



United States Department of the Interior  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

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To: FM's

From: State Director, NM

Subject: Strategy for Streamlining Section 7 Consultations

The Regional Executive Committee of the Southwest Strategy has approved an interagency strategy for streamlining Section 7 Consultations in New Mexico and Arizona. The goal of the strategy is to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of Section 7 Consultations under the Endangered Species Act. This not only involves ensuring that agency actions reduce adverse effects, but also promote conservation of species and the ecosystem upon which they depend. The strategy is designed to result in streamlined consultations that are scientifically and legally sound and are completed with shorter average time frames.

A focal point of the strategy is effective communication with the Fish and Wildlife Service throughout the consultation process, but especially in the early phases of the process. This coordination will greatly facilitate understanding of the proposed action, describing potential effects to species and their habitats, and reaching agreement on the effects determination. Based on our past experience, effective accomplishment of these tasks will improve our consultations and speed the process.

The strategy also provides additional tools to assist in improving coordination, resolving issues and completing consultations. These include an interagency T&E program manager group, dispute resolution process, and development of guidance criteria for making effects determinations. The degree to which these tools help the consultation process will depend on our level of commitment to implement and refine them.

The attached strategy provides a means for improving our approach in completing Section 7 Consultations. The strategy will be an important component in our approach for conducting Section 7 Consultations in New Mexico. I strongly encourage you to embrace the concepts the strategy describes and utilize the tools and approaches in conducting our consultations. In many ways, the strategy creates a starting point that agencies can build upon. Our effectiveness will improve with consistent implementation of the principles and refinement of the tools identified in the strategy.

Additional copies of the strategy can be obtained on the New Mexico BLM internal and external website. If you have any questions, feel free to contact Paul Sawyer at (505) 438-7516.



Stephen D. Salzman  
Acting

1 Attachment:

1 - *Long-Term Strategy of Streamlining Consultations under the Endangered Species Act in Arizona and New Mexico*. 114 pages.

Distribution

WO-230 (LS-204)

RS-100

NM (930, P. Sawyer)

NM (954, Central Files)

NM (950, DSD)

NM (912, Attn: Mary White)