

St. George

Planning Process

Overview of the Planning Process

The Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 (P.L. 111-11) directed the Bureau of Land Management's St. George Field Office (SGFO) to prepare management plans for the newly-designated Beaver Dam Wash National Conservation Area (NCA) and the Red Cliffs NCA. In May 2010, the SGFO published a Notice of Intent (NOI) to initiate a planning process that included the preparation of Resource Management Plans (RMPs) for the NCAs and an amendment to the SGFO RMP (1999) to consider two issues: nominations for Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs) related to "priority biological conservation" and designations for motorized vehicle travel. An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will be prepared to evaluate the alternatives proposed in the RMPs for the NCAs and the SGFO RMP amendment.

The SGFO was also directed by P.L. 111-11 to prepare a Comprehensive Travel and Transportation Management Plan for (Travel Management Plan) public lands in Washington County. An Environmental Assessment will be prepared to evaluate the alternatives proposed in the Travel Management Plan related to motorized and non-motorized route/trail designations.

Scoping Reports for the RMPs/EIS and the Travel Plan/EA are posted on the SGFO website and can be downloaded from that site (www.blm.gov/ut/st/en/fo/st__george.html).

Hard copies are available for review in the SGFO public room.



January 2011

What you'll find in the Scoping Report

Chapter 1 provides a background for this planning effort, its legal limitations/sideboards, and a summary of scoping efforts.

Chapter 2 summarizes the public comments. During the scoping period, 1,940 individuals provided comments concerning the future management of the planning area.

Chapter 3 presents the issues identified in the public comments that will be carried forward in the planning process.

Chapter 4 presents the issues identified in the public comments that are outside the scope of this process and explains why these issues will not be considered.

Chapter 5 reports on the data that was provided by the public during scoping.

Contact Information:

Keith Rigtrup
Planning Project Manager
St. George Field Office
345 East Riverside Drive
St. George, Utah 84770
(435) 865-3000
utsggrp@blm.gov



www.blm.gov/ut/st/en/fo/st__george.html



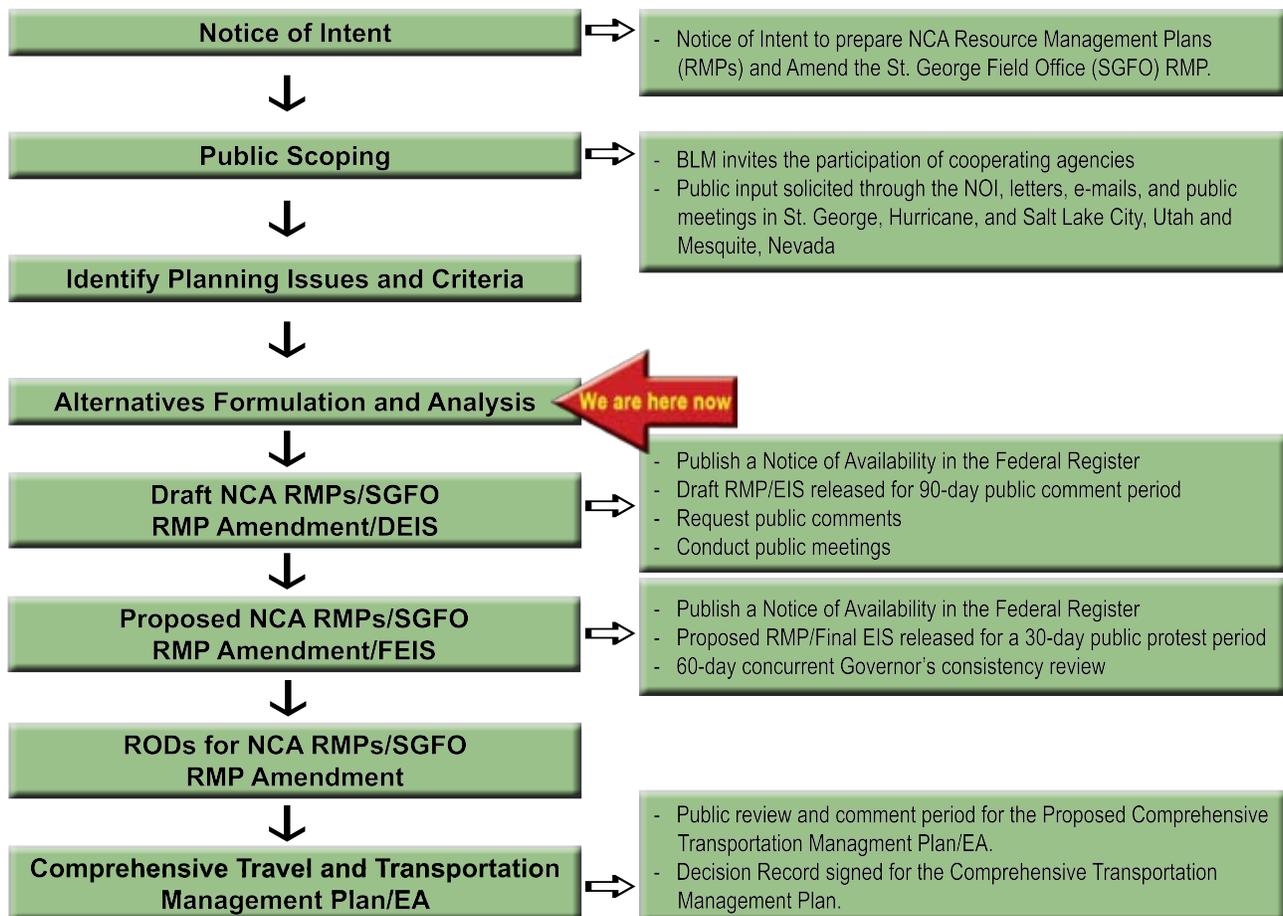
Summary of the Scoping Process

A public scoping period was offered between May 10 and July 19, 2010, providing the public an opportunity to identify issues to be considered during the SGFO RMP planning process. Formal public scoping meetings were held in four communities (St. George, Hurricane, Salt Lake City, UT, and Mesquite, NV) in June of 2010. These meetings provided an opportunity for the public to learn more about the NCAs, the scope of the planning process, and submit written comments. Written comments were also accepted throughout the scoping period, including those submitted via email.

The SGFO also provided opportunities for the public to provide comments related to the Travel Management Plan/EA during this scoping period, at the formal scoping meetings and through written comments. Public input will continue to be accepted on issues related to the development of the Travel Management Plan until a Draft EA is released for public review.



Planning Process and Public Participation Components





Summary of Public Input for the Environmental Impact Statement



The scoping period for the RMPs/ SGFO RMP Amendment/EIS ended on July 19, 2010, with a total of 1,940 respondents submitting written comments. Written comments were numbered, entered into a database, and the content of the comments categorized. Comments focused primarily on the types of activities and uses that should be authorized within the Beaver Dam Wash and Red Cliffs NCAs. As an example, cross-country motorized Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) travel in the NCAs was an issue identified as a primary concern for many members of the public. Other comments recommended that the NCA resource values be protected by excluding or limiting rights-of-ways and limiting or closing routes to motorized or mechanized vehicle travel. For the Beaver Dam Wash NCA, some public comments recommended that livestock grazing not be authorized, while others stated that the continuation of livestock would not conflict with the conservation and protection of NCA resources. A majority of

public comments related to the Red Cliffs NCA recommended the elimination of motorized vehicle travel off designated roads, and to a lesser degree, requested designation of non-motorized routes/trails. Many comments recommended that the “northern transportation route” (also mandated to be identified by P.L.111-11), not be located within the Red Cliffs NCA.

Public comments related to the SGFO RMP included 35 nominations for ACECs where special management was needed to address biological conservation issues. Approximately 50 percent of public comments provided recommendations for motorized OHV area designations.

Other comments were evaluated as being outside the scope of this planning process. The Scoping Report provides a rationale for why these comments were not considered in this planning process.



Summary of Public Input for the Travel Plan/EA

Initial scoping for the Travel Plan/EA was conducted concurrently with public scoping for the RMPs/SGFO RMP Amendment/EIS. Public comments were numbered, entered into a database, and the contents categorized. A majority of the comments submitted were specific recommendations for routes to be included in the Travel Plan, with the public providing maps, GPS, and GIS digital files to support these recommendations. Some comments specifically identified routes that should be closed to motorized travel, in areas such as the NCAs, ACECs, lands with wilderness characteristics, or near historical sites. A number of routes were suggested to be managed for a different use types. The SGFO GIS Route Inventory was updated to include all new information provided by the public during this initial scoping period.

FIRST CLASS MAIL
UNITED STATES POSTAGE
AND FEES PAID
U.S. Department of the Interior
Permit No. G-76

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
St. George Field Office
345 East Riverside Drive
St. George, Utah 84790
OFFICIAL BUSINESS
PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE, \$300

Socio-economic Workshop

The SGFO will host a public Socio-economic Workshop to provide interested stakeholders with an overview of sources of socioeconomic data, the processes of economic analysis, and economic concepts to be used in this planning process. For more information about the Socio-economic Workshop, contact Keith Rigrup at (435) 865-3000.

SGFO Socio-economic Workshop

Date: February 8, 2011 **Time:** 4-6 p.m.

Location: City of St. George Community Arts Center, 3rd floor Assembly Hall, 86 South Main, St. George, UT 84770

