaches to fulfill both public involvement and program objectives or work with them to devise a rational, workable approach.

The program and context.—The more complex a program, the more groups are involved, and the more coordination and communication is

needed. For example, an overall watershed basin plan will require working with many more groups than a decision to change the operation and maintenance on a valve. The number of potential participants (including affected people, those who could stop the action, potential partners, and technical experts) serves as one gauge of involvement.

Level of conflict.— The more potential for conflict, the more facilitation and communication are needed. The conflict level will also determine how you approach problems. If you have a polarized situation, for example, you must establish rapport with all sides and still maintain your "objectivity" and credibility.

Define products and results

Depending on the type of program and the relationship between the team leader and practitioner, defining the roles and expected products can range from an informal agreement to a formal statement of work signed as part of a contract or service agreement.

Based on the initial information about the program, a preliminary approach will be drafted or discussed as a reality check with the team leader. Often, within the Technical Service Center (TSC), this will take the form of a task-based estimate (TBE) describing the tasks required. Recognize that this initial estimate may require significant revision as the program or project action plan is developed. A PI plan is a key part of your public involvement program. Along with the service agreement, this will document tasks, resources, and schedules.

To the extent possible, you define the results of the public involvement program by suggesting:

- What tasks will be needed to get people involved and ensure communication

- What you can do for the program (facilitate, gather information, develop consent)

- What you will need to do the task (staff day estimates, documentation)

- Who will do what analyses

- How results will be communicated and displayed in reports

- Who will document the public involvement process

The level of detail depends on the stage of the program. Table 4 shows examples of stages and suggests the level of detail needed in a statement of work.

When done well, the public involvement process yields an understanding among publics, team members, and decisionmakers that is taken for granted ("common sense").

The statement of work centers around public involvement products and the nature of the program, publics, and context. Public involvement's ultimate product is an implementable alternative that will work to solve the problem and that people will support. The path to the solution is often intangible—if the public involvement practitioners do their job properly, the work is not noticed.

Public involvement products may be as tangible as reports or input to reports (e.g., a public involvement program, PI plan, scoping report), and tasks may be as visible as meetings (e.g., materials, notes, results). Tasks

Table 4.—Suggested levels of detail for statements of work		
Stage	Level of detail	Example
Cost estimate (bid for job)	Staff days required for tasks and expected accomplishments	Meetings with four key publics (Crystal River Valley Conservation Society, Settler's Creek Rafter Club, Goliath Quarry, Crystal River Water District) at scoping, alternative formulation, draft, and final stages. (Estimate the number of staff days based on travel, participation, and preparation time.)
Statement of work or work agreement	Detailed description of activities	Three meetings at scoping stages to determine issues Two meetings at alternative stage to refine alternatives A workshop to evaluate weighting factors Two formal hearings at the draft stage Responses to comments (Detail groups, dates, purpose of action, techniques, preparation, results)
PI plan	Meeting agenda and checklist	(See *Planning—How to Write and Use a PI Plan,* page 2-49, for examples.)

can vary from moving chairs and setting up meetings to helping define
the study and process. If tasks can be defined with a minimum of conflict
and delay, so much the better. However, most of your effort will be spent
on establishing rapport with publics and ensuring that their comments are
used in the decision process. This may not be obvious in the reports.

Public input during alternative formulation and evaluation results
in changes which shape implementable solutions. (See "Analyze
Perceptions" in *Mindset—How to Approach Public Involvement,*
page 2-14.)

The public doesn't support what it doesn't understand; it doesn't understand what it hasn't been involved in.

If input from the public is denied its proper role in formulating and
evaluating alternatives, it is highly unlikely that the solution will succeed.

No matter how carefully crafted a proposed action is (from a technical or politically correct standpoint), if it does not meet the publics' needs or they don't perceive having input into it, they will not support it.

Understand the community

You have to know the community to tailor a PI program, obtain input, determine impacts, and understand comments. Get the community background to understand who will be impacted and how. Use social analysis to find out about trends in the area and what groups are out there.

To understand the community, you must go out and get into the community. Look for community structure by determining:

The level of information you can use is inversely proportional to the number of communities and directly proportional to the severity of the perceived impact.

- **Interaction.**—How do people interact? Are there key leaders whom everyone else turns to? Is interaction formal or informal? How are groups formed? Who was involved in what previous actions?

- **Communication.**—How do groups communicate? Look at communication patterns: how information is exchanged. This is closely related to how groups within the community interact. Communication might be through announcements in a church, social gathering, or service group. However, interactions may be outside that context.

- **Decisionmaking processes.**—How do communities make official and unofficial decisions? What is an issue or controversy, and what is taken for granted? These are not always determined by dollars or

impacts. For example, a $30-million waste treatment plant may not be controversial; whereas a $5,000 sidewalk improvement may galvanize the town.

Advice: Be willing to listen to what groups have to say. It may have nothing to do with your program, but after you listen to them, then they may be willing to talk about your actions.

If people have had a bad experience with any federal agency, be prepared to listen to these grievances before discussing the specifics of your program. These may not be relevant to your program, and there won't be anything you can do about the past. Yet people need to know you understand their history.

To get a description of the community relevant to your project or program, determine:

Priorities and perceptions of impacts.—Allow people to tell you what is important in the area. Ask: What is important to you? What is important to other groups? How will this action affect the community? How will you and your group be affected?

Groups.—Each community encompasses a variety of overlapping groups (e.g., the Parent-Teacher Association, water users, the Spanish-speaking community, the deaf community, the local church). These groups will each have different agendas, issues, and concerns about your program (e.g., education, water, translations, access, or meeting conflicts with

Wednesday night services). Find out how the various groups relate to your project or program. Which groups do people identify with? How do they interact? What are their goals and priorities? Assumptions can be deadly, as each group has its own values, perceptions, and approaches to a situation.

Past history.—What are the past influences? How have things been decided? Ask about whatever past experience the community might have had that could be related to the program. Ask historical questions to understand the background and perspective (e.g., How did the flood of 1957 affect people? What about the drought of 1977-83?). The flood of 1860 may still influence decisions in one community, whereas another community may not be influenced even by a 1990 flood because they recently built a project to prevent its recurrence.

Risk and trust.—Find out the level of risk and trust operating in a situation. This is an outgrowth both of previous actions and of cultural attitudes toward Reclamation (or the federal government).

Unique factors.—Things in the geographical area, cultural context, political situation, or program setting that may point to potential issues, areas for misunderstanding, or incipient conflicts.

Census data/social analyses

Consider the nature, size, and diversity of the community. Use secondary data (e.g., census, local reports on growth) to understand changes in the community:

- Population growth for insights into how people view potential growth

- Shifts in employment sectors over time for insights into what groups and areas may be affected (e.g., increasing manufacturing and declining agriculture in an area with urban growth)

- Other social indicators (e.g., unique factors, attitudes, or cultures)

Gathering some crucial information can serve to provide discussion topics and insights into the character of the community.

Community issues

Issues vary in importance in each community. Find out what the community cares about and why. This will help determine how to communicate and approach concerns.

Translate general concerns into specifics for each community. For example, stating that agriculture is important in a rural community isn't enough. Go further. Specifically state that the community values farming enough to pay higher property taxes to support agriculture. This will help decisionmakers compare solutions that increase costs for irrigation or municipal water.

Dig into WHY something is an issue. Stating that everyone in a county drinks bottled water doesn't provide information for a decision. But further showing that people have called about the smell and color or that

more than 3,000 people a year are projected to have health problems caused by minerals in the water does pinpoint water quality issues and their relative importance.

Understand the program

You must understand the program well enough to explain it.

The nature of the program and the past history of related problems in the area directly affect how you will interact with local publics. Is the community polarized over whether or not there is a problem (e.g., selenium isn't an issue—my cattle need it)? Is there conflict over the action to be taken?

You need to understand your program's purpose and how your actions will impact people well enough to be able to communicate that to the community. If the program's purpose and need statement is well articulated and clearly understood, then your job will be much simpler. If you don't have a purpose and need statement, get the team leader and decisionmakers to form one in a usable, understandable manner for yourself, other team members, and participants.

The community can thGen answer how your program's goals correspond with their value structure, other actions, and their community goals.

The level of involvement depends on who and what the program will impact. For example, a change in irrigation water allocation law throughout the West will require a PI plan spanning 17 states and many different groups. Focus data gathering on the areas that will be impacted.

Devise a communication strategy

Every community has different grapevines: the corner post office, the high school basketball game, the quilters sewing circle, the Marble Springs Internet chat group, or the Wednesday Ladies Aid Bible study group. To find out the best way of communicating and reaching the most people effectively, talk with:

People who talk to people.—Knowledgeable individuals (e.g., shop-keepers, rural mail carriers, motel clerks, bankers, realtors, restaurant owners, barbers) will give you insights into the community ("Oh, you're talking to Edna Harris; she runs the paper and knows a lot." "Yeah, Mr. Davidson represents some folks around here and is well respected." "Why are you talking to Mr. Cole? He doesn't know anything." "Have you talked with the guys over in Jake Mateson's shop?").

People who lead.—These include people in key positions (e.g., ministers, mayors, heads of the Chamber of Commerce). The religious, political, and business leaders must keep current on how to reach their constituencies. Asking about previous decisions can help show where factions are and how they relate ("Yeah, people say I helped get the new growth plan in place, but mostly I made peace between the corner store that wanted a new highway and the school that wanted to keep it a park. . . ."). Such discussions can also pinpoint what relationships are important to the community (e.g., an old feud, a grudge against the federal government, land taken off state tax rolls) and other relevant contexts.

Advice: Ask the dumb, obvious questions to get a picture of what people take for granted: What is your major role in the community? What do people mean by "growth"? Look for subtle clues: Where do community leaders eat (e.g., a private club or an open restaurant)? Ask how people get information on proposed changes by local governments. Find out how groups hear about and get involved in local decision processes (e.g., land use planning, sanitation districts).

Use this information to determine how best to reach people (e.g., local radio talk shows, cable station programs, meetings at community centers). Plan out what information would be best disseminated where (e.g., paid ads in the daily newspaper may be best for meetings, presentations to service clubs may be best to describe the program, notices on the Internet may be best for frequently updated or complex information). Planning out the most effective way to get your message across and listen to people will help build understanding and support. Check back with people you have talked with to ensure your methods will work.

You will know that you've talked with enough people to understand the issues and identify publics when no one mentions new contacts, issues, concerns, or perspectives.

Planning—How to Write and Use a PI Plan

Once you know the program, community, communication structure, context, and setting, you can begin to tailor the PI plan to ensure effective participation. A PI plan helps the team, team leader, and decisionmaker understand:

- Where the public involvement program is going
- How it benefits the overall program
- What will be done next

This section discusses how to plan and update the public involvement program.

What a PI plan is

A PI plan is an evolving document that details:

- Publics
- Issues
- Program tasks and decision points
- Public involvement actions to take
- Information to gather
- Analyses to use
- Information to present
- Responsibility for carrying out tasks

If you don't know where you're going, you'll end up somewhere else.

The PI plan keys off the study. The program's major events determine the extent, timing, and tasks outlined in the PI plan. The PI plan is not a step-by-step "cookbook" for success. Rather, it mirrors the decision process and helps determine what actions are needed at what stage of problemsolving. A PI plan is flexible—it guides you through the continuous process of assessing communication and participation.

Develop these plans by consulting with appropriate federal, state, and local agencies, as well as interested and affected groups and individuals. Continue to test your assumptions and do reality checks. Are you dealing with the right people? Is there anyone new who should be involved?

Delays in the study will create a ripple effect through the public involvement process.

What has changed? In one case, a city assigned a person to talk with.
Two years later, the practitioner found out that this person did not know
the real players or the situation and could not act or help build consent.

Technical Service Center (TSC) Memoranda provide specific guidance
for TSC employees:

1. Acceptance and Accomplishment of Work in the TSC

2. Accountability and Quality Assurance for Products Through
    Signatory Authority and Peer Review

3. Development and Use of Service Agreements

Consult these memos for guidance on developing service agreements and
statements of work, as well as coordinating with clients.

At all stages, the PI plan should answer the key questions:

**A PI plan is not a long
exhaustive listing, it is a
brief analytical roadmap.**

- What do you need to know?
- What do publics need to know?
- What are the publics' expectations, actions, and level of participation?
- What do decisionmakers need to know?
- What is the most efficient way to get there?
- Who is going to do it?

Organize the plan by asking, "What kinds of decisions are made at which
points in the process, and what public involvement implications do each
of these decision points hold?" This will help ensure that each activity
has a specific objective and meets a defined need. These needs and
background information drive the selection of techniques.[9]

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[9] We recommend developing more detailed work plans for activities
(e.g., meetings). *The Public Meeting Survival Guide,* U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, n.d.,
has a good worksheet to follow (see attachment C).

What to think about in a public involvement process

Basically, you will:

- Get information from publics
- Present information to publics
- Analyze information
- Present analyses to decisionmakers for consideration

With this in mind, consider:

How to present information to publics.—Determine a strategy for the level of detail, frequency, and type of presentations.[10] You need to have a thorough understanding of the process and focus on the purpose so you can make effective changes. Your agenda or presentation may be adapted "in real time." As the event proceeds, watch for facial, body, and content cues which may indicate a need for change (e.g., add or drop agenda items, change techniques or method of communication, provide background or technical information, break into groups). When scheduling presenters and assigning activities, consider each person's background and ability to get the message across and to listen, as well as his or her credibility.

How to analyze the publics' input

As you prepare the PI plan, carefully select and document the methodology for analyzing data and presenting information. The publics' input needs to be categorized, analyzed, and presented to the team and decisionmakers. To do this, select categories that will reflect the publics' concerns (e.g., recreation, property impacts, economics, environmental impacts). Put the comments in these categories and summarize the various views. These categories must be defensible and reasonable. Checking these analyses against reality is vital.

Preparing for public involvement forces you to clarify:

- **Program goals, mandates, and requirements**

- **Decision process**

- **Technical findings**

- **Alternative approaches**

A good sense of humor and a contingency plan will come in handy.

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[10] The general approach is explained in *Mindset—How to Approach Public Involvement,* page 2-13.

PI plan outlines

The length of the plan depends on the complexity of the process—anywhere from 1 page to 20 pages. The shorter the plan, often the better.

Use the PI plan requirements in the *Reclamation Manual* and the advice on PI plans in Reclamation's 1980 *Public Involvement Manual* (chapter 8) to form an outline for your plan. The rest of this section presents a sample outline.

Sample Outline for a PI Plan

Chapter 1. Background

Briefly describe the project or program. This will set the stage for the rest of the PI plan. This is usually written by or in close coordination with the team leader.

If public involvement comes in late in the decision process, describe where you are in the decision process and what has happened so far.

- **Purpose and need for action**.—Why are you acting? What does the project or program hope to accomplish? What needs will be met? What objectives fulfilled? What authority are you acting under?

- **Program process and management.**—What decisions are necessary? Who will make them? How will they be made? What input, rationale, analyses, and evaluation factors will be used? What are the partners' and Reclamation's roles?

- **Key review points.—**When will you examine and update the PI plan? When will you review actions with the team leader? With the decisionmaker?

- **Public involvement expectations.**—How does the public involvement program fit in with and benefit the overall program and approach?

Chapter 2. Previous Consultation

Briefly provide a history of where the public involvement program has been and where it is going. As you go through the process, keep adding to this page to maintain a log or an as-built description. (See "Documentation" in the next section, *Implementing—How to Do the Work,* for details on keeping records.) Updates here will help show rationales for public involvement and program decisions as well as bring new people up to speed.

Actions.—What has been done so far and how the PI plan has evolved.

Contacts.—Briefly list which agency and person has contacted what groups. Summarize significant input.

Chapter 3. Publics and Issues

From the information gathered in the ongoing scoping, analyze the major issues and identify groups.

- **Major identified issues**.—Which issues are likely to be addressed? Which are significant and need to be analyzed? Which are insignificant but mentioned frequently, or are potential areas of conflict? How will the public involvement program address these issues?

Use a table similar to table 5 to categorize issues by their significance and show what actions will be taken to address the issue. If information is presented in a table, you must have sufficient text to explain what the table means.

Table 5.—Example of a table listing issues with degrees of significance and proposed public involvement actions for a hypothetical project		
Issue	**Significance**	**Actions to address issue**
Agricultural water rights	Significant issue (concern over loss of water for crops)	Explain how program will work with existing water rights. Explore options.
Flows for endangered cutfin trout	Significant issue (concern over spawning and juvenile migration flows)	Explain hydrologic model and impacts from alternatives
Boating on stream above reservoir	Relevant, but outside program area	Explain the boundaries of the decision and authority
Tom Stoner cabin historical point	Historic site, but not mentioned as issue	Consult with State Historic Preservation Office
Fishing downstream of Katey's Point	Not affected, so not significant, but mentioned frequently	Brochure to explain why the fishing will not be affected. Meet with fishery groups to show analysis.

Participants.—List agencies, groups, and individuals most likely to be interested or affected.[11] This list is the beginning point for developing a distribution or mailing list and may be attached as an appendix.

Views.—You can combine issues and participants to get an overall picture. Assess the level of interest. Use a table similar to table 6 to keep track of the publics and their concerns. Note that this sort of table may not be appropriate to include in a published plan. It is an aid for the practitioner and decisionmaker but might cause misunderstandings.

Table 6.—Example of a table mapping out participants and issues for a hypothetical Reclamation project			
Public	**Agricultural water rights**	**Endangered species**	**Boating on reservoir**
Farmers	Are concerned that water rights may not be fulfilled	Not relevant	Are concerned that ramp access may block grazing
Environmental group	Are willing to pay for water rights or create water bank	Are concerned about riparian habitat for treefrogs	Are concerned about jet ski noise

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[11] See *Who Are the Publics?* in Part 1, page 1-4.

Chapter 4. Level of Public Interest

Assess the level of public interest that would probably be generated. What might cause controversy? What publics would be involved at what phases? To what extent would they be involved? What are their expectations? Present this material in a useful format to the team leader and the team so they understand the basis for the level and type of public involvement activities. This also provides a rationale for selecting techniques.

Chapter 5. Public Involvement Responsibilities and Expertise

Identify what public involvement expertise and effort may be needed at different phases of the program from Reclamation, partners, cooperating agencies, etc. Identify critical and qualified staff. Use the program's action plan to coordinate with study phases and key dates. This provides a basis for contracts, memorandums of agreement, statements of work, etc. (See *Overseeing—What to Do When Someone Else is Doing the Work,* page 2-74.)

Chapter 6. Public Involvement Tasks and Techniques

Schedule public involvement activities, and tie this schedule to the decision process. What tasks will be done when? For what purpose? How do these tasks relate to the overall project or program? What reports will be done at what phases? For what purpose? Attachment D, *Summary of Strengths and Weaknesses of Needs Assessment Techniques*, discusses public involvement techniques.

Use the actions laid out in table 3 in *Decision Process—When to Do What* to develop a table similar to table 7 that lists phases of the program with corresponding public involvement techniques and actions. This table provides the rationale for allocating resources and staff days. The table should be sufficiently detailed to identify requirements (e.g., public hearings) and the need for resources (e.g., advertisements, court recorders, meeting rooms). Detailed agendas for each meeting will be needed later.

Program activity/phase	Public involvement objectives	Communication and interaction with publics	Techniques and analyses	Responsible person
Scoping	Continue public input	Monthly contacts with district, groups	Facilitated meetings, open houses	Reclamation's public involvement practitioner
		Periodic mailings on issues and status of activities	Brochures and summaries	Reclamation's public involvement practitioner
	Education	Cooperative effort with school for water conservation materials	Lesson plans, meetings with teachers	Crystal River Valley Water District

Table 7.—Public involvement tasks within the overall program for hypothetical example

Update the PI plan

Word processors have made it simple to update the plan. Keep a date in the header or footer and number the versions.

Set aside specific times (usually tied to a program activity, milestone, or important date) to review the plan. What has been done? What has changed? Who else is involved? How does this affect communication, techniques, analysis, and presentation? Coordinate with the team leader and partners.

Modifications to the 1980 *Public Involvement Manual* for PI plans

Reclamation's 1980 *Public Involvement Manual*, chapter 8, provides advice on preparing PI plans. We strongly suggest you read it before preparing a PI plan. However, we have found a few refinements are needed. The following subsections amend advice in the 1980 *Public Involvement Manual*.

Adaptive planning

Recent experience with programs dealing with multiple purposes, disciplines, partners, and agencies has shown that PI plans and programs need to adapt to constant changes (e.g., staffing, funding, overall program,

and context). Use the program's action plan and work with the team leader to integrate the PI plan of activities and schedule with the overall action plan for the program. Set aside "phases" and specific points for participants to join in or leave. Explain that delays in the process (e.g., analyses, meetings, reports) mean a consequent delay in the public involvement program.

Estimates

Putting numbers in the PI plan itself is too inflexible. Often, preliminary cost estimates are seen as final cost figures. Estimates and time schedules need to be derived from the PI plan rather than being a part of the plan. As dates and activities change, cost estimates will need to be modified.

Complying with current directives

The 1980 *Public Involvement Manual* is based on superseded *Reclamation Instructions*. Use the following section from the *Reclamation Manual Public Involvement Directives* to ensure that your PI plan fulfills the updated mandatory requirements:

(Quote from Reclamation Manual, CMP-04-01)

4D. Public Involvement Program Plan. For programs or actions requiring public participation beyond minimal levels, the following items will be addressed in a flexible program plan tailored to the action and updated as necessary:

(1)   Issues or problems which seem to require an action or decision to resolve.

(2)   Reclamation authorities related to the decision or action.

(3)   Necessary decisions, how they will be reached, and who will decide.

(4)   Specific objectives, techniques, and sequence of actions that will be used to accomplish the necessary level of public participation and the flexibility necessary to cope with changing needs.

(5)   Necessary communication and interaction with affected publics to complete each step in the decisionmaking process.

(6)   Known interested and affected publics.

(7)   Unique conditions and context surrounding the issues and publics that could affect selection of public involvement techniques.

(8)   Procedures that will be used for documenting and analyzing input for decisionmakers and tracking issues and input to show participants how the publics' views were considered.

(9)   Internal processes to evaluate the effectiveness of the public involvement effort.

Implementing—How to Do the Work

This section provides advice for carrying out public involvement's major responsibilities.

While most of the skills you need (e.g., establishing rapport with hostile publics, establishing relationships with team leaders, developing partnerships and long-term relationships) will be learned by experience, the following section provides general directions in getting the work done.

Working with the publics

Programs not only solve current problems—they help create the collaboration needed to solve future problems.

The more we can encourage agencies, groups, and publics to work together, the more effective we can be in addressing not only the program's goals, but the overall problems and issues in the problemshed. Create a model for working together that goes beyond the confines of the program if at all possible. Use whatever works in a particular situation. Some common models are:

- **Standing, long-term.**—Groups are formed around a single geographic area or issue. These groups are in place to address issues that come to the forefront as the group dynamic has long been established.

- **Program specific.**—Groups come together for a specific activity or program. They start out as unconnected individuals whose only common ground may be to recognize that there is a problem. A successful group works together and reaches a point where the members become a single entity to solve the problem fairly and effectively. The groups then disband.

- **Continuing.**—Groups are brought in to solve a particular problem or issue and remain to work on other problems or to adapt the solution to changing conditions.

Each type of group may be formal (e.g. standing agreements) or informal (e.g., people interested in water issues in the Crystal River Valley meet every third Tuesday at the Zandra Miller School).

When establishing public involvement activities and groups, concentrate on building long-term relationships needed to promote sustainable solutions within the community.

How to get information to the publics

The most effective way to present information (e.g., level of detail, format, organization, topics covered) depends on interest, background knowledge, and expectations of each group and participant. Before going to the public, do your homework. Meet with team members to understand their:

- Perspectives

- Work (What needs to be presented? Do any of the team members need to be at the meeting to explain their work?)

- Analyses (What has been done, assumptions used, results gained, what needs to be done, what information will be gathered, and how?)

Don't hesitate to call on presentation specialists, such as Technical Communications and Visual Presentations.

Find out about previous government (or large private) actions that affected the same communities. Debrief the public involvement practitioners or key people in those efforts to discover what information techniques worked, what participants expected, and how participants interacted.

Use all this information to plan out the most effective presentation. Keep a resource center of previous examples (brochures, newsletters, updates, reports). You may be able to tailor some of the existing material to meet the present situation. Further, it is easier to modify a document than to start from scratch. Ask colleagues to preview your material. Ask them:

- If you were a _____ (name a specific public; e.g., water district manager, environmental group president, senator), how would you respond:

    — What other material would you want to see?
    — What don't you need?

- What would improve the presentation?

Select presenters based on their expertise and ability to communicate effectively. Rehearse material and show drafts to key publics. This will help point out any places to improve (add, delete, change explanations, etc.).

How to get and analyze input from the publics

Begin data gathering with end goals in mind. Know what information you need before you seek input. Don't seek data you don't need.

Selecting input data gathering techniques depends on:

- **Program characteristics.**—Program requirements differ
  (e.g., rulemaking requires different participation and processes than
  site-specific habitat enhancement). The relationship between
  Reclamation and the publics must be carefully considered, especially
  where there has been conflict. It is best to talk directly and clearly
  with critics to identify specifically the problem and potential solutions.

- **Publics' communication patterns.**—Each community is unique
  (e.g., people get their news and interact differently in a large town
  where there is no central community than they do in a small town).
  Ask the people how to make contacts and hold discussions. Formal
  memos and press releases do not establish credibility in most circles.
  A wide variety of techniques are available—and more than one
  probably will work.

- **Available expertise and resources.**—Time, staff, money, and legal
  constraints may not allow for obvious techniques (e.g., surveys,
  workshops). If you have resources available such as community
  members, partners, or past studies, use them.

- **Needs of decisionmakers.**—Priorities, information, and contexts
  differ. Ask: What issues are priorities? Are recreation pool levels in
  a reservoir as important as downstream fish spawning flows? What is
  the threshold of acceptable impacts on an issue? How can we get the
  information to answer the questions?

How data are gathered directly influences how the analysis will be done.
You need to balance the requirements for detailed information with the
resources needed to analyze the information. Simple questions may be
easier to ask and answer but may not provide the indepth information. It
may seem easier to use a computer to analyze a computer-coded survey,
but this analysis may not produce the information needed to make
decisions and may require clearance from OMB (see Paperwork
Reduction Act in *Mindset—How to Approach Public Involvement*,
"Recognize Overall Constraints," page 2-25). Interviews and open-ended
questions provide useful information. However, using a computer to code
and analyze these results is difficult and time consuming.

The number of responses will also determine what tools are used in the analysis. Twenty comment letters may be analyzed by hand, while 50 to 150 will require a matrix table in a word processor or spreadsheet. An even greater number of responses would require categorizing, coding, and statistical techniques.

Categorize responses and note frequency. Work with the team leader to determine which issues are significant. (This may not be related to frequency—reservoir boating levels may be mentioned 100 times and yet not be affected by your program; while dam seepage, a wild and scenic river, an endangered species, or a national historic site may be mentioned only once and be a critical consideration.) If an irrelevant or insignificant issue is mentioned frequently, document it and educate people on why it is irrelevant or insignificant.

The team will use the significant issues to devise indicators (e.g., frequency of water service interruptions from drought, reservoir level drawdowns that stop all recreation). Use these indicators to help analyze comments (from meetings, reports, etc.) to tell the decisionmaker what publics think about issues. This may be broken down by public and issue.

How to get information to the team and decisionmakers

Team leaders, team members, and decisionmakers need frequent briefings and occasional reports (e.g., NEPA compliance scoping reports). Briefings can be based on the decision process or action plan steps. Briefings should take less than 15 minutes to present:

- An overall snapshot of current events
- The status of the public involvement program
- Major publics, issues, and relationships

At some stages, such as formulating alternatives, more indepth discussions will be required. Table 8 provides some examples. Reality

Table 8.—Examples of discussions at various stages	
Stage	**Discuss**
Developing objectives	Publics needs and issues, other programs in the area
Formulating alternatives	Issues, options suggested by publics
Evaluating alternatives	Tradeoffs and priorities

checks with the publics are needed between each stage. An updated table of publics and issues (see table 6) may be useful. Be prepared for requests for impromptu briefings for management and team leaders.

Teams need to discuss how to use information in public involvement documents (e.g., scoping reports). Information about publics and their concerns is essential to determine how to analyze the publics or to educate them about these issues.

The team should be well informed and involved when approaching public involvement events (e.g., public information workshops, public hearings, or other presentations). The team's involvement will depend on the event (e.g., experts may be on hand during open houses or workshops, while they may simply read summaries of formal hearings).

How to handle conflict

Although every government action is based on enhancing someone's quality of life, a degree of conflict is inherent in each action. Even if everyone agrees that a program is worthwhile, people will disagree about priorities, actions, and benefits. The level of conflict and how it affects your process depends on the communities and the program.

Conflict is not a sign of failure, nor is it something to avoid. Prepare for conflict by allowing people to voice and vent their concerns, issues, and fears. Only by allowing problems to come out can we:

Seek to understand rather than to be understood.

• Find common agreements for the purpose and need of the action (e.g., solving the water quality problem, addressing future water needs)

- Develop ground rules that stress commitment to addressing that purpose

Do not dismiss comments or concerns out of hand. Every person assumes that his or her argument is valid. Granting this validity will build your credibility and help to minimize the amount of personal stake in the conflict.

Don't tell people what time it is on their watches.

Don't assume you know the perspective or position. Allow people to state their own views rather than telling them that you understand their feelings. Talk directly to people who are raising the issues to find out what the concerns really are. You may find that their level of acceptance is much higher than you think.

Maintain your objectivity enough to analyze the situation and determine root causes of conflict, even if you are personally attacked. If necessary, assign someone else on the team (or hire an outside, neutral party) as an observer and facilitator while you interact with volatile people.

Developing and adhering to ground rules should help:

- Ensure a fair, open, and honest process
- Keep discussions focused on the purpose and need as much as possible
- Exchange relevant information with all participants

Resolving conflict involves several elements:

- **Communication.—**Listen to all parties and make sure that you understand their positions. Relate emotion-laden terms back to as rational a basis as possible. Recast these into questions that meet the underlying values and needs: "How can we ensure traditional farms survive (or anadromous fish survive)?" rather than "You are destroying our way of life." Make sure that all groups understand the other positions and rationales.

- **Open disagreements.—** Discuss undiscussable issues. Find out what the political concerns are. Treat these concerns just like any other input into the process.

- **Clarifying terms.—** Be aware of differing opinions, agendas, needs, and definitions of terms. Bring out differences and find ways to agree on what important words mean.

The *Conflict Management and Decisionmaking Resource Manual*'s circle of conflict (Reclamation, 1992, page 2) is a useful tool for uncovering the root cause of conflict. Determine if the cause is based on deep, fundamental issues (i.e., values or relationships) or on surface differences (i.e., interests or perceptions of analyses and impacts). When differences are based on fundamental values or relationships, find ways to identify the sources of conflict and bring the conflict to addressing interests and solving problems. The *Conflict Management and Decisionmaking Resource Manual* provides advice on analyzing and resolving conflict.

Both Reclamation's *Conflict Management and Decisionmaking Resource Manual* and *Conflict Management Guidebook* discuss alternative dispute resolution processes.

When to hold your ground

Public involvement practitioners need to determine what is and is not worthwhile to stress or emphasize (e.g., which Reclamation or technical issues to clarify with publics, which issues to stress with the decision-makers, or which publics or concerns have priority). These priorities and emphases will depend on the context of the action and decision.

Not every battle is worthwhile.

At times, publics, partners, or people in Reclamation will ask or expect something that may not meet the needs of the program or may be counterproductive. Participants may request information be changed or included in analysis. Decisionmakers may request information only about certain participants. You may be personally attacked in the media. It is vital to determine which situations are worth taking a stand on and which

are better left alone. Ask: Is this battle going to influence the decision? If yes, determine the best way to focus the battle on solving the problem. If no, walk away from the battle if at all possible.

Advice: Develop a clear, well focused purpose and need for the action with the team, team leader, and decision-makers before going out to the public. Clearly define and delineate the "decision boundaries" (e.g., what you are and are not authorized to do, what the process will address, general timeframes, roles of participants in the process, who will make the final decision, and what the decision will be based on). Avoid personal pride and ego.

Your professional judgment and the advice of knowledgeable individuals will be the best guide for choosing to pursue or not to pursue a specific course of action. Be sure you have the support needed.

What techniques to use

Determine how you will select and apply techniques to get, analyze, and present information (e.g., running a workshop just because it worked in a different context may not be effective; surveys may not be possible). Take time to determine what factors and rationales you will use to select techniques (e.g., we will base our selection on what people accept, what has worked there, and our purposes). The selection of techniques[12] is usually based on a complex series of simultaneously interacting factors, including:

- Program's purpose and intention (why we are here, what we are planning to do)

- Participants (who is involved, how they interact, what their expectations are)

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[12] Techniques are described in the 1980 *Public Involvement Manual* (chapter 18-22), the *Decision Process* Website Toolbox (http://www.usbr.gov/guide/toolbox.htm), the *Public Meeting Survival Guide* (attachment C), and other resources. See Part 3, *Tools and Resources*.

- Skill level and experience of available staff (the practitioner, team leader, team members, and decisionmakers)

- Resources and communication patterns (where and how people get and share information)

- Context (the area's history with this and other federal programs, other actions that are in the area)

- Concerns (potential impacts)

- Level of interest, controversy, or conflict (present or directly linked to the program)

Advice: Obvious choices are not always the best. A technique (e.g., minimal formal hearings) may seem like a cost-effective approach but will not fulfill the need for public involvement. Using a brief decision process to determine your techniques allows flexible, documented conscious decisions to be made with input from relevant sources. Plan how you will conduct events to ensure nothing is missed on tactical decisions. The *Public Meeting Survival Guide* (attachment D) contains an excellent two-page worksheet which works well for planning meetings.

Public involvement practitioners need to determine what is and is not working and fix the problems—often on the fly.

As the Paperwork Reduction Act (updated in 1995) drastically reduces the number of surveys or questionnaires the federal government can perform, the public involvement practitioner needs to find other ways to obtain input. These will vary by community. Which key publics to ask and how to ask depends on your analysis of the situation. Table 3 in *Decision Process—When to Do What* ties obtaining information to the program's process. Look at who is involved in other previous and current processes. Ask people you know who else should be involved.

Planning information to present will help focus the public involvement program. Determine what information decisionmakers would need to make a balanced decision.

Answer: What unique factors about these publics matter in the decision? What could affect the success or failure of an alternative? Think of this as a BRIEFing and don't waste time on superfluous explanations. Summarize the bottom line.

Once you have drafted an approach to select techniques, do a reality check with the team leader and others as needed (e.g., key participants, people leading other processes and actions) to ensure you've considered all relevant factors. You may also want to do "trial runs" and rehearsals with small groups for meeting or information gathering techniques to ensure they are effective. This helps build rapport and credibility.

What to document

Make recordkeeping as simple and as thorough as you can.

Keeping good records is critically important. Undocumented processes call actions into question, lead to accusations of improper procedures, and destroy internal and external credibility. Courts have overturned poor NEPA processes, and audits have shown gaps in documentation. You need to be able to track and account for all input in the public involvement process.

Documentation is quite simply a good business and management practice. It is vital that you keep a record of your contacts and of your efforts to:

• Identify and involve all affected publics
• Demonstrate that the process was conducted fairly and openly

You must work closely with the team leader and team members to ensure good recordkeeping throughout the process. Integrate these records with the team's records.[13]

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[13] A tutorial on defining and keeping administrative records is at the *Decision Process* website at http://www.usbr.gov/guide/record.htm

The longer the process, the more important it is to keep everything. Even keeping flip chart notes of meetings can be useful. For example, keeping flip chart notes helped bridge a 5-year lag between initial scoping and beginning a draft environmental impact statement. The public involvement practitioner put up notes from the first meeting at later meetings to show exactly where input had come from. Keeping these notes showed respect for the participant's time and input. The respect and attention paid off—the effort was the first to avoid an administrative appeal.

The effort spent to keep good records pays for itself in time and hassles over lawsuits and lost input later.

Actions and contacts

Document public involvement actions, whom you contacted, and whom you tried to contact. If a group comes forward later, saying that they were not informed nor given the opportunity to consult, the log provides written proof that Reclamation tried to contact and involve their groups or similar groups. (Note: at times, this log may not be enough. You may need to send registered or certified mail to show that you did try to contact a particular group.)

Give a similar log form to managers and team members to help them keep track of who they talk to.

A running log of significant actions, benchmarks, etc., will let new players, decisionmakers, and the publics know what happened when. Table 9 shows a sample log, but tailor the log to your needs. This log provides a history of where we were, what we had done, and why we did it. Reconstructing actions for an audit or appeal is easier and more thorough with a log.

Table 9.—Sample contact log				
Group	**Person contacted**	**Phone number and e-mail address**	**Dates contacted**	**Notes**
Marble Springs Chamber of Commerce	Rachel Cole	680-555-8756 rcole@store.com	11/14/98	Added to mailing list
Ranchers United	Sven Jensen	680-555-3326	11/18/98	Could not reach, mailed letter about next public meeting

A word processor file is usually sufficient for an activity and contact log. Either identify one person responsible for the record (and provide that

person with the information necessary for the record) or have the file available on a workstation for several authorized people to access.

Logs on the computer can help you search for names quickly and update more easily. Logs on paper are easier to carry in the field. You might have a paper log that someone can enter into the computer. Choose a method that works for you and is consistent throughout the process.

Mailing lists

An updated list of names and addresses can also help you keep track of participants and changes in organizations and staff. Table 10 provides an example. Annotate this record to show why changes were made, why names were added, and when it was updated. Use mailing lists only to keep track of contacts and send material relevant to the process. Check to ensure you comply with the Privacy Act (See Privacy Act in *Mindset—How to Approach Public Involvement*, "Recognize Overall Constraints," page 2-25).

Table 10.—Sample mailing list				
Name	**Organization**	**Address**	**Changes made**	**Last updated**
Billie Rose	Black Queen Mine	824 The Pilings, Marble Springs CO 80334	Billie Rose took over for Joe Cattering	10/11/98

Written comments

People should have the opportunity to write and send comments throughout the process. Encourage written comments. Suggest that people who feel strongly about an issue put their comments in writing as part of a written record. Every piece of information distributed about the activity should contain a contact name, phone number, mailing address, and E-mail address.

Provide easy ways for people to send in comments. A technique not discussed elsewhere is to distribute an easily mailed paper, with room for comments and the correct return address (e.g., postcards, newsletters, brochures). Note that asking specific questions for statistical analysis

requires complying with the Paperwork Reduction Act. However, asking if someone wants to be on a mailing list or providing space for unstructured comments does not require clearance. Team members in the field can hand out these postcards if they are asked about the program. Postcards can be distributed with mailings to encourage responses. Postcards can be available at public meetings for those who don't want to speak up in front of their peers or who want to ensure their comments are part of the record.

Track how comments were used and responded to (even those outside the scope of the program). Make sure that these written comments and Reclamation's responses to these comments become part of the administrative record for the process. While methods to keep track of these comments will differ in each process, a master table of comments (table 11) can help:

Table 11.—Sample comment log for a hypothetical environmental impact statement			
Person or group	**Date**	**Topic**	**Response**
Doc Nancy	11/10/98	Health and water quality	included in final environmental impact statement
Fishing R Us	11/19/98	Fishery impacts	included in final environmental impact statement

Keep track of comments based on their content. Many comment letters will have more than one content area. An example of coding and tracking comments is on the following page (table 12). Devise and maintain a consistent and understandable code (e.g., R = Recreation, RF = fishing, RJ = jet-skiing). Open-ended codes help deal with new issues (e.g., RB = hot air balloon bungee jumping). Put this code on the letter itself and enter the comment in the log under this heading. List the letters on a computer log with the content code. These tables help team managers determine who should respond to the comments.

E-mailed comments

E-mail has the informality and ease of a telephone call. Thus, E-mail can be either a formal, written comment for the record or an informal question

The more comments, the more important the record becomes.

Table 12.—Sample comment log with a comment code for a hypothetical environmental impact statement

Letter/ comment code	Brief description of comment	Agreements	Hydrology	Chapter 2 (Alternatives)	Water quality	Threatened and endangered species	Fish/ vegetation or wildlife	Social and economics	Cultural resources
1/AC	Environmental impact statement should include a mechanism to revisit and modify the water leasing agreement.	Added adaptive management							
1/FCR	Environmental impact statement is shortsighted in the way it impacts Crystal River fisheries.						Discussed cumulative fishery impacts		
2/W	Environmental impact statement creates categories of water rights that do not exist under state law.			Clarified water rights					

A = Agreement
AC = Changing agreement
AP = Participants in agreement
F = Fishing
FA = Anadromous fish
FCR = Crystal River
W = Water rights

or response for the trash. Use some common sense: If the same E-mail came through the conventional mails, would it be a record? If so, print it and treat it as a written comment. If not, delete it. You may want to keep an archived file of your E-mails until the program is over—this is a handy backup for potentially misplaced addresses. Be aware that all E-mails are treated as government correspondence, subject to official records and public access laws such as FOIA. (See the *Reclamation Manual* on E-mail Messages as Official Records in attachment B.)

Do what is appropriate for the size of your program.

Oral comments

Comments (e.g., from meetings, consultations, and hearings) may be verbal. However, they still need to be part of the record. Make a record of oral comments in much the same manner as written comments. Take careful notes in meetings, as appropriate. The documentation process for formal oral requirements (e.g., NEPA hearings) is more stringent and forms a part of the administrative record.

Informal comments are recorded at the discretion of the public involvement practitioner and the team leader. Use common sense—document comments if they seem relevant. This is especially important if comments are used to formulate alternatives and make decisions (e.g., adding a $5-million road around a reservoir at a governor's suggestion).

Process and results

For all comments and analyses generated through public involvement, documents should note not only their contents, but also how they affected the decisionmaking process (e.g., alternatives considered but eliminated, alternatives refined, impacts and issues considered).

For NEPA compliance actions, include a summary of the public involvement process in chapter 5 (consultation and coordination). The basic information needed is outlined in section 6.5.5 of Reclamation's 2000 *NEPA Handbook*.

Reports take a snapshot of a situation at a particular point.

Public input and analyses are contained in an overall summary report about the program or project. Generally, a public involvement summary report (outlined in chapter 9 of the 1980 *Public Involvement Manual*) can meet the NEPA process requirements for documenting the public involvement process.

Overseeing—What to Do When Someone Else is Doing the Work

This section discusses Reclamation's role when another agency, local organization, or contractor is doing public involvement.

Reclamation policy states that, "Reclamation is responsible for ensuring the adequacy of public involvement activities in which the agency is involved" (CMP-04-01, 3A). We cannot abandon this responsibility when other partners or contractors do the work.

Partners

Public involvement is sometimes delegated to our partners (e.g., a water district, or state agency) or to another agency (e.g., U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Bureau of Land Management). We still must ensure that affected publics know about the action and have a chance to provide input. Work with the agencies to determine:

- Who will be contacted when
- How we will ensure all groups have been contacted
- How input will be tracked and used in the decision process
- Who will be the responsible party to ensure tasks are carried out

Often, creating a PI plan with the organization that will conduct the public involvement program can help ensure that nothing falls through the cracks (See *Planning—How to Write and Use a PI Plan,* page 2-49.) More than two agencies may do public involvement activities in some cases. If so, it is vital to have agreements between all offices to have an institutionalized, consistent process. Different interpretations of requirements may need to be ironed out (e.g., when an environmental assessment goes to the public, how many formal hearings must be held).

Casual agreements are fraught with peril—there is too much at stake.

A memorandum of agreement or understanding outlines responsibilities and shows how these efforts are a part of the whole process. Make sure everyone is clear on responsibilities, tasks, and definitions. This includes

clarifying terms—notification to one agency may mean a notice in a newspaper; to another, it may signify a notice in the *Federal Register*. (See Reclamation's Directives and Standards on *Federal Register* Documents, ADM 01-02, in attachment B.)

Specify actions to take (e.g., we will use newspapers, TV, radio, and the Internet to disseminate information about upcoming meetings, results from these meetings, and comment periods). The more roles and responsibilities are clarified, the fewer chances there are for misunderstandings and unmet expectations.

A decisionmaker (often the official who signs the Record of Decision) also has the responsibility to make sure that actions get carried out. Set up review times and reality checks with partners and publics throughout the process to ensure that the public involvement process is still on track.

Contractors

Contracts should clearly spell out:

- Specific tasks that the contractor will do
- Specific deliverables from those tasks
- Our standards that those results and tasks will meet
- Review and consultation procedures to ensure standards are met

There are no perfect contracts, but try to cover as many potential problems as possible.

Public involvement practitioners work with contract officers (D-7810, Acquisition and Operations Group) to ensure that contractors provide the work we need and meet our standards. Technical experts:

- Provide statements of work
- Evaluate the technical merit of proposals
- Ensure the work is done properly

Public involvement practitioners may serve as Contracting Officer's Technical Representatives (COTRs) who advise, but do not supervise, contractors. We strongly recommend that all public involvement

Lack of planning does not justify circumventing the process.

practitioners have training as COTRs. As a COTR, you are responsible for writing the statement of work and making sure it is accurate and complete. A COTR:

• Monitors performance

• Evaluates work as it progresses

• Inspects and recommends that the contracting office accept/reject completed work for the government

A contract can be very similar to a PI plan, but the contract emphasizes and details the actions to be taken to ensure that all parties understand:

• Who will do what
• What the actions will accomplish
• When the actions will be done
• How changes will be handled

See table 3 for a detailed list of actions and accomplishments in a public involvement program.

Reviewing contracts and proposals

Work with contract officers to evaluate proposals, or at least develop the technical review criteria. Proposals are usually evaluated in a negotiated procurement process, which emphasizes technical merit over cost considerations. This process helps ensure Reclamation gets the most value for the money.

Flexibility is important. Build in considerations for changes.

When you are reviewing proposals, consider:

• **Experience.**—Has the contractor done similar work (e.g., similar publics, issues, actions)? Are they familiar with Reclamation's needs, standards, and ways of doing business?

• **Past performance.**—Ask previous clients: Was the public involvement effort conducted in an open, fair, and honest process? Was it effective? How did participants perceive the contractor?

- **Available staff and resources.**—Is the contractor equipped to handle the work? Can the contractor add resources to meet contingencies? Are the specific staff who have the experience and capability to carry out the proposed tasks available? How will changes in personnel be handled?

- **Ability to work independently.**— Public involvement requires initiative, professionalism, and the ability to address unexpected situations. Does the contractor have the managerial and communications capabilities to handle contingencies and evaluate actions within the context and constraints of Reclamation's program?

- **Appropriateness of the proposed methodology.**—Will it provide opportunities for communication with affected publics? Does it provide the information the team and decisionmakers need? Does it meet legal requirements (e.g., Paperwork Reduction Act) and Reclamation needs?

- **Distance from area.**—Try to minimize travel distances to hold down costs.

- **Familiarity with the local publics, issues, and concerns.**—Knowing the area is crucial to knowing how and what to communicate.

Sample Contract

Work with the contract officer to develop a contract. Technical experts will usually provide enough information to specify what will be done, what will be acceptable, and how deliverables and services will be evaluated. This contract outline will help fill in the public involvement practitioner's information.

Sample Outline for a Contract

Background

- Action, purpose, and need

- How the PI program will help accomplish the program's overall goals

- How the public involvement contractor, decisionmakers, and team managers will work together

- What information Reclamation will provide and when

Services and Period of Performance

List what actions the contractor will take for public involvement. Be as specific as possible. Consider:

- **Contacts.—** What groups will be contacted? How will they be contacted? How will the contractor ensure that all affected publics are contacted?

- **Public involvement activities.—** What meetings, hearings, workshops, etc., will be held? With what groups? In what locations? How will preparation, notes, and reports be handled?

- **Documentation.—**How will the record for public involvement be kept (include written, oral, and formal comments; contact logs; and mailing lists)?

- **Analyses and reports.—**How will analyses and summaries of public involvement comments be done? What methodology and techniques will be used? How will the results be reported?

- **Contingencies.—**How will changes in the process be handled (e.g., new affected groups, a higher level of controversy, related actions that affect the public involvement)?

Deliverables

- **Reports.—**What will the report and deliverables contain? (Be as specific as possible: for example, specify that comments should be summarized and categorized. A list of comments is hard to read and does not provide the information decisionmakers need.) When will reports be due? What format

(e.g., electronic WordPerfect Version X and hard copy) will be used? How will Reclamation ensure the report is adequate?

- **Logs.—**What logs will the contractor keep (e.g., logs of comments, actions taken, contacts)? How will these logs be kept (e.g., computer database, word processor file)? Be as specific as possible (e.g., state the software to use to ensure compatibility).

- **Records.**—How will the contractor keep records of activities, original papers, etc.? How and at what intervals will these be provided to Reclamation?

Progress Checks

Build in "reality checks." Set aside specific periods for reviews. Specify who will be doing those reviews, what evaluation criteria they will use, and what will be done with those results. What will happen if the review shows the work is not satisfactory? Work with the contract officer to determine what criteria the work will meet before Reclamation pays the contractor. For example, you may tie payments to progress reports that specify what the contractor has done. These procedures need to be built into the contract.

It is too late to go back and fix things once we've signed the contract.

Schedule

List the times and dates of public involvement actions, milestones, progress checks, reviews, and delivery dates.

Synopsis

The "synopsis" is a brief summary of the statement of work used to announce the proposed acquisition (contract). The Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR), Part 5, prescribes procedures for announcing procurements over certain cost thresholds. This synopsis informs the entire business community of the government's need, which ideally generates more competition and lower prices. The synopsis contains:

Contractors should be held to the same standards as internal public involvement practitioners.

- An excerpt of the statement of work that would best define the procurement

- When the solicitation is anticipated to be issued

- What types of offerors (applicants) will be considered (e.g., small business)

- Telephone numbers and other contact points for addressing questions

- Agency address for prospective bidders/offerors to send their written request for a copy of the solicitation when available.

Contract Details

The contract officer will provide details about the way the contract will be selected and administered. These include:

Contract type.—The process for acquiring goods and services and compensating the contractor. FAR Part 16 identifies 15 contract types. Contract officers may specify any one of these types, depending on the amount of the responsibility for performance assumed by the contractor. The contract types chosen reflect how much risk is assumed by the government or the contractor. At one end of the spectrum, a firm fixed priced (i.e., the contractor does the work for an agreed-on price) places all of the risks on the contractor. Specific deliverables are due at a specific time, and the contractor's compensation is somewhat higher for assuming this risk. At the other end of the spectrum, cost type contracts compensate the contractor for their costs as their performance progresses. These contracts are usually associated with research and development, where a deliverable cannot be defined by either party.

Solicitation and selection.—A contract can be awarded either through a sealed bid or through a negotiated procurement process. FAR Parts 14 and 15 govern these processes. As sealed bids only

consider price, they are usually used for acquiring simple services or supplies. As public involvement activities are so complex, negotiated processes are usually appropriate. Negotiated procurement processes consider technical excellence as well as the offer price. These are used to acquire more complex services and supplies. Offerors submit technical proposals, and technical considerations outweigh price considerations to find the "best value." The contract officer may negotiate with those offerors submitting proposals to make clarifications in the specifications, etc. Sole source offers are also negotiated. Several rounds of negotiations are quite common under the negotiation process.

Evaluation and price or cost analysis.—The process to determine if services and fees are reasonable is governed by FAR Part 15. Price analysis compares prices from several offerors. Cost analysis usually determines if a single offeror price is reasonable. The contract officer will work with the technical experts to determine questions to answer within these analyses.

Terms and conditions.— The clauses and provisions that the contract operates under are usually standard, but technical experts may suggest conditions that will help to determine if the work is performed to Reclamation's needs and standards.

Keeping Track—How to Ensure Your Program Works

Participants, decisionmakers, issues, related actions, and other variables will change. Public involvement processes must be assessed to ensure that they do the job within this constantly changing context.[14]

This section provides a reality check to adapt your program to changing conditions.

[14] This section is based on Reclamation's experiences, the *Natural Resource Planning Survival Guide* (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, n.d.), and the *Citizen Participation Handbook* (Bleirer, 1998).

Reviewing the process

Periodic reviews help determine if the public involvement effort is working. To help the process be as effective as possible, reviews should be conducted not only at the end of a process, but at several points along the way. Ideally, a team leader, the public involvement practitioner, and key participants should meet to answer:

Is the process well planned out?

- Does Reclamation management understand the plan?
- Will the plan help address the program's purpose and needs?
- Are there enough resources to carry out the plan?

Is the process working?

- Have you reached all the affected publics?
- Are people well informed about the program?
- Do people have opportunities to comment?
- Do they know what happens to their comments?
- Do participants judge their participation to be worthwhile?

If so, what techniques are the most effective and timely?

If not, what needs to be done?

Are there changes that require modifying our approach and process?

Public involvement program checklist for survival

For the overall program or project to succeed, the public involvement practitioner should ensure the following is in place throughout the process. Use these items as a common sense survival checklist—if something is not in place, then determine what is needed.

    (1)   A communication strategy is agreed to, documented in the PI plan, and ongoing, so that:

_____ Participants and potentially affected or interested publics know what the process is

_____ Decisionmakers, team leaders, and team members understand the role that public input will play in the decision process

_____ Times for regular process reviews and adjustments have been established—and adhered to or modified

(2)   The problem or opportunity is understood, so that:

_____ Everyone knows why they must work to solve this problem or take this opportunity to prevent future problems, preserve present values, and work with other ongoing programs

_____ Participants and decisionmakers agree that the issues and potential benefits are sufficiently important for federal involvement

(3)   Reclamation's role in the process is clearly defined, so that:

_____ Participants and decisionmakers agree that, given our mission, we are responsible for being involved

_____ Publics and participants are aware of what matters the program or project is and is not authorized to address

(4)   The overall decision process is laid out in an action plan and PI plan, so that:

_____ Decisionmakers, participants, and the team agree that the process is fair, acceptable, and reasonable

_____ How and when decisions will be made, and who will make them, is clear

_____ How public input will be analyzed, used, and tracked is planned out and clear

(5)   The PI program works with participants, so that:

_____ Publics understand enough to provide input

_____ Impacts have been recognized and analyzed

_____ Publics have had enough opportunities to provide input for a balanced decision

Problem analysis

Constantly check to identify potential and real problems within the public involvement process. Find out if there are affected publics, team members, team managers, or decisionmakers who question:

- Your communication strategy (Do meetings come in the middle of harvest?)

- That there is a significant problem (Water supplies aren't a problem—we had floods last year!)

- That Reclamation has a role (Don't make such a federal case out of this!)

- That your process is acceptable (Nothing I do makes a difference, so why bother?)

- The way you are considering potential impacts (Why haven't you considered the grey catfish? What about the impact of increased power rates on Crystal Mill?)

Determine if the problem is based on:

- A lack of understanding. (If so, beef up the education effort in that area or communicate to understand the issues.)

- Issues which are not part of your program. (People may be categorically opposed to any federal action, or to any action which would affect a certain area, raise taxes, etc.) If so, increase education about the program's goals, boundaries, etc.

- A difficulty relating to image. (Are you wearing ties in a flannel shirt area? Are meetings held in a bar in a primarily religious area?) Talk to people with whom you have established rapport to determine the need for changes in approach.

- A difficulty in communication or participation. (Are you talking with the right entities? Do materials need to be explained at a higher or more basic level of detail? Are you working with the primary languages in the area? Do meeting times or places need to be changed?)

- A substantial, reasonable objection to the overall program, Reclamation's role, or analyses. (If concerns indicate a need to change the program, report this information to the team leader, team members, decisionmakers, and managers of the program. What they do with it is up to them. Do what you can to address concerns.)

Determine how serious problems are and plan how to deal with them. The team leader and decisionmakers will ultimately decide what approach to use. For example, if there are misunderstandings about what an action will do, develop credible education programs to show the purpose and results of your actions. If a problem with a particular public is not solvable but there is ample consent among other groups, then you might concentrate resources on developing consent elsewhere.

If input indicates a need for a program change, document this, pass the information on, track, and document results to demonstrate how public input was used in the process.

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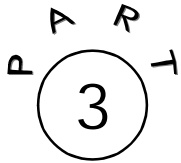
Tools and Resources

Resources Attached to this Manual

- Attachment A—*Departmental Manual* 301, *Public Participation in Decisionmaking*

- Attachment B—*Reclamation Manual* Policy and Directives and Standards

    — Policy CMP P03. Public Involvement in Reclamation Activities
    — Directives and Standards CMP P04. Public Involvement in Reclamation Activities
    — Directives and Standards RCD 07-01. Electronic Mail (E-Mail) Messages as Official Records
    — Directives and Standards ADM 01-12. Federal Register Documents
    — Directives and Standards ADM 02-12. Publication Printing
    — Directives and Standards ADM 01-03. Information Collection

- Attachment *C—The Public Meeting Survival Guide*

- Attachment *D—Summary of Strengths and Weaknesses of Needs Assessment Techniques*

Reclamation Resources

The following resources are located on the *Public Involvement Manual* Resource Shelf in the Denver TSC Office.

Bleiker, H., 1998. *Citizens Participation Handbook*. Institute for Participatory Management and Planning, PO Box 1937, Monterey, California, 93942-1937; ipmp@aol.com; (408) 373-4292.

Burdge, R., 1998. *A Conceptual Approach to Social Impact Assessment*. Social Ecology Press, Middleton, Wisconsin.

Bureau of Reclamation, 1980. *Public Involvement Manual*. Prepared by Janes L. Creighton, Saratoga, California, for the Water and Power Resources Service.

_____, 1983. *Public Involvement: A Sourcebook for Reclamation Planners*. Division of Planning Technical Services, Denver, Colorado.

_____, 1991. *Contracting Officer's Technical Representative (COTR) Desk Guide*. Developed by the Educational Services Institute.

_____, 1992. *Conflict Management and Decisionmaking Resource Manual*. Center for Dispute Resolution, Boulder, Colorado.

_____, 1992. *Introduction to Public Involvement Resource Notebook*. Developed by CH2MHill.

_____, 1995. *Public Involvement Zone.* Mid-Pacific Region, Sacramento, California.

_____, 1998. *Conflict Management Handbook.* Alternative Dispute Resolution Team, Denver, Colorado.

_____, 1998. *Decision Process Guide: How to Get Things Done in Government*. Denver, Colorado. (A web version of the guide is at http://www.usbr.gov/guide)

_____, 2000. *NEPA Handbook*. Denver, Colorado.

_____, 2000. *Reclamation Manual* (TSC maintains this notebook with relevant *Reclamation Manual* policy and directives). The entire manual is at http://www.usbr.gov/recman.

_____, 2000. *Sourcebook* (TSC maintains this notebook with useful comment and meeting forms and public involvement examples).

Canadian International Development Agency, 1997. *Guidelines for Environmental Assessments and Traditional Knowledge*. Report from the Centre for Traditional Knowledge to the World Council of Indigenous People.

Maslow, A., 1954. *Motivation and Personality*. Harper and Row, New York.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, n.d. *Public Meeting Survival Guide*: *A user friendly workbook for getting into—and out of—meetings [alive]*. U.S. Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service, Portland, Oregon.

_____, n.d. *Natural Resource Planning Survival Guide*: *A rational approach to problemsolving and collaborative decisionmaking that you (and the public) can live with!* U.S. Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service, Portland, Oregon.

Attachment A

Departmental Manual 301
Public Participation in Decisionmaking

2.1 <u>Policy</u>. The Department of the Interior will offer the public meaningful opportunities for participation in decision-making processes leading to actions and policies which may significantly affect or interest them.

2.2 <u>Definitions</u>.

   A.   "Public" means affected or interested individuals, including consumers; organizations and special interest groups; officials of local, State, and Indian tribal governments; and officials of other Federal agencies.

   B.   "Participation" means systematic opportunity for the public to know about and express their opinions on possible Departmental actions and policies; and to know that their views are considered in shaping decisions and become part of the record of the decision-making process.

2.3 <u>Purpose</u>. These guidelines are to provide a firm policy basis and a consistent Department-wide framework within which bureaus and offices are accountable to the Secretary and to the public for timely and effective public involvement in decisions which may significantly affect or interest them. The guidelines call for early and repeated consideration of public participation by responsible officials. The guidelines suggest relationships, communications media, techniques, technical skills, and resources to consider. The guidelines establish minimum procedures and reporting requirements, and assign oversight and evaluation responsibility.

2.4 <u>Responsibility</u>.

   A.   Officials at every level of the Secretariat and all bureaus and offices are responsible for considering public participation early in decision-making processes leading to actions or policies which:

      (1) could have a significant effect on the public or be of significant interest to them;

      (2) could appear to the public as being significant.

Department of the Interior

DEPARTMENTAL MANUAL

Departmental Management

Part 301 Major Program Issues
and Decisions

Chapter 2 Public Participation in Decision-making   301 DM 2.4B

B. Each Assistant Secretary, and each head of bureau or office, 's responsible for

(1) up-to-date and consistent policy guidance on the kinds of decisions or activities in his/her area in which public involvement is or is not needed or useful, and

(2) procedures for such public involvement in keeping with office missions. For advice in writing such guidance, officials may call on the Assistant Secretary -- Policy, Budget, and Administration, the Director of the Office of Public Affairs, and the Solicitor.

C. These guidelines supplement laws, regulations, policies, and guidelines mandating or governing public involvement in administrative action. In determining whether to solicit public participation in a decision-making process, and in determining the form of the participation, Department officials must consider particularly:

(1) the notice-and-comment rulemaking requirements of the Administrative Procedure Act, 5 U.S.C. 553;

(2) the Federal Register publication requirements of the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. 552(a);

(3) the advisory committee requirements of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, 5 U.S.C. Appendix I;

(4) the environmental impact consideration process of the National Environmental Policy Act, 42 U.S.C. 4321, et. seq.; and

(5) the procedures for development of significant rules under Executive Order 12044 (March 23, 1978).

2.5 Determination of Need for Public Participation.

A. Officials will consider opportunities where public input might be necessary or useful in any decision-making process and in periodic work planning processes, as well as for the traditional procedures such as formal rulemaking, project planning, area management planning, environmental assessment, or established consumer affairs activities.

B. In decision-making processes which already require public participation, officials will consider the need or usefulness of involving the public earlier or more frequently than mandated, or than has historically been done.

Department of the interior

DEPARTMENTAL MANUAL

Departmental Management

Part 301 Major Program Issues
and Decisions

Chapter 2 Public Participation in Decision-making   301 DM 2.5C

C. Officials responsible for determining the need or usefulness of public participation on a possible action or policy will record the decision as to whether to involve the public or not, and identify the officials responsible for the decision, and for planning and carrying out any public participation. The record need not be separate from the normal documentation of a decision-making process.

D. Officials will review their initial determinations about public participation at key decision points leading to action or policy development to be sure the reasons for the initial determination and the scope of any involvement planned are still sound. These reviews and any changes which result will be recorded also, again identifying responsible officials.

2.6 Facilitating Public Involvement.

A. Responsible officials will consult with the public affairs division of their bureau or office, or of the Department, throughout their planning for public participation, starting with the earliest discussions as to whether public participation is needed or useful for the given instance.

B. Once public participation is known to be needed or useful, responsible officials will notify and consult with other divisions of their bureau or office and other offices in the Department which have had experience with public involvement in comparable matters or addressing segments of the same public; or which have been designated as a consumer representative or other citizen contact points; or which are designated to work with disadvantaged, handicapped, aged, and minority peoples.

C. Responsible officials will identify and assign qualified personnel with necessary technical skills with staff support and funding adequate to plan and carry out public participation effectively tied to the decision-making process. Officials should not overlook opportunities for public involvement in preparing the plan itself.

D. Responsible officials will coordinate with other officials who may be addressing the same citizens in the same area at the same time. The coordination should insure that the interested public is not offered so many involvement opportunities that they cannot participate as fully as they would like. Government officials to

Department of the Interior

DEPARTMENTAL MANUAL

Departmental Management

Part 301 Major Program Issues
and Decisions

Chapter 2 Public Participation in Decision-making   301 DM 2.6D

consider would be those in Interior bureaus and offices in Washington
and the field, in other Federal agencies, and in State, local, and
Indian tribal offices with relevant jurisdictions.

    E.   Responsible officials will make special efforts throughout
all planning for public participation to reach and involve reluctant
or unknown segments of the public. For example, minorities can be
reached by such means as minority press, television, and radio.
Likewise, special media channels exist to reach special segments of
the public -- the aged, young people, the handicapped, the disadvantaged.
Information can be posted or handed out in non-traditional places.
Material inviting public participation can be written in languages
other than English.

    F.   A basic checklist of steps allowing public participation:

    (1) Notify the widest range of people of the possibility
of a policy or action which might affect or interest them significantly.
Allow enough lead time on the initial notification and on communica-
tions throughout the process that individuals and groups have time
to consider the values at stake for them and make arrangements to
participate or be represented in the involvement process.

    (2) Provide information about a possible action or policy
in plenty of time and in easily used forms. The first information
may simply cite a problem or activity which appears to call for some
action or policy. Early information should cover expected effects
of various possible actions, issues associated with various possible
actions, ways to get more facts on the subject, steps for decision-
making about the action, including the means for the public to
participate, and names of officials knowledgable about the action.

    (3) Allow time and means for public comments.

    (4) Allow time and process for due consideration of com-
ments made.

    (5) Keep a brief public record of public views and of
techniques used to obtain public input, noting responsible officials.

    (6) Provide for feedback to the public involved as to action
or "no action" decisions after their participation.

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Department of the Interior

DEPARTMENTAL MANUAL

Departmental Management

Part 301 Major Program Issues
and Decisions

Chapter 2 Public Participation in Decision-making   301 DM 2.6G

G. Responsible officials will survey and select techniques
for public participation which are appropriate both to the mission
of the unit and to the extent of possible public interest. Sample
techniques are listed below. These techniques may be used alone,
or in sequence with others. They may be used once or repeated.
In general, officials should consider the degree of formality useful
and appropriate to various stages of the decision process: select
the less formal techniques in initial stages (press releases,
speeches, informal meetings, etc.), and the more formal techniques
near the final decision point (public hearings, Federal Register
publications, etc.). In all cases, once Departmental officials
have determined that public participation is needed or useful,
they should consult with the Office of the Solicitor on legal
requirements applicable to that decision-making. The overall public
participation plan, closely tied to the decision-making process,
should be flexible enough that techniques may be added or dropped
as public input shows a new level of need or interest. Here is
a checklist of techniques.

(1) For announcing possible actions or need for action
and for supplying information (including public participation plans
themselves): releases to press and other media, direct mail, brochures,
reports, and speeches or presentations to interest groups, conferences,
schools, clubs, etc.

(2) For gathering opinion or reaction to issues, questions
or proposals: public hearings, less formal public meetings or forums,
"hotlines" and surveys or questionnaires. (Any survey or question-
naire must conform to requirements of the Office of Management
and Budget)

(3) To allow interaction and exchange of information and
opinions on issues, questions or proposals: workshops, advisory
boards, informal contacts, and several varieties of structured
"nominal group" discussions. These techniques may be structured
to develop alternatives or modifications. The "nominal group"
methods especially require skilled planning and leadership, but
they can be effectively used, for example, as a way to examine
feasible alternatives, or to help resolve conflicts between user
groups in cases where genuine trade-offs exist in the issues under
discussion.

Department of the Interior

DEPARTMENTAL MANUAL

Departmental Management

Part 301 Major Program Issues
and Decisions

Chapter 2 Public Participation in Decision-making   301 DM 2.6G(4)

(4) For feedback to those interested, any of the techniques
above may be appropriate. Techniques using discussion and inter-
action provide some instant feedback to participants. Feedback
should include not only intermediate or final decisions, but also
reference to the public views heard and considered in the participa-
tion process.

H. Officials throughout the Department, in consultation with
public affairs officers, will seek opportunities to improve the general
level of public knowledge about significant authorities and activities
of the Department, with provision for recorded comment and feedback.
Suggested means include periodic publication of calendars of antic-
ipated actions printed in popular as well as official press; periodic
open public meetings; periodic "open office" time; and other public
involvement techniques which, being regularly scheduled, could
lessen the need for numbers of separate public participation plans
or events.

2.7 Administration, Oversight and Evaluation.

A. Each Assistant Secretary and each head of bureau or office is
to establish effective procedures allowing public participation
early and at intervals throughout decision-making processes which
may significantly affect or interest them.

(1) Procedures will be available to the public before
June 30, 1979, and will be updated annually after that.

(2) Procedures will provide for responsible officials to
record enough information about any public participation process
they undertake so that public participation efforts throughout
the Department can be compared and evaluated. The record would note
as briefly as possible the usefulness of the bureau guidance, the
public participation plans and the techniques selected, along with
the adequacy of the manpower and other resources applied.

(3) Procedures will identify a staff contact point (public
affairs office or other as appropriate) to deal with or refer to
knowledgeable officials all matters bearing on public involvement;
circulate systematically key public involvement information among
interested parties including policy and program officials, public

affairs, training, and equal opportunity divisions, in Washington and the field; and compile periodic reports at least annually which may be either in memorandum form, or in the form of a transcript or minutes of a Department-wide meeting. Reports will briefly summarize key memorandums, decision documents and the records or reports required by these guidelines, and will highlight significant public involvement successes and failures for Departmental review and evaluation. The list of staff contacts will be available to the public.

(4) Procedures will provide for resolution of conflicts between legitimate public interests, where possible; and for systematic consideration of complaints from the public about their opportunities for participation.

B. In circumstances where emergency direction is called for and there is not time for public participation before the actions needed, responsible officials will determine if public participation is necessary or useful after the episode (such as natural disaster, pollution crisis or industrial accident requiring Departmental response), and will carry out appropriate public involvement procedures as soon as practicable. If the subsequent public input provides enough reason, initial decisions or guidance for future such responses will be reviewed and changed as necessary or useful.

C. Assistant Secretaries, and heads of bureaus and offices will be responsible for training programs to assure the continuing quality and usefulness of public participation plans and techniques appropriate to Departmental actions in which the public may be interested.

D. The Executive Secretariat will review issue documents submitted for Secretarial decision to be sure public participation was appropriately considered.

E. The Solicitor is assigned oversight responsibility for compliance of public participation procedures with laws governing public participation.

F. The Assistant Secretary -- Policy, Budget, and Administration, in consultation with the Director, Office of Public Affairs, has oversight responsibility for:

Department of the Interior

DEPARTMENTAL MANUAL

Departmental Management

Part 301 Major Program Issues
and Decisions

Chapter 2 Public Participation in Decision-making   301 DM 2.7F(1)

(1) periodic review of guidance issued by Assistant Secretaries and heads of bureaus and offices;

(2) response to questions, and resolution of issues and conflicts or complaints raised by public participation activities, and not resolved at other levels;

(3) systematic exchange of information and expertise on public participation throughout the Department;

(4) periodic orientation on public participation strategy related to both Department-wide performance and currently significant issues for policy officials and program managers at all levels;

(5) adequate training in the technical skills necessary to plan and manage public participation activities;

(6) consideration of special budget needs for public participation beyond legal and normal administrative overhead requirements. If he/she finds cause, the Assistant Secretary -- Policy, Budget, and Administration will make recommendation to the Secretary as to options for covering such costs.

G. The Assistant Secretary -- Policy, Budget, and Administration, in consultation with the Director, Office of Public Affairs, the Solicitor, the Under Secretary, the line Assistant Secretaries, and Senior Staff of the Department will periodically evaluate the effectiveness of the Department's total effort to involve the public in a meaningful way in the decision-making processes of the Department. Data reviewed in the course of the evaluation will include reports of the Assistant Secretaries, heads of bureaus and offices, and responsible officials, and will also include both random and systematic comment from the public.

2.8 Publication of Guidance.

A. This guidance will be made a part of the Departmental Manual and published in the Federal Register.

B. Future amendments to this guidance will be similarly published.

C. The Assistant Secretary -- Policy, Budget, and Administration, in consultation with the Director, Office of Public Affairs, and the Solicitor, will review, revise, circulate for comment, and publish amended guidance at any time that comment or experience with public participation proves gaps, excessive constraints, or other fault with these guidelines.

D. Even if no amendment is necessary, these guidelines will be reprinted periodically, at least annually, to help ensure access of a variety of citizens to decision-making in the Department which may impact or interest them significantly.

E. Responsible officials are encouraged to distribute these guidelines as widely as it may be useful to anyone interested in effective participation in the decision-making processes of this Department.

Attachment B

Reclamation Manual
Policy and Directives and Standards

Reclamation Manual / Policy CMP P03

Subject: Public Involvement in Reclamation Activities

Purpose: To ensure that whenever Reclamation actions may significantly affect individuals or groups, Reclamation will systematically provide opportunities for affected individuals, groups, and communities to be informed about the issues; as appropriate, participate in the definition of the problem, objectives, and possible solutions; and have their views documented and considered in Reclamation's decision-making processes.

Authority: Departmental Manual (DM) 301 Chapter 2 and supporting regulations, laws, and directives listed in tables 1 - 3 in the appendix of CMP 04-01.

Contact: Policy Projects Office, D-5010

1. **Goals and Objectives.** Reclamation will implement appropriate procedures for public involvement in a timely and effective manner for all Reclamation decisions that may significantly affect or interest the public. Appropriate public involvement must occur with the understanding that Reclamation cannot relinquish its legislated decision-making responsibility. Although the public will provide input to be considered in the decision-making process, the public does not make the decision. If the significance of a considered action is unknown, consult with a public involvement staff professional to determine whether public involvement is needed or useful. The goals of this public involvement policy are to:

   A. Ensure that programs respond to public needs and concerns within Reclamation's overall mission.

   B. Provide meaningful opportunities for the public to participate and provide input in the decision-making processes.

2. **Rationale for Public Involvement.** Public involvement in the Reclamation decision-making process is important for the following reasons:

   A. **Successful Missions.** Reclamation successfully serves the public, if the publics' concerns are considered in implementing programs. Public involvement:

      (1) Improves opportunities for developing successful agreements and solutions, minimizes litigation and disputes, ultimately reduces program costs and time, and enhances effectiveness.

      (2) Invites input from all stakeholders to ensure representation and consideration of differing perspectives and solutions and discloses legal, physical, and institutional constraints which could preclude possible options.

   B. **Credibility.** By consistently being open, fair, and honest, a public involvement process fosters both legitimacy and credibility. The public may not completely agree with the final

decision, but they may more likely support the action as a result of being involved in such a process.

C. **Accountability.** Public involvement ensures that Reclamation is accountable to its customers and stakeholders.

3. **Approach.** Public involvement is a conscious process requiring order and intent. The process must be:

A. **Open.** An open, fair, and participatory public involvement process helps Reclamation accomplish its agency and project-specific missions. Reclamation must incorporate partnerships, where applicable, to manage water and land resources effectively. Reclamation should ensure the adequacy of public involvement for activities in which the agency is involved.

B. **Flexible.** Public involvement must be appropriate to the specific situation and circumstances and must be incorporated into the decision-making process as soon as the need for action is recognized. The public involvement approach must be selected based on the nature of the issues and the public affected, which vary by location, program, and action. Understanding the particular situation and applying relevant, cost-effective, and useful techniques is necessary to attain the program's objective. Public involvement requires a thoughtful, flexible approach that can respond to changes throughout the decision process.

4. **Responsibility and Accountability.**

A. **Managers.** Managers are responsible for soliciting and considering appropriate public input at all levels of the decision-making process. Decisions regarding specific strategies for public involvement need to be determined at the lowest applicable level of the organization. Delegation of program responsibility carries with it accountability for public involvement. Responsibility for public involvement and subsequent decision-making must be at the same level.

B. **Resources.** Adequate resources--including staff, training, and funding--to facilitate public involvement processes is to be maintained and available at appropriate levels throughout Reclamation.

C. **Further Requirements.** Table 1 in the appendix of CMP 04-01 lists actions which trigger laws requiring public involvement. Table 2 describes the requirements under laws and regulations governing public involvement. In addition, most program- and project-specific enabling legislation carries with it authority for appropriate public involvement activities.

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(109) 1/11/00
NEW RELEASE

Reclamation Manual / Directives and Standards CMP 04-01

Subject: Public Involvement in Reclamation Activities

Purpose: To ensure that whenever Reclamation actions may significantly affect individuals or groups, Reclamation will systematically provide opportunities for affected individuals, groups, and communities to be informed about the issues; as appropriate, participate in the definition of the problem, objectives, and possible solutions; and have their views documented and considered in Reclamation's decision-making process.

Authority: Departmental Manual (DM) 301 Chapter 2 and supporting regulations, laws, and directives listed in tables 1 - 3 in the appendix.

Contact: Policy Projects Office, D-5010

1. Purpose and Benefits.

    A. **Purpose.** For Reclamation activities with a potential or perceived impact on individuals and groups, Reclamation will, as appropriate, provide interested publics:

- Opportunities to participate in the decision-making process,

- Information about decisions being considered, and

- Documentation of how the publics' input was considered.

    B. **Benefits.** Corollary benefits of public involvement include strengthening Reclamation's ability to:

- Address and resolve potential conflicts and issues before misunderstandings develop into active opposition and litigation.

- Develop supportable solutions.

- Build agency credibility.

- Educate the public about Reclamation's programs and objectives.

- Gain information and knowledge to effectively plan and carry out Reclamation's mission.

- Create inclusive and mutually beneficial relationships between Reclamation and the publics.

2. Definitions.

A. **Affected Publics** refers to individuals; customers; groups; organizations; communities; and officials of local, state, Federal, foreign, or tribal governmental entities that may be impacted by or interested in an action or decision. Factors which identify affected publics include: interests; jurisdiction; proximity; potential social, economic, and environmental impacts; resource use; and values.

B. **Consultation** means the exchange of information and advice in order to plan or make decisions. Consultation is to occur before decision-making.

C. **Participation** means the systematic opportunity for the public to know about and express their opinions on Reclamation actions and policies being considered, and to know that their views are considered in shaping decisions and become part of the record of the decision-making process.

D. **Public Involvement** is the systematic provision for affected publics to be informed about and participate in Reclamation decision processes. It centers around effective, open exchange and communication among the partners, agencies, organizations, and all the various affected publics. Because public involvement means inviting publics to be actively involved before a decision is made, it differs from public relations, information, or education.

E. **Public Information** (also public affairs) means communicating and disseminating information about Reclamation activities by using various methods to inform, advise, or educate.

3. **Actions or Decisions That Require Public Involvement.**

A. **General.** Public involvement will be undertaken to minimize or avoid potential problems and conflicts and maintain the quality of proposed and ongoing programs. Involvement must be tailored to the issues, action, and decision-making process. The level of public involvement can range from a telephone call to an affected agency (e.g., emergency actions) to a large-scale, long-term program (e.g., multi-state watershed management). Consultation requirements with other Federal, state, local, and tribal governmental entities are a part of public involvement. To determine the need for public involvement:

    (1) Consult applicable laws and regulations.

    (2) Consider how public involvement will help build productive relationships.

    (3) Consult with individuals, organizations, and agencies which might consider themselves affected by the action.

B. **Criteria.** As appropriate, it is Reclamation's policy to integrate public involvement into actions and decision processes that meet the following criteria:

    (1) Reclamation is responsible for the decision.

    (2) There is a potential or perceived potential for significant impact on an

individual, group, or community outside of Reclamation, or publics are interested or concerned.

(3) It is not part of a plan or program that has already been developed in consultation with the public.

(4) Conditions or actions have changed for a plan or program which was previously developed in consultation with the public.

C. **Actions With Other Groups.** Reclamation must retain responsibility for public involvement consistent with Reclamation's role in the decision process. This includes actions when:

(1) Reclamation has been designated as lead agency for National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) compliance.

(2) A program involves cooperation or partnership with other government agencies or non-government organizations.

(3) Resulting decisions or actions depend on or affect Reclamation facilities, operations, or resources or otherwise impact agency agreements, contracts, or other agency obligations and authorities.

D. **Internal Actions.** Actions exclusively involving matters of internal administration which do not impact external publics do not require public involvement.

E. **Emergency Events.** Emergency occurrences may not provide time for extensive public participation before Reclamation takes necessary actions. However, pre-event planning activities may be required (e.g., coordination with jurisdictions located downstream from our dams is required under Reclamation's Emergency Management Directives). Notification, consultation, or coordination with other relevant organizations to plan for or manage an emergency and its consequences constitutes the public involvement activity. Responsible officials will determine if public participation is useful or necessary and will carry out appropriate efforts as soon as practical.

F. **Consultation and Coordination.** Public involvement activities should include coordination and consultation activities with Reclamation staff who are involved in the same geographic area or dealing with the same publics and issues. Consulting with other Federal, state, local, and tribal governmental entities and affected publics is essential to the success of Reclamation activities and is required under specific regulations (see appendix).

(1) **Consultation With Native American Tribes.** Tribes are nations with which the Federal Government has a unique relationship requiring direct Government-to-Government consultation.

(2) **Special Groups.** Some related directives require identifying and analyzing potential effects on the interests of specific groups. These activities may require formal consultation with the affected publics (see legal requirements in the appendix).

G. **Litigation.** If public input indicates the possibility of litigation, appropriate managers must be notified immediately. If a Reclamation activity becomes the subject of litigation, public involvement practitioners, staff, and managers must immediately consult with the appropriate Solicitor's Office. As Reclamation's goal is to continue public involvement to the extent possible, practitioners and managers will work with the solicitors to develop a plan to facilitate public involvement activities. Reclamation must recognize that litigation may constrain public involvement, but the goal is to resolve as many issues on a level of conflict as low as possible.

4. Standards of Practice.

A. **Expectations.** Managers and practitioners must recognize that decision processes require flexibility and must check periodically during the process to ensure that the following expectations are met:

(1) Establish and maintain effective communication with affected publics throughout the project or program.

(2) Select public involvement activities based on the significance, type, and needs of the decision process and action.

(3) Clearly define the role of all participants and the scope and boundaries of the decision process and action.

(4) Educate publics on resource management issues so that they can participate effectively. Incorporate public input on the needs, objectives, resources and constraints, range of alternatives, evaluation, and implementation.

(5) Ensure agency decision processes are open, consistent, and structured to provide equal participation opportunities for all affected individuals, groups, and communities.

(6) Identify public concerns and values. Ensure that decision-makers understand and appropriately consider the publics' desires, needs, and concerns.

(7) Ensure that agency actions meet established standards for public notice and visibility under the requirements of applicable laws or policies such as NEPA or Indian Trust Assets policy. (See table 1 in appendix.)

(8) Document public involvement activities, public comments, and agency responses to provide a background for new participants and decision-makers, a record of decision (if applicable), and records for court litigation. Documentation includes public involvement plans (see paragraph 4D), modifications to plans, records of public input and feedback provided to the public, and summary reports.

(9) Use professional expertise to facilitate development of options, seek resolution of issues and agreement among individuals and groups, and avoid advocating and pre-committing to any particular alternative before the decision.

B. **Actions.** Reclamation will meet these expectations by:

(1) Knowing the key publics and the customers Reclamation serves and affects.

(2) Establishing and maintaining early and continuous two-way communication with publics and customers to identify opportunities or problem areas and provide appropriate opportunities for involvement. Note that publics and customers (both initial and latecomers) may change direction or add new perspectives during the process.

(3) Exchanging information with the public to facilitate their understanding of Reclamation programs and operations and Reclamation's understanding of their needs, desires, and concerns.

(4) Consulting with the public early and often on Reclamation programs and proposals to obtain timely input on problems, objectives, and solutions.

(5) Including Reclamation decision-makers in designing and implementing programs at all stages of public involvement.

(6) Maintaining active internal communication channels among agency disciplines and levels.

(7) Analyzing data from the publics to determine relevant information and the consequences of potential actions.

(8) Documenting and providing analyses of the publics' input and participation to managers and team members in a form relevant to the decision.

(9) Deciding on an agency course of action after appropriate consideration of the publics' views.

(10) Providing feedback to the publics on the final decision and how their input was considered.

C. **Resources.** Discretionary guidance (e.g., the *Public Involvement Manual, the Decision Process Guidebook*) shows how public involvement can be integrated into a decision process. Public involvement specialists are available to help meet these expectations.

D. **Public Involvement Program Plan.** For programs or actions requiring public participation beyond minimal levels, the following items will be addressed in a flexible program plan tailored to the action and updated as necessary:

(1) Issues or problems which seem to require an action or decision to resolve.

(2) Reclamation authorities related to the action or decision.

(3) Necessary decisions, how they will be reached, and who will decide.

(4) Specific objectives, techniques, and sequence of actions that will be used to

accomplish the necessary level of public participation and the flexibility necessary to cope with changing needs.

(5) Necessary communication and interaction with affected publics to complete each step in the decision-making process.

(6) Known interested and affected publics.

(7) Unique conditions and context surrounding the issues and publics that could affect selection of public involvement techniques.

(8) Procedures that will be used for documenting and analyzing input for decision-makers and tracking issues and input to show participants how the public's views were considered.

(9) Internal processess to evaluate the effectiveness of the public involvement effort.

E. **Review.** As programs, affected publics, and perceptions change throughout the decision process, periodic reviews are needed to ensure that the public involvement strategies are still consistent with program goals.

F. **Information-Gathering Activities.** Activities such as surveys, questionnaires, interviews, and interactive meetings must be conducted in compliance with the Freedom of Information Act, Privacy Act, and Paperwork Reduction Act, respecting the publics' right to privacy and accessibility (see appendix).

G. **Unknown or Reluctant Publics.** Efforts shall be taken to reach and involve reluctant or unknown publics who may be affected, using minority or special media, translated materials, etc., as appropriate.

5. Responsibilities.

A. Within the purview of their work, all Reclamation employees are responsible for public involvement when they interact with any publics (including non-Reclamation Federal, state, tribal, and local government entities; non-government organizations; and individuals). Program- and project-specific enabling legislation and authorities for Reclamation activities carry with them the authority for appropriate public involvement activities (see appendix).

B. Managers, team leaders, and decision-makers will, as appropriate, consider and incorporate public involvement early in the decision-making processes for Reclamation actions. Managers will also be responsible for keeping team leaders and others informed about their public discussions and negotiations so that public participation programs may be based on complete and current information and provide a consistent message to the public. As decision-makers, managers will ensure that public concerns are considered before their decisions. Team leaders and program managers will be directly responsible for considering this input in their activities.

C. Practitioners are specialists within the multidisciplinary team who provide unique knowledge, expertise, and skills in identifying public and issues, facilitating, and

communicating. They will be responsible for carrying out public involvement, including keeping abreast of the state-of-the-art approaches and tools, planning, executing, documenting, and keeping the publics and decision-makers informed.

D. Team members and professional staff will incorporate public involvement into their Reclamation activities. Work and program responsibility assignments will also carry the responsibility for ensuring that public input is analyzed, considered, and recorded. Contacts with individuals and groups in areas of expertise are considered public involvement activities.

E. Managers will ensure that training in public involvement is made available at the appropriate level for Reclamation staff. Managers and decision-makers will be provided conceptual training necessary for their duties. Team leaders, team members, and technical experts will be provided training to integrate public involvement into Reclamation activities. Practitioners, who will need to plan and implement activities with affected publics, will be provided training in state-of-the-art levels of public involvement techniques and expertise.

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Reclamation Manual / Directives and Standards CMP 04-01

Appendix A

Related Laws, Regulations, Executive Orders, and Policies

Before planning and undertaking public involvement activities, personnel must become familiar with applicable laws, regulations, executive orders, and other policies that trigger and govern public participation. Various actions within the same decision process will be governed by different laws; for example, taking a survey must follow the restrictions in the Paperwork Reduction Act, relocating citizens must follow actions laid out in the Uniform Relocation Act, etc.

Table 1 lists possible actions in a program or study and then shows which actions trigger what laws.

Table 2 briefly describes these laws and regulations as a general introduction to the applicable language and actions required. The first column cites the law (in the same order as table 1), the second column quotes or paraphrases the applicable language, while the third column lists major actions needed to comply with the law. This table is by no means a complete legal description; it merely introduces these requirements to assist readers in identifying further research necessary to comply with specific laws affecting their programs.

To use these tables:

A. Determine which actions the program might involve. (For example, the Purple Lake study involves taking a survey to determine issues in the area.)

B. Look down the first column of table 1 to find each action. (In this example, Survey or Questionnaire is the eighth item down the list.)

C. Look across that row and note any checked columns. These columns cite laws which apply to the action. (The proposed survey may be regulated by the Paperwork Reduction Act.)

D. Turn the pages of table 1 to list all relevant laws. Note that actions are in clusters which tend to trigger various groups of laws. (While surveys are only covered under the Paperwork Reduction Act, other actions may be covered under several laws and regulations which may be on more than one page.)

E. Find a summary of the applicable law(s) in table 2 by looking down the first column. These laws are listed in the same order as in table 1. (Paperwork Reduction Act is the seventh law across in table 1 and the seventh law down in table 2.)

F. Look at the second column of table 2 for applicable language and the third column for required agency actions.

Table 3 lists more regulations involved in related actions for further research.

These tables do not cover all regulations, policy, and executive orders. Suggestions for updates on new executive orders, laws, changes in the Departmental Manual, etc., should be forwarded to D-5010.

These tables are tools for accomplishing the task; however, other approaches and sources need to be considered. Several tools are available on the Internet for further reference:

- A description of relevant laws and regulations (http://www.usbr.gov/laws/pi.html)

- Some decision-making tools (http://www.usbr.gov/guide/toolbox.htm)

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Reclamation Manual
Directives and Standards

Table 1. - Reclamation Actions and Potential Triggering Legislation.

	Administrative Procedures Act (5 U.S.C. 551 et seq., June 22, 1946)	E.O. 12862 on Customer Service (September 11, 1993)	E.O. 12875 Enhancing Intergovernmental Partnership	Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) of 1974	Government Performance and Results Act of 1993	Intergovernmental Cooperation Act of 1968 (P.L. 90-577)	Paperwork Reduction Act of 1980
Action							
Relocate or Displace Citizens	✓						
Customer Service		✓			✓		✓
Historic Properties/Cultural Resources							
Obtain Planning or Construction Funding	✓						
Establish and Change Rules or Requirements							
Techniques							
Survey or Questionnaire	✓						✓
Public Indirectly Requests Information From Reclamation	✓			✓			✓
Reclamation Requests Personal Information From the	✓						
Process							
Advisory Committee						✓	
Partnership With Other Agencies			✓				
Impacts							
Economic Impacts							
Historic Sites/Cultural Resources							
Minority/Ethnic/Low Income							
Threatened and Endangered Species							
Wetlands							
Native American							
Reservation or Sign on Reservation Land							
Indian Trust Assets							
Funerary Objects and Associated Human Remains							
Sacred Sites							
NEPA Compliance and Programs							

Reclamation Manual
Directives and Standards

Table 1. - Reclamation Actions and Potential Triggering Legislation - (Continued).

	Privacy Act of 1988 Section 552a Title 5, U.S.C. 1993 revision	Departmental Manual DM 308 Committee Management	Departmental Manual DM 301.2 Public Participation in Decisionmaking	Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) of 1972 (P.L. 92-463, Section 2)	E.O. 12838 Termination and Limitation of Federal Advisory Committees	E.O. 12866 Regulatory Planning and Review	Principles and Guidelines March 10, 1983
Action							
Relocate or Displace Citizens			✓				
Customer Service			✓				
Historic Properties/Cultural Resources			✓				
Obtain Planning or Construction Funding			✓			✓	✓
Establish and Change Rules or Requirements			✓				
Techniques							
Survey or Questionnaire							
Public Indirectly Requests Information From Reclamation							
Reclamation Requests Personal Information From the Public							
Process							
Advisory Committee	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Partnership With Other Agencies	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Impacts							
Economic Impacts			✓				✓
Historic Sites/Cultural Resources			✓				✓
Minority/Ethnic/Low Income			✓				✓
Threatened and Endangered Species			✓				✓
Wetlands			✓				✓
Native American							
Reservation or Sign on Reservation Land			✓			✓	
Indian Trust Assets			✓			✓	
Funerary Objects and Associated Human Remains			✓			✓	
Sacred Sites			✓			✓	
NEPA Compliance and Programs							

Reclamation Manual
Directives and Standards

Table 1. - Reclamation Actions and Potential Triggering Legislation - (Continued).

	Environmental Justice E.O. 12898	National Historic Preservation Act [Section 110 (16 U.S.C. 470 h-2)]	National Environmental Policy Act/Council of Environmental Quality	Executive Orders 11514 and 1191 Protection and Enhancement of Environmental Quality	Uniform Relocation Act of 1970	Endangered Species Act of 1973 as amended	Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act of 1958
Action							
Relocate or Displace Citizens	✓		✓		✓	✓	
Customer Service					✓	✓	
Historic Properties/Cultural Resources		✓	✓				
Obtain Planning or Construction Funding							
Establish and Change Rules or Requirements							
Techniques							
Survey or Questionnaire							
Public Indirectly Requests Information From Reclamation							
Reclamation Requests Personal Information From the Public							
Process							
Advisory Committee							
Partnership With Other Agencies							
Impacts							
Economic Impacts	✓		✓				
Historic Sites/Cultural Resources	✓	✓					
Minority/Ethnic/Low Income	✓		✓				
Threatened and Endangered Species			✓				
Wetlands			✓				
Native American							
Reservation or Sign on Reservation Land							
Indian Trust Assets			✓				
Funerary Objects and Associated Human Remains				✓			
Sacred Sites		✓	✓			✓	
NEPA Compliance and Programs	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓

Reclamation Manual
Directives and Standards

Table. 1 - Reclamation Actions and Potential Triggering Legislation - (Continued).

	Indian Trust Assets (ITA) Policy	Indian Self Determination Act (Self-Governance)	E.O. 13007 Sacred Sites	American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978	Native American Graves Protection and Rehabilitation Act (NAGPRA) of 1990
Action					
Relocate or Displace Citizens					
Customer Service					
Historic Properties/Cultural Resources					
Obtain Planning or Construction Funding					
Establish and Change Rules or Requirements					
Techniques					
Survey or Questionnaire					
Public Indirectly Requests Information From Reclamation					
Reclamation Requests Personal Information From the Public					
Process					
Advisory Committee					
Partnership With Other Agencies					
Impacts					
Economic Impacts					
Historic Sites/Cultural Resources					
Minority/Ethnic/Low Income					
Threatened and Endangered Species					
Wetlands					
Native American					
Reservation or Sign on Reservation Land	✓	✓		✓	
Indian Trust Assets	✓				
Funerary Objects and Associated Human Remains	✓		✓	✓	✓
Sacred Sites	✓		✓	✓	
NEPA Compliance and Programs					

Reclamation Manual

Directives and Standards

Table 2. - Explanation of Laws, Regulations, Executive Orders, and Directives Applicable to Public Involvement.

Regulation/Executive Order	Applicable language	Actions required
Administrative Procedures Act (5 U.S.C. 551 et seq. June 22, 1946)	Statements of agency constitute legislative rules where they are within granted and delegated powers of the agency and are binding on the agency.	Reclamation will comply with its own policies, directives, and rules.
Cumulative Effects of Public Involvement (Rulemaking)	Grants the public the right to participate in rulemaking process and gives public right to comment on proposed rules.	Reclamation will make information available to the public, including rules, opinions, orders, records, and proceedings.
Customer Service E.O. 12862 September 11, 1993	All executive departments and agencies that provide significant services directly to the public shall provide those services in a manner that seeks to meet the customer service standard established in this order.	Agencies shall identify customers, survey customers, and front-line employees to determine kind and quality of services and barriers to those services; benchmark customer service performance against the best in the business; make information, services, and complaint systems easily accessible; and provide means to; address customer complaints. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approval is required to survey customers. (See Paperwork Reduction Act.)
Enhancing Intergovernmental Partnership E.O. 12875	Agencies will reduce the imposition of nonstatutory unfunded mandates upon State, local, and tribal governments.	Reclamation will establish meaningful and timely mechanisms for consultation and coordination with these affected parties in the development of regulatory proposals containing significant nonstatutory unfunded mandates.
Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) of 1974	Grants access to information to public upon request.	Unless specific provisions of the Act or the Privacy Act deny access, information is to be released within 20 days of a FOIA request.
Government Performance and Results Act of 1993	To systematically hold Federal agencies accountable for achieving program results. To set program goals, measure performance against those goals, and report publicly on their progress.	To improve program effectiveness and accountability by promoting a new focus on results, service quality, and customer satisfaction. To improve service delivery by planning for meeting program objectives and providing information about program results and service quality.
Intergovernmental Cooperation Act of 1968 (P.L. 90-577)	Regulations shall promote sound and orderly development of urban and rural areas by considering such things as an appropriate choice of use for land development (e.g., housing, commercial, industrial), conservation of natural resources, balanced transportation systems, and adequate outdoor recreation and open space areas.	Public involvement—consult with other agencies and interface with social analysis infrastructure impact evaluation, e.g., transportation, hospitals, schools, public safety, housing, etc., staffing and facility impacts.
Paperwork Reduction Act 1995	Minimizes the public burden of data gathering. It also makes Federal information policies and strategies as uniform and as coordinated as possible. Reclamation will not ask 10 or more people the same question or conduct surveys, interviews, or questionnaires without clearance from the OMB.	Get clearance from OMB for surveys of 10 or more people. General requests for comment and collection of information from persons on a voluntary basis in public meetings, workshops, or similar public participation activities is exempted from this requirement. The public will be provided with a 60-day comment period on proposed collection of information and a 30-day comment period after information collection applications have been submitted for OMB approval.
Privacy Act of 1988, Section 552a of Title 5, U.S.C., revised 1993	An agency shall not act or engage in a practice that breaches an Information Privacy Principle. Personal information shall not be collected by a collector for inclusion in a record or in a generally available publication unless: (a) the information is collected for a lawful purpose directly related to a function or activity of the collector; and (b) the collection of the information is necessary for or directly related to that purpose.	Personal information means information or an opinion (including information or opinions forming part of a database), whether true or not, and whether recorded in a material form or not, about an individual whose identity is apparent, or can reasonably be ascertained, from the information or opinion. Any personal record must be safeguarded in accordance with Privacy Act procedures. Contact Reclamation's Privacy Act Office regarding systems of records covered by this Act.

Reclamation Manual

Directives and Standards

Table 2. - Explanation of Laws, Regulations, Executive Orders, and Directives Applicable to Public Involvement - (Continued).

Regulation/Executive Order	Applicable language	Actions required
DM 301.2 **Public Participation in Decisionmaking**	Interior will offer the public meaningful opportunities for participation in decisionmaking processes leading to actions and policies which may significantly affect or interest them.	Reclamation will involve the public in the decision process and document that involvement.
Federal Advisory Committee Act of 1972 (FACA) **(P.L. 92-463, Section 2)** **Termination and Limitation of Federal Advisory Committees** **E.O. 12838** **(Also E.O. 12875)**	Form advisory committees only when essential and terminated when they are no longer needed. Standards and uniform procedures should govern their establishment, operation, and duration. Congress and the public shall be kept informed with respect to the number, purpose, membership, activities, and cost of advisory committees. The function of advisory committees should be advisory only. All matters under their consideration should be determined in accordance with law by the official agency or officer involved.	While advisory committees frequently are useful to furnish expert advice and diverse opinions and ideas to the Federal Government, the law mandates limitations on their use. To fulfill Federal responsibilities under FACA, Reclamation will systematically ensure fair, open access to meetings and advisory committees, document advisory committee activities, govern the role of advisory committees in decisionmaking processes, and fulfill Federal responsibilities.
DM 308 **Committee Management**	Promote more efficient committee management through avoiding duplication and unnecessary committees, and provide for systematic recording and availability of information.	Reclamation will use DM 308 as implementation directives and policy guidance for compliance with FACA.
Reclamation Project Act of 1939 (43 U.S.C. 485h) **(43 CFR 425.2.2)**	"Provide an opportunity for submission of written data, views, and arguments, and shall consider all substantive comments so received."	Reclamation will provide notice of contract actions 60 days before publishing announcements.
Regulatory Planning and Review E.O. 12866	Harmonize Federal regulatory actions with related state, local, and tribal regulatory and Government functions.	Reclamation will explore and, *where appropriate*, use consensual mechanisms for developing regulations, including negotiated rulemaking. Proposed rules will have a comment period of 60 days. Comments will be addressed in the final rulemaking package published in the *Federal Register*.
Principles and Guidelines **(Economic and Environmental Principles and Guidelines for Water and Related Land Resources Implementation Studies, March 10, 1983)**		
- 1.4.3 General Public Participation	Interested and affected agencies, groups, and individuals will be provided opportunities to participate throughout the planning process.	In consultation with affected publics, a coordinated public participation program should be established with agencies and groups. Efforts to secure public participation should be pursued through appropriate means such as public hearings, public meetings, workshops, information programs, and citizen committees.
- 1.4.4 Review and Consultation	Reviews and consults with interested and affected agencies, groups, and individuals are needed in the planning process.	Consult with all interested groups to ensure their input is part of the decisionmaking process. Seek their review and incorporate the resulting comments much the same as required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).
- 1.4.8 Scoping	Planning should include an early and open process to identify both the likely significant issues to be addressed and the range of those issues.	Scoping (similar to NEPA requirements) includes affected Federal, State, and local agencies and other interested groups or persons throughout planning to ensure that all significant decisionmaking factors are addressed and that unneeded and extraneous studies are not undertaken.
- 1.6.2 Alternative Plan Formulation	Alternative plans will be formulated in consideration of four criteria: completeness, effectiveness, efficiency, and acceptability. Acceptability is the workability and viability of the alternative plan with respect to acceptance by State and local entities laws, regulations, and public policies.	Reclamation will systematically formulate viable alternatives to maximize opportunities to solve problems. Analysis will establish the acceptability of alternatives to determine their viability in the planning process.

Reclamation Manual

Directives and Standards

Table 2. - Explanation of Laws, Regulations, Executive Orders, and Directives Applicable to Public Involvement - (Continued).

Regulation/Executive Order	Applicable language	Actions required
- 1.7.1 Accounts, General	Four accounts are established to facilitate evaluation and display of the effects of alternative plans: (1) National Economic Development, (2) Environmental Quality, (3) Regional Economic Development, and (4) Other Social Effects.	Public involvement provides essential information for analyzing and using all four accounts in the decision process.
Environmental Justice E.O. 12898 CEQs Environmental Justice guidance under NEPA (ECM 95-3 and 98-2)	Federal agencies shall make achieving environmental justice part of their missions by identifying and addressing, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of its programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and low-income populations.	Federal agencies shall provide minority and low-income populations the opportunity to comment on the development and design of Reclamation activities and consider this in the decision.
National Historic Preservation Act [Section 110 (16 U.S.C. 470 h-2)]	The agency's preservation-related activities are carried out in consultation with other Federal, State, and local agencies, Indian tribes, Native Hawaiian organizations carrying out historic preservation planning activities, and with the private sector.	Consultation is required with State Historical Preservation Offices when cultural resources are affected. Other cultural resources guidance is provided in the RM.
NEPA/CEQ - Scoping (40 CFR 40 CFR 1501-1508, 516 DM 2.6)	Scoping is the early and open process for determining significant issues related to a proposed action that will be addressed in NEPA compliance.	Use formal and informal scoping activities (e.g., meetings, workshops) throughout the decision process to look at various perspectives that define the critical elements, resources, and interactions in the study.
- Public Involvement (40 CFR 1506.6, 516 DM 3.3.)	Public involvement processes should begin early so that environmental concerns can be discussed with the public as the plans are developed and evaluated. Development and implementation of a PI plan should begin as soon as it is determined that NEPA compliance is necessary.	Participants are to be present at important scoping meetings, public hearings, etc., to provide information concerning non-Reclamation objectives associated with the proposed actions.
- Public Notification	Involve the public in preparing and implementing NEPA procedures.	Reclamation will provide public notice of intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statements (EIS), NEPA-related hearings, public meetings, and the availability of EISs. Reclamation will provide information to those who have requested it on an action.
- Public Hearings, 455 DM 1.1 Discretionary Hearings	Public hearing(s) must be held on all draft EISs.	The draft EIS should be available to the public for at least 15, and preferably 30 days, before the hearing. A notice of the public hearing must appear in the *Federal Register* at least 30 days before the hearing date.
- Social Analysis (40 CFR 1502.6)	Include the relationship between local short-term uses of man's environment and the maintenance and enhancement of long-term productivity in every recommendation or report on proposals for legislation and other major Federal actions significantly affecting the quality of the human environment.	NEPA compliance documents will be prepared using an interdisciplinary approach, including social analysis, which will ensure the integrated use of the natural and social sciences and the environmental design arts.
- Public Review (40 CFR 1506.10, 516 DM 4.24)	The public will have time to review and comment on draft EISs and environmental assessments (EAs).	**Draft EIS**.—Minimum review of 60 days after the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) publication of the notice of availability. A notice of public hearing must be published in the *Federal Register* and at least one public hearing held during the draft EIS public review and comment period. **Draft EA**.—An informal notice that an EA has been prepared.

Reclamation Manual
Directives and Standards

Table 2. - Explanation of Laws, Regulations, Executive Orders, and Directives Applicable to Public Involvement - (Continued).

Regulation/Executive Order	Applicable language	Actions required
- Consultation and Coordination (CFR 1500.2 and 1502.25)	Consultation will be included in the NEPA compliance document with agencies or technical experts that participated in the project planning process and provided significant information and recommendations for inclusion into the analysis process.	The consultation and coordination chapter of a NEPA compliance document will contain a narrative history of the relevant public involvement actions that have taken place or are expected to take place during the planning of the project. It may list or describe specific work meetings, scoping sessions, public meetings, and any other consultation and coordination activities.
Protection and Enhancement of Environmental Quality E.O. 11514, amended by E.O. 11991	Agencies will develop procedures (i.e., public hearings, information on alternative courses of action) to ensure the provision of timely public review and understanding of Federal plans and programs with environmental impact in order to obtain interested party views.	Consultation may be required. The following provide guidance on this executive order: ! Reclamation Manual system Environmental Policy and Directives ! NEPA Handbook
Uniform Relocation Act of 1970	Provides for uniform and equitable treatment of persons displaced from their homes, businesses, or farms by Federal or federally assisted programs and to establish uniform and equitable land acquisition policies for Federal and federally listed programs.	Whenever acquiring real property for a program or project by a Federal agency results in displacing anyone, the agency shall reimburse and provide relocation planning, assistance coordination, and advisory services.
Endangered Species Act of 1973 as amended	This Act protects animal and plant species currently in danger of extinction (endangered) and those that may become endangered in the foreseeable future (threatened).	Section 7 of this Act requires Federal agencies to ensure that all federally associated activities within the United States do not harm the continued existence of threatened or endangered species or designated areas (critical habitats) important in conserving those species. Agencies must consult with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), which maintains current lists of species designated as threatened or endangered, when affects on a listed species may occur. The FWS has established a system of informal and formal consultation procedures.
Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act of 1958	Ensures that wildlife conservation receives equal consideration and is coordinated with other features of water resource development programs.	Whenever Reclamation proposes to alter or modify any body of water for any purpose, Reclamation must first consult and coordinate with the FWS and the affected state fish and game agency(ies). This consultation and coordination will address ways to conserve wildlife resources by preventing loss of and damage to such resources, as well as to further develop and improve these resources.
Indian Trust Assets (ITA) Laws and Policy	The United States has a trust responsibility to protect and maintain rights reserved by or granted to American Indian tribes or individuals by treaties, statutes, and executive orders.	ITA identification will involve consultation with potentially affected tribes, Indian organizations or individuals, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Office of American Indian Trust, the Solicitor's Office, and Reclamation's Native American Affairs Office (or the regional Native American Affairs Coordinator). Reclamation will consult directly with the tribes potentially affected to identify and analyze potential impacts, and this consultation will be documented in the NEPA compliance document, along with a statement of potential impacts on ITA. Any anticipated impacts to Indian trust resources from a proposed project or action by bureaus and offices will be explicitly addressed in environmental documents.

Reclamation Manual
Directives and Standards

Table 2. - Explanation of Laws, Regulations, Executive Orders, and Directives Applicable to Public Involvement - (Continued).

Regulation/Executive Order	Applicable language	Actions required
Sacred Sites E.O. 13007	Each executive agency will, to the extent practicable, accommodate access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites by Indian religious practitioners and avoid adversely affecting the physical integrity of these sites. Where appropriate, agencies will maintain the confidentiality of sacred sites.	Agencies shall report procedures implemented or proposed to facilitate consultation with appropriate Indian tribes and religious leaders and the expeditious resolution of disputes relating to agency actions affecting sacred sites.
American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978	Protects and preserves the inherent right to believe, express, and exercise the traditional religions of American Indians, Eskimos, Aleuts, and Native Hawaiians.	Federal departments, agencies, and other instrumentalities responsible for administering relevant laws will consult with Native traditional religious leaders to determine changes necessary in policy to protect and preserve Native American cultural and religious practices.
Native American Grave Repatriation Act	This Act assigns ownership and control of Native American cultural items, human remains, and associated funerary objects to Native Americans. It also establishes requirements for the treatment of Native American human remains and sacred or cultural objects found on Federal land. This Act further provides for the protection, inventory, and repatriation of Native American cultural items, human remains, and associated funerary objects.	When these items are inadvertently discovered, cease activity, make a reasonable effort to protect the items and notify the appropriate Indian tribe(s) and/or Native Hawaiian organization(s).
Reclamation Policies		
RM CMP Social Evaluation	This policy is to ensure Reclamation will systematically consider potential social impacts on individuals, groups, and communities in its decisionmaking processes.	Public involvement and social assessment must be closely coordinated for consistency to similar subject matter, but analysis, techniques, and purpose must remain separate.
RM CMP P02, Internet Policy	Encourages Internet use and sets procedures and approval for placing information on the Internet.	Information that affects national policy will be approved by the Public Affairs Chief or the Director of External Affairs and Policy Analysis.

Reclamation Manual
Directives and Standards

Table 3. - Related Subjects and Applicable Regulations.

Related subjects	Applicable regulations
NEPA Integration [40 CFR 1500.2 (c) and 1502.25]	Related environmental laws, rules, regulations, and executive orders will be integrated concurrently to the fullest extent possible in an EIS.
Native American	American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978 (P.L. 95-341); Reclamation's Indian Trust Policy, July 2, 1993; Native American Graves Repatriation Act of 1995; Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act of 1975; and applicable treaties.
Cultural resources	Reclamation Manual LND P01 and LND 02-01; Antiquities Act of 1906 (34 Stat. 225); Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979 (P.L. 96-95); Archaeological and Historic Preservation Act of 1974 (P.L. 93-291); Protection and Enhancement of the Cultural Environment (Executive Order 11593, 1971); and the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (P.L. 89-655) as amended (P.L. 95-515).
Environmental consultation	Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 (CERCLA or Superfund) (P.L. 96-510); Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Acts of 1986 (SARA) (P.L. 99-499); Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976 (RCRA) (P.L. 94-580); and the Toxic Substances Control Act of 1986 (TSCA) (P.L. 99-519).
Fish and wildlife consultation	Endangered Species Act of 1973 (P.L. 93-205), and the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act of 1958 (P.L. 85-624).
Recreation	Federal Water Project Recreation Act of 1965 (P.L. 89-72).

Attachment C

The Public Meeting Survival Guide

The

Public Meeting Survival Guide

A user friendly workbook for getting into - and out of - meetings [alive]

"Why should I use this book?"

"I've held lots of meetings before!"

We've all been to meetings that could have been more productive and/or efficient. Meetings are expensive and time consuming, therefore meetings you hold should be productive and professional. This booklet can help.

"But I don't get involved in PUBLIC meetings."

Well... 'ever hold a meeting for a half-dozen staff members to review a situation or solve a problem? Have you ever been to an inter-agency "coordination meeting" that went nowhere except for setting a time to meet again? Have you ever been instructed to "get some public input on this before we decide?"

If you think of anyone who participates in a "face-to-face sit-down" as your PUBLIC, the procedures and strategies outlined in this booklet will apply. The basic elements of objectives, agenda, content, roles, summary and implementation never change.

• Meetings are a necessary part of doing business, whether that business is public involvement or solving management problems. Use this meeting booklet as a tool to doing your job better!

GIVE IT A TRY... Flip through this booklet (it's been designed to be as painless as possible) and see if you can pick up a tip or two that may help your next meeting be more successful.

You've been to lots of meetings before that were something less than productive, professional or efficient. Use this workbook to help your meeting be all that the others weren't.

Contents	Steps

The first thing you must decide is **why** you are having this meeting. Your answer to that question does make a difference on the type of meeting required. Meetings generally fall into one of these categories.

1. This is a meeting you want to do. You need to hear from participants on an issue

2. This is a meeting that may be one of several sessions. It could be part of a planning process or similar longer-term activity. You want input that will help you in that effort.

3. Meetings that don't fit the above
   - You have to do it. It's a one shot deal.
     You don't want to, but somebody said you must!
   - You need input in order to solve a problem
   - You want to give information and get feedback
   - Someone else called this meeting.
     You have no control.

All Things Considered

You are involved in this meeting. It is important that you be professional about it – meaning it is not a waste of your time or theirs. This booklet will help you be efficient, productive and responsible with your participation.

Good Luck!

Helpful Hints

Your public might be:

- An interagency group
- A group of your own staff working on an issue

As well as:

- Citizens or representatives of user groups

Therefore a Public Meeting may be appropriate when you want:

- Information or advice
- Their involvement in solving a problem or making a decision
- Clarification of an issue
- Public pressure has prevailed
- The issue involves several groups

A public meeting is *not* appropriate when:

- The decision has been made
- There is inadequate data
- There is not enough time to deal with input
- Emotions are too high to allow constructive input

The second step is to decide how much involvement you expect or want in this meeting.

1. Get input (information, ideas, advice)

2. Develop decision (active involvement in solving a problem)

3. Get reactions to plans or present information.

• If your intent is to explain or inform people of a decision, a meeting may not be appropriate.

All Things Considered

Don't try to fool your public!! If a decision has already been made, tell 'em of the decision in other ways, such as a news release, press conference, newsletter, printed statement, etc. "Meeting" implies you are willing and able to accept input.

Now, ask yourself some key questions about who you want to be involved in this process.

(Don't try to write anything now, just think about the questions. The worksheet comes later.)

Audience:

- **Who are they?**
- **What do they know about the topic?**
- **What is their attitude about the process, the agency, you?**
- **Are all sides of the issue represented?**
- **Are all groups affected by the issue represented?**
- **Who are the decision makers... and will they be present?**

All Things Considered

Make sure all the key players are involved on all sides of the issue *and* from the agency – If anyone is missing, the outcome will be suspect for everyone, and you just held a tough meeting for nothing.

Prior to the meeting:

- If you are not sure about answers to these questions, make a few phone calls!
- Ask a known critic who his/her adversary might be.
- Ask the meeting participants "Who else needs to know about this issue."
- Ask who needs to be at the next meeting to resolve this issue.
- If the "big guns" can't come – have them send someone with the authority to act for them. If they won't delegate the decision, then hold a meeting when they *can* come.
- A decision doesn't have to be made at the meeting, but the decision maker does need to be there.

Helpful Hints

Public Meetings Are:

- Most effective *early* in a plan or decision process

- Used as "scoping" or "What do you think?" input sessions.

Meetings then become a positive component of a reasonable process.

Meeting Formats (Examples)

1. Open house
2. Small group break-out
3. Staff panel discussion
4. Question & Answer
   (Like Donahue and Oprah)
5. Presentation/ discussion
6. Explanation/testimony
7. _____
   (Whatever you need)

All Things Considered

Determining the meeting format can be tricky. You might want to talk with your public affairs experts for suggestions.

STOP
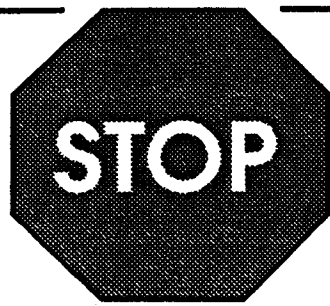
You've made a couple of decisions.

Before you go any further, tear out the following page and use it as a work sheet as you go through the steps. When you're finished, the work sheet will have a complete outline of your meeting plan.

All Things Considered

Most of the time the "public" attends meetings to tell you what *they* think. The days are over when government can hold a meeting, dump a lot of data on folks, and expect them to agree. Remember, meetings provide a forum primarily for emotional input – be prepared for it! You may want to talk to your public affairs person at this point.

Meeting Worksheet

1 WHY ARE YOU HAVING THIS PUBLIC MEETING

Write in what you are trying to accomplish.

Jot down your answer as a sentence, "I want to..."

WHAT'S THE LEVEL OF INVOLVEMENT? 2

3 WHO IS THE AUDIENCE?

Answer questions briefly.

WHAT MEETING FORMAT DO YOU WANT? 4

5 WHAT ARE MEETING OBJECTIVES?

Write down some SMART objectives.

cut here

Meeting Worksheet

6 What is Your Agenda?

7 ARE YOU READY TO PLAN YOUR PRESENTATION?

Use effective presentations worksheet in appendix.

8 DO YOU WANT INPUT?

Decide and list here...

9 HOW DO WE END IT ALL

Refer to bottom of checklist.

10 PLAYERS ON YOUR TEAM

Name	Role

11 DETAILS, DETAILS

Refer to meeting checklist.

12 POST GAME

Evaluation Summary _____

Your Viewpoint _____

Participant's View _____

cut here

Helpful Hints

Objectives should be..

Sensible

Measurable

Attainable

Relevant

Trackable

Clearly separate the objective of *this* meeting .....
..... from the objective of your program, plan or issue-solving process.

Objectives become a ruler to measure productivity.

The next step is to identify your meeting objectives. Objectives should sound like this:

"At the end of this meeting,
I want the audience to......

Examples:

– understand the new rules on..."
– know the difference between..."
– develop lists of alternatives on..."

Once you have decided on objectives, transfer them to your work sheet for easy reference. Most meetings are two-fold – presenting information *and* receiving input from all attendees.

Read on —>

All Things Considered

Always identify your objectives verbally and display them visually at the start of the meeting – both for your process and for the meeting at hand. When folks get long-winded or off track, refer to the objective statement and ask... "How do your comments help us meet these objectives?"

A written and displayed agenda is not optional – it's a must! It should include the following.

- A welcome, introduction and statement of purpose for the meeting (objectives)
- A written agenda noting start, stop and break times
- A sequential breakdown of meeting content
- A "what happens next" explanation

Sample Agenda

7:00 - Welcome/Introduction
7:10 - Obj./Agenda/Procedure
7:15 - Staff subject presentation
7:45 - Explain procedure for input
7:50 - Public comments/questions
8:30 - Break
8:45 - Public input continued
9:50 - Wrap-up/Summary of meeting
10:00 - Adjourn

All Things Considered

The agenda sets up the ground rules that can be enforced by the meeting manager. Changes can only be made by consensus of all participants (including you). State this at the beginning of the meeting. The agenda and its timeline may be your only defense in a discussion that takes a wrong turn.

Helpful Hints

*Always* schedule a break (even a short one) in your meeting.

Why?
Because:
- Comfort leads to reason. Uncomfortable people are difficult.
- No one is at their best when uncomfortable.
- Energy vent – a chance to cool off if emotions are high
- "The agenda said we had to." (You all agreed an hour ago, so do it!) This puts the focus back on the process, regardless of the issue.
- Gives you a chance to re-group. Changes in agenda may be suggested to meet objectives.
- Gives those who really don't want to stay a chance to split (and they will).
- Chance to refocus group on objectives and agenda when they return.

STOP

(again)

TIME OUT

By giving your
meeting this much
thought, your
chance to be a part
of a professional,
productive meeting
is getting better

Your professional-
ism in conducting
this meeting will
inspire professional-
ism in participants.
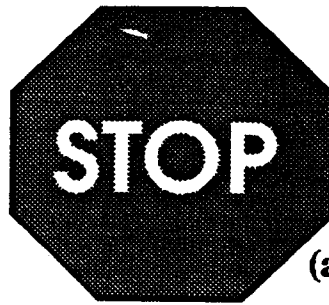
Notice how many decisions you
have made so far?

You are well on the way to
accomplishing your meeting.

Now you are going to get into some
of the agenda content. But first,
give *yourself* a break – then come
back.

All Things Considered

Remember all those boring, frustrating, non-produc-
tive meetings you've attended in the past? Use this
workbook to make yours everything those weren't.

Welcome Back!

The agenda has been developed and now it's time to put the meat on the bones.

You need to think about how to package the information that you would like to give your audience.

1. Make an outline of the information to be delivered. (See appendix for a briefing guide.)
2. Decide on the best format (Slides, handouts, overheads, wall charts, videotape, hands-on activity, none of the above, all of the above)
3. Decide who is to present it.
4. Set up room to best accomplish objectives.

All Things Considered

If you are holding a meeting to "go over" information already in print – re-write it! *Send* it out for review, and take written comments. *Then* hold a meeting to iron-out concerns.

Helpful Hints

- Your presentation adds a *verbal* and *visual* component. Both will reinforce any technical information or data (which is best-handled in a written hand-out).

- Extensive or complex data should be made available to participants *before* the meeting.

- Review of multiple pages of info or data is *not* a reason to hold a face-to-face meeting.

- If someone is only patiently waiting for you to finish so they can tell you what *they* think – they are probably not listening.

Note: Meetings often are a poor *learning* environment!

Helpful Hints

Input can be:

- **Brainstorm lists of:**
  - concerns
  - issues
  - problems
  - pros and cons
  - opportunities
- **Participants can:**
  - prioritize
  - group their input
  - resolve concerns one at a time
- **Written**
  - response
  - formal letters
- **Verbal**
  - captured on a flipchart
  - tape recorded

On highly emotional or polarized issues:

- Have participants write down their concerns, then have participants share one per person until all are out. (Note: they can turn their cards in if they do not want to share.)
- Set a maximum time limit per individual before you start – then stick to it!

So, you've decided how to *give* the people information, but you also need to decide *if* you want to get information *back* from them.
(Check steps 3 and 4 again)

If you do want to get information back, decide in what form it will be. Ask for the information the way you can use it.

- Brainstorm lists
- Written comments
- Verbal feedback
- Prioritized preferences, etc.

All Things Considered

Since you have gone to all this trouble to try and get input – make sure it's useable. Use a handout that summarizes your information. Use a one-pager that can be written on, folded and mailed in later. Try to make the point that you want serious comment, not a "vote by mail" numbers effort.

9 HOW DO WE END IT ALL?

So, you've made it through the body of the meeting okay...
Now how do you plan to finish this thing?

- What will be done as a result of this meeting?
- When?
- By whom?
- How will participants be notified or involved in efforts?
- What steps and schedule remain in the overall process?
- Any elements of the process/decision that are outside of your agency's control?

Answers to the above will provide a basis for closure of your meeting.

Identify the timeline

- Let participants know how their input will make a difference.

- Clearly identify how the decision will be made.

- Say who will make the decision.

- Let participants know when the decision will be made (timeline again).

All Things Considered

We want to end as professionally as we started. Referring to the objectives and agenda can summarize and also foster a sense of accomplishment. Even if everyone still disagrees on the issue, they can take some pride in having tried to resolve it in a civilized manner.

Now that your meeting is planned, here are some things to make it run more smoothly.

PLAYERS 10

Helpful Hints

Recorder:
(often overlooked, yet key role)

- Don't recruit from the audience unless that person is briefed on the rules.
- Checks with facilitator, not with audience for clarification.
- Writes quickly, gets down key words – not a verbatim transcript.
- Doesn't contribute own ideas.

Flipchart rules:
- 12-15 lines per chart.
- Switch colors with each new contribution. Use dark colors for text; only use red for highlights.
- Label and number pages.
- Post charts on wall.
- When full, *never* flip a page out of sight (this leads to redundancy and stifles higher-level thought).
- Abbreviations are acceptable.
- Spelling is not important – legibility is!

Everybody at your meeting has a role to play. Defining these roles is critical to a successful outcome.

Key roles are: • = critical role x = secondary role

- *Meeting manager:* Sets the tone, keeps group on task and on time, assures fairness of input, moves through agenda
- *Fact or contact person:* Provides necessary information, does not "editorialize" and is not defensive
- *Participants:* Have a right to be *heard*, not to *prevail* (at the expense of others or staff)
- *Decision maker:* Adds legitimacy to meeting, should be a listener not a responder
- x *Facilitator:* Plays similar role as meeting manager, but in smaller groups
- x *Recorder:* Writes input on charts (see Hints), does not interact with participants, does not contribute own ideas
- x *Elected official:* Listens, supports staff with opening statement, welcomes participants

All Things Considered

Your boss, the expert on your issue, participants, etc. all have roles. At the start of the meeting, get agreement on who does what and stick with it. If "the boss takes over" or a politico is playing the crowd – tough it out until the break, then confront/resolve discrepency and re-adjust as necessary. It is not professional nor productive for a meeting to dissolve into frustration for all.

You're at the end (whew!) The meeting is all planned. So now just go and do it. Right?.... Wrong!

What about logistics – where should you hold it? Do you have all the equipment you need? Do you even know what you'll need?

There's a checklist in the appendix that will help you figure out what you need, then help you keep track of getting it together.

All Things Considered

If you are organized, unhurried and under control with the physical setting and logistics, your credibility will be enhanced and your confidence will carry over into the meeting content.

Helpful Hints

- Start on time... End on time.
- Bring your own slide/film projector if possible.
- Orient room toward a wall if lots of chart-hanging is expected.
- If microphone is available, USE IT. (Nothing is more frustrating than not being able to hear).
- Arrive (minimum) of one hour before start time.
- Use nametags for staff – participants too if small group.
- Sign the way to meeting room from parking lot.
- *Always* post objective and agenda.
- Find the light switches ahead of time.
- Have handouts available at the door, don't pass them out during the meeting.
- Consider having a sign-in and/or a mailing-list sheet.

Helpful Hints

Evaluations

Be careful how you ask for evaluation. You don't want to leave with a long list of negatives on everyone's mind.

Simply ask:

"What are some things you like about this meeting... and what are some of the things we can do better next time?

• Ask participants to jot answers on a card.

• Ask if anyone would like to share any comments written on their card. (Take a few positives and negatives... thank everyone, and have them leave their cards on the way out.)

Now, you really are finished planning this thing. Right?... If you said "Wrong!" you're either a terrible cynic, or you're catching on to this process.

There's just one more thing... really. Once the actual meeting is over, you should decide how well you did. Evaluation not only tells you how what you accomplished, but can give you a feel for your next step in dealing with an issue; or help you realize what level you must hit with your next public involvement strategy.

All Things Considered

When it's all over, ask yourself:
• Do you need another meeting? (Go to page 1)
• How will it be different from this one?
You're well on your way to a positive, productive, professional meeting. Your survival is guaranteed. (Besides, workman's comp covers meeting related injuries.)

Special thanks to all who authored, reviewed, conspired and inspired the development of this publication.

Public Meeting Survival Guide
1990

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Effective Presentations
WORKSHEET

WHY... are you doing this?
Give them a **reason** for your effort. Use analogies in explaining how it fits into the big picture. Identify your place in the timeline.
<u>Briefly</u> give an overview using visuals if possible (title chart, graphic, logo, etc.), of the information you plan to cover in this presentation.

1

WHAT... is this based on?
Mixing the use of charts and graphs with verbal comments, deliver your background **data**. Outline the information and the steps you used in establishing that a need or problem exists. Have details available as handouts, don't try to cover everything verbally.

2

HOW... will it work
Identify the **problem** in more detail. Explain your solution in practical terms. Give them your "bottom line". Describe process/procedure needed to make it happen. How will things be different? Short and to the point!

3

SO WHAT... happens next?
Clarify how this is important to <u>them</u>. Explain how your **action** will be carried out and how it will affect them. What happens if you do nothing? In closing, reiterate the Why one more time, then ask for comment/discussion.

4

Your presentation should take a comfortable 20 minutes, with 30 minutes as a maximum!

(See further instructions on back).

Things that help make your meeting work!

Things to do for———————— **Meeting**
     Date ————————————————
     Day ————————————————
     Time ————————————————
     Place ————————————————

Don't Forget to invite local...
- ○ Commissioners
- ○ Legislators
- ○ Key Public Officials
...personally to your meeting

BEFORE THE MEETING

- ○ Meeting space
- ○ Who has key to building?
- ○ Tables/chairs - enough?
- ○ (who puts 'em back?)
- ○ Can you darken?(Slides/film)
- ○ Public address system?
- ○ (find controls ahead of time)
- ○ Parking/central location?

- ○ Materials
- ○ Sign-up procedure
- ○ Mailing labels
- ○ Signs_
- ○ Name tags
- ○ Handout materials
- ○ Refreshments /cups,etc.

MEETING NOTICE
- ○ Mailing list
- ○ News media
- ○ Personal contacts
- ○ Purpose statement

VISUALS
- ○ Displays
- ○ Directional signs (from parking to door)
- ○ Slide program/overheads

AT THE MEETING
- ○ Physical arrangements
- ○ Don't use the stage!
- ○ Find the rest rooms
- ○ Wall space for charts/visuals
- ○ Tape-off unused seating
- ○ Room arrangements
- ○ Start on time, end on time
- ○ Money/PO for facility

- ○ Miscellaneous Supplies
  - •Flip carts and paper
  - •Magic markers (several colors)
- ○ Pens, pencils for sign-up
  - •Masking tape
  - •Extension cords
- ○ Projector/screen/take-up reel
  - •Recorder/tapes

AFTER THE MEETING
- ○ Document meeting - who will transcribe?
- ○ Add names to mailing list
- ○ Collect response cards/evaluations (who will summarize?)
- ○ Put everything back the way you found it!

- ○ What's been accomplished?
- ○ What's next?
- ○ Who will do it?

Dear Presentor,

When we talk to someone, we generally assume that they are listening to what we are saying. We also assume that if we explain things carefully, they will understand completely what we just said. After all, it makes perfect sense to us, right? Wrong!

Research in the education field, focusing on how people learn, has clearly defined four <u>different</u> kinds of learners. Some people can learn by just watching and listening to others talk. Some are much more comfortable and efficent learners when they read information. One group learns by actually participating in the process in order to "try it out" for themselves. And finally one group was found to be able to quickly assimilate information because they were impatient, wanting to "get on with it" to see if things are different as a result of this new information.

So, what does this have to do with your presentation? Simple. Your audience is a combination of the learners described above. In fact, all of us have learned things by all four ways at one time or another. If you want to be effective in getting the most comprehension of our subject by an audience, it makes sense to address all the ways that people learn.

The work sheet we've designed (see previous page) will help you cover all the learning "bases" with your presentation. The emphasis or time you place on each question depends on the kind of information you have. Very technical presentations spend a lot of time answering questions two and three, while a presentation of an idea or concept may dwell on questions one and four. But in either case, it is essential to touch on <u>all four</u> questions in order to have the best chance of your audience clearly understanding what you are trying to tell them.

Our natural tendency is to teach the way we like to learn. That's OK if your audience thinks and learns just like you, but chances are they don't; so you have to stretch your thinking a bit to give them information in a way that makes it easy for them to understand. If people understand what you are trying to tell them they will be better able to make decisions, find solutions, agree with you, or whatever it is you want from them as a result of your presentation.

Oh! One more thing. Those education researchers also found that people are more willing to listen and have better retention of subject matter if you present information answering the questions in the *sequence* we've suggested. Start with they WHY and proceed from there as you jot down the elements of your presentations on the worksheet.

Your presentation is important or you wouldn't be doing it. Use this worksheet to help them understand. Good luck!

AJ & Co. , 1989
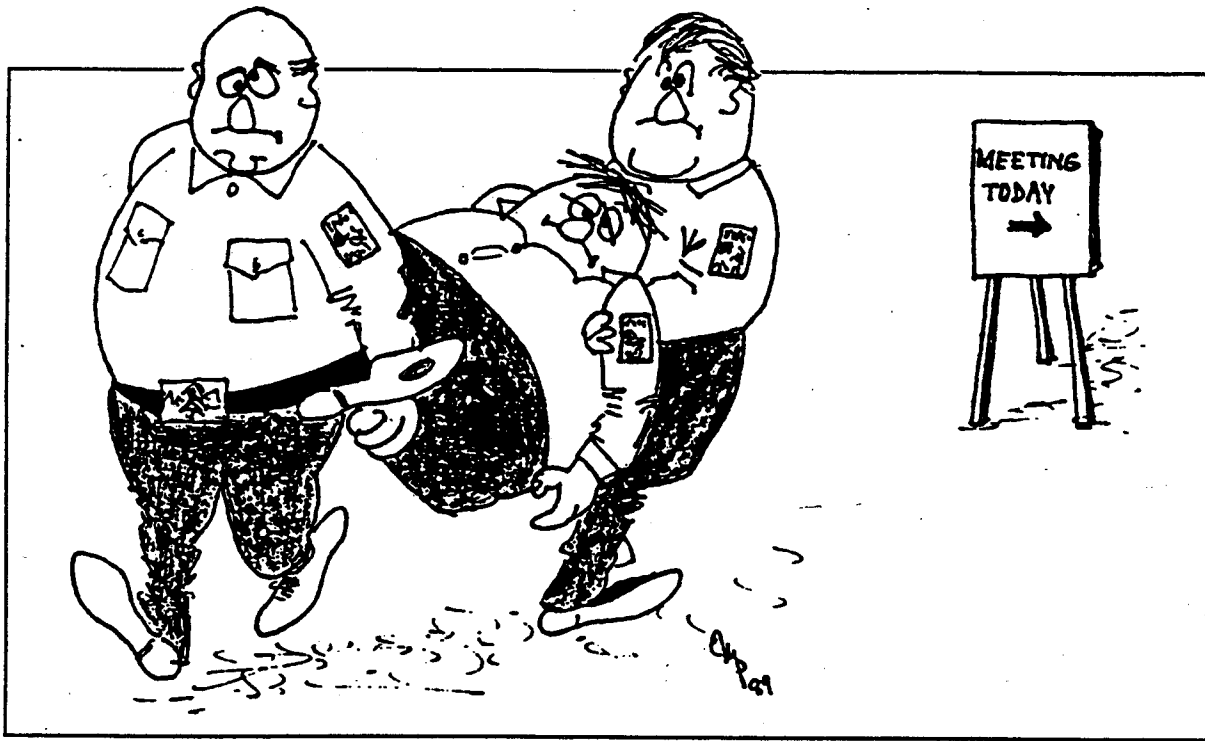
"If you give people a chance to be reasonable . . . they'll respond reasonably"
(Unknown bruised and bloody facilitator)

All Things Considered

We don't hold meetings to be dumped on, yelled at or used for sport by opponents. We also don't hold meetings just to "show the flag" . . . "convince 'em we are right" . . . or to "confuse and conquer." We have tough decisions with the resource at stake and we want their help. If that's not your motive . . .

DON'T HOLD A MEETING

U.S. Department of the Interior
Fish and Wildlife Service
911 N.E. 11th Avenue
Portland, Oregon 97232-4181

Oregon Department of
Fish and Wildllife
P.O. Box 59
Portland, Oregon 97207

Attachment D

Summary of Strengths and Weaknesses of Needs Assessment Techniques

Attachment D

This table lists several well-known public involvement techniques, with their corresponding advantages and disadvantages. Determine what resources you have available and use this table to help plan your public involvement activities.

Summary of strengths and weaknesses of needs assessment techniques

Public Involvement Technique	Major Strengths	Major Weaknesses
Secondary information	Can be obtained quickly, with little time spent in the local community	Does not include input from the impact population and requires good sociological detective work
Agency records	Can be obtained quickly, but requires time in community	Does not include input from the impact population and requires good sociological detective work
Key informant (expert input)	Can be obtained quickly and provides contact with the community	May not be representative of community and produces limited perspective
Advisory groups (task forces)	Includes representative input of community leadership	May not be representative of community and requires regular meetings
Community forums	Can include all segments of population and large amounts of input in short periods	Requires careful planning and may not be representative of minority viewpoints
Nominal group process	Generates a large amount of ideas in a short time	Requires expert leadership and may be best as a consensus-seeking technique
Delphi technique	Helps achieve consensus on community needs, best for technical issues	Requires expert leadership and time-consuming questionnaire preparation
Questionnaire Surveys		
Community studies (citizen-developed needs assessment agendas)	Involves citizens in the needs assessment process	Very time consuming; citizens may lose interest
Community studies (standardized needs assessment agendas)	Involves citizens in some of the needs assessment process but eliminates technical drudgery	Time consuming; citizens may think experts have major input
Community leader surveys	Ensures representation of all community leaders; does not require face-to-face meeting	Not representative of entire community and time consuming
Community-regional independent surveys	Good for comparing community needs with adjacent areas; is representative	Very expensive and requires highly trained research staff
Synchronized policy and issue surveys	Combines the nominal group process with questionnaire surveys	Requires cooperation between policymakers and experts in survey research
Jury Panels	Chooses an advisory group by random selection from the general population	Requires experience in group dynamics and survey research; an untested technique

Source: Burdge, R., 1998, page 210. (Copyrighted material reprinted with permission.)

Department of the Interior

The mission of the Department of the Interior is to protect and provide access to our Nation's natural and cultural heritage and honor our trust responsibilities to tribes.

Bureau of Reclamation

The mission of the Bureau of Reclamation is to manage, develop, and protect water and related resources in an environmentally and economically sound manner in the interest of the American public.

Technical Service Center

The mission of the Technical Service Center is to provide top quality technical services for managing, developing, and protecting water and related resources.