

# The Environmental Impact Statement Process

## INTRODUCTION

This chart presents the process by which actions for the Upper Las Vegas Wash Conservation Transfer Area (ULVW - CTA) will be reviewed to ensure full compliance with environmental regulatory requirements and to minimize potential environmental impacts during implementation. This process supplements the Record of Decision (ROD) for the Las Vegas Valley Disposal Boundary Final Environmental Impact Statement (LVVDB FEIS). The analytical process set forth in this procedure follows the general guidelines of the BLM for NEPA compliance (NEPA Handbook H-1790-1, BLM 1988).

## PURPOSE AND NEED

The purpose of this action is threefold; define the ultimate boundary of the ULVW - CTA, determine the allowable uses within the ULVW - CTA consistent with BLM's current management responsibilities, and identify the managing entity or entities for the ULVW - CTA.

The analysis of this SEIS is needed to protect sensitive resources, including fossils, cultural resources, and endemic plants, on public lands available for disposal within the ULVW-CTA study area, allowing for compatible uses, in accordance with other applicable laws.

## PROCESS

The SEIS will include five primary stages, each involving a series of related activities.

### Notice of Intent – July 6, 2007

The process begins with a Notice of Intent published in the Federal Register.

### Scoping Period – Through August 20, 2007

Scoping is the term used in the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations implementing the NEPA [40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Parts 1500 et. seq.] to define the early and open process for determining the scope of issues to be addressed in the EIS. The scoping process serves a number of purposes. The primary purpose of scoping is to provide an avenue to involve the public in identifying significant issues related to the management of the CTA. It also helps identify any issues that are not significant and can thereby be eliminated from detailed analysis in the EIS. The list of stakeholders and other interested parties is also updated and generally expanded during the scoping process. The public scoping process will help identify a range of alternatives that should be considered in the SEIS, and issues and concerns regarding the various alternatives. The scoping meetings provide an opportunity for the public to learn about the project and share any concerns or comments they may have. Additionally, the public may submit information and identify issues that are addressed during the SEIS process.

### Draft SEIS – Spring and Summer of 2008

The BLM prepares a Draft SEIS and makes it available to the public. This document generally includes the following:

- Summary
- Purpose of and need for action
- Alternatives, including proposed actions
- Affected environment
- Environmental consequences
- Notice of Availability

The completion of the Draft SEIS is announced in the Federal Register through a Notice of Availability. This notice includes specific information about the public comment period, including a time frame, notes of public meetings and information about how comments may be submitted. Public participation associated with the Draft SEIS is administered by the BLM.

### Final EIS – Fall of 2008

After the public comment period, a Final SEIS is prepared. This document includes descriptions of public comments and indicates how they were addressed in the Final SEIS. A Notice of Availability is posted in the Federal Register announcing the completion of the Final SEIS.

### Record of Decision – Fall of 2008

No sooner than 30 days after the Final SEIS is published, a Record of Decision describing the BLM's decision regarding proposed action is signed.

