

BLM's Land Use Planning Conference 2009 – Proposed Agenda

The Division of Decision Support, Planning and NEPA is coordinating the agenda with support from a Conference Agenda Planning Committee, as well as an oversight committee which includes representation from each State and Center. The proposed agenda sessions are organized into the six Conference Themes.

If you have feedback or questions on the proposed agenda for the BLM Land Use Planning Conference, please contact either of the Conference Co-Chairs: Jenna Sloan, Planning and Environmental Analyst, Jenna_Sloan@blm.gov, 202-557-3589; or Frank Quamen, Wildlife Biologist & Geospatial Program Analyst, Frank_Quamen@blm.gov, 202-557-3588.

Feedback must be received no later than January 2, 2009 to allow time for incorporation into the final conference agenda.

Plenary Sessions

- Land Use Planning Successes – 2001 through Present
- Healthy Lands Initiative
- ePlanning
- Implementation Strategies, Monitoring, and Evaluation

Concurrent Sessions Listed by Theme

- A. [Focusing on Sustainable Resource Planning and Decision-Making](#)
- B. [Incorporating Decision Support Tools](#)
- C. [Addressing the Long-Term Strategy](#)
- D. [Collaborating with Cooperators and Forming Partnerships](#)
- E. [Improving NEPA in Changing Environments](#)
- F. [Closing the Gaps - Training Opportunities on How to Get There from Here](#)

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A. Focusing on Sustainable Resource Planning and Decision-Making

Theme Leads: Mark Spencer & Jenna Sloan

Part 1 and Part 2: Program Guidance for Resource Management Plan Development

Two concurrent sessions (Part 1 and Part 2) will be combined into a single session to present the essential required BLM program guidance that must be addressed in land use plans and amendments. The panel will be composed of BLM resource specialists who have reviewed numerous preliminary RMPs for their program areas. The panel will discuss what must be included in RMP documents to address specific program requirements, clarify respective new program policy guidance since the Land Use Planning Handbook was completed, and highlight some common resource program issues that are often overlooked during RMP development.

Strengthening Future RMPs & Plan Amendments: A Historical Evaluation of Raised Protest Issues

The BLM's protest period offers a final opportunity for anyone who has participated in the planning process to protest approval of the planning decision prior to the signing of the Record of Decision. This panel presentation will focus on reoccurring protest issues and their application, ramification to future plan and plan amendment development, and tips on avoiding potential pitfalls.

Strategies for Socio-Economic Analysis in RMPs

The need to adequately address socio-economic assessments and analysis in RMP development has become more important, and for this reason, an entire session is dedicated to that topic. This presentation is a collaborative effort by the BLM and Forest Service to draft initial responses to the major economic and social analysis issues in order to achieve consistency and credibility among agencies and offices with shared constituencies, resource management issues, and analysis approaches.

Emerging Legal Trends for Land Use Planning

Appeals and other legal challenges help provide a barometer for future trends in developing Resource Management Plans and supporting NEPA documents. This session will examine several appeal and court cases involving the BLM and other federal land management agencies, and their relevance to pertinent legal issues that may emerge throughout the next decade.

Managing Your RMP Project Successfully: BLM and Contractor Lessons Learned

This panel discussion draws upon several successful RMPs/EISs to evaluate the challenges and solutions for managing and contracting land use plans and supporting NEPA analyses. Composed of BLM RMP team leads, contractors, and managers, the panel presentation is composed of two parts. The first part of the presentation will summarize lessons learned from a

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variety of RMP efforts. The latter half of the presentation will focus on one case study, the Casper Resource Management Plan in Wyoming.

Getting Off to a Good Start: RMP Budget and Project Schedule Development

Developing and implementing a successful budget and accompanying project schedule are two of the major challenges when starting an RMP or plan amendment. Speakers in this panel will discuss their respective schedule and budget development for three different types of planning efforts, and how budgets and schedules were adjusted to address the unexpected.

Amending Land Use Plans with Programmatic Environmental Impact Statements

A Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) provides efficient and cost-effective NEPA documentation for amending multiple land use plans. To date, BLM national projects completed or underway support over 200 plan amendments for development of wind and solar energy, oil shale and tar sands leasing, and the designation of energy transport corridors. Examples of how the PEIS process has been used to amend BLM land use plans will be discussed.

Overcoming Challenges in RMP/NEPA Development: Moderated Open Forum

The National Planning Conference attracts BLM planners and environmental coordinators with a wide range of experiences and insights. This moderated panel forum is open to all who would like to participate in an informal question and answer period and share ideas on how to best address the tough internal and external project management and RMP/NEPA development issues faced daily by planning project leads, managers, contractors, and resource specialists.

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B. Incorporating Decision Support Tools

Theme Leads: Duane Dippon and Deb Dinville

Decision Support Tools for Wildland Fire Management (2 talks)

1) *Using LANDFIRE Products and Fire Regime Condition Class (FRCC) Methodologies.* This workshop session will describe how LANDFIRE products can be used to classify vegetation and develop appropriate LUP decisions, and will also describe some of the limitations of the LANDFIRE Fire Regime Condition Class products.

2) *Wildland Fire Decision Support Systems (WFDSS).* This workshop session will discuss linkages between land use plan decisions and the WFDSS process - an interagency scalable decision support system that utilizes appropriate fire behavior modeling, economic principles, and IT to support effective wildland fire decisions.

Decision Support Tools for Forestry and Travel Management (2 talks)

1) *Using GIS to designate routes.* This session will discuss the creation and use of a geo-database tool to facilitate and streamline the route designation process for an RMP.

2) *Use of FORVIS to support land use plan decisions.* This session will show conceptually how the Forest and Vegetation Information System (FORVIS) can facilitate the analysis of alternative future forest structure conditions on a large landscape over a twenty year period.

Remote Sensing as a Decision Support Tool (2 talks)

1) *Remote sensing support for natural resource planning.* This talk will highlight some of the factors that should be considered to ensure that remote sensing acquisition generates the results needed to support resource planning activities, whether it is for establishing baseline data for setting plan priorities, or monitoring plan effectiveness to support adaptive management.

2) *Acquiring detailed aerial imagery data in support of resource management and planning.* This presentation will provide resource specialists with an overview of photogrammetry and examples of projects to which these technologies have been applied, including initial field use of 3D technology.

Decision Support Tools for Paleontological Resource Mgmt (2 talks)

1) *Paleontological resource management consideration for land use plans.* The BLM regards fossil resources as a fragile, nonrenewable scientific record. This presentation will discuss incorporating paleontological data into the land use planning process.

2) *Potential fossil yield classification: a tool for land use planning.* Potential for a given geographic area to contain significant fossil resources can be assessed by classifying geologic formations based on Potential Fossil Yield Classification (PFYC). The fundamental geologic mapping unit, the geologic formation, can be ranked based on rock type, environment of deposition, and known locality data.

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Western Oregon Plan Revision (WOPR) Decision Support Tools: Part 1 (3 talks)

- 1) *Managing one GIS team in support of six RMPs and one EIS.* This talk will discuss how a centralized planning geospatial database was created to support all of the requirements of the planning effort.
- 2) *System support and technical configuration of virtual GIS team supporting land use planning.* The IT infrastructure and maintenance will be the topic for this presentation.
- 3) *Data management and quality control techniques.* This presentation explores steps the WOPR GIS team has taken to organize and utilize hundreds of datasets while providing managers with information for making decisions.

Western Oregon Plan Revision (WOPR) Decision Support Tools: Part 2 (3 talks)

- 1) *Creating published maps in support of RMPs/EISs.* This presentation will discuss the approach used for the finished cartography, as well as the processes involved in creating printed maps.
- 2) *Writing scripts and models in a centralized Citrix environment for the WOPR.* This talk will present a first hand look at writing scripts and models for a large project.
- 3) *Using grid-based focal analyses to support cumulative environmental impact assessments.* General methods for conducting and interpreting focal analyses, as well as their benefits and limitations, will be discussed in this presentation.

Western Oregon Plan Revision (WOPR) Decision Support Tools: Part 3 (3 talks)

- 1) *Using Model Builder and Crystal Reports for land use planning analysis, reporting, and documentation.* This presentation will highlight some of the benefits of using these applications, particularly in communicating analytical processes between GIS professionals and resource specialists.
- 2) *Using ArcIMS to support internal processes in land use planning.* This presentation will provide a hands-on experience and report on the process and successes of using ArcIMS.
- 3) *Panel discussion: Lessons learned, Q&A session with WOPR BLM staff.*

Lessons Learned from the Carlsbad Field Office (3 talks)

- 1) *Improving employee health and making sound decisions through the integration of technology: a Field Office Manager's perspective.* Managing for a holistic approach through the use of technology and the integration of all programs will be discussed.
- 2) *The Preparation, Management and Use of GIS Planning within an Energy Pilot Office: Carlsbad, New Mexico.* We will discuss our five-stage GIS planning strategy.
- 3) *Utilizing localized decision support tools for land use planning: streamlining the planning process.* This presentation will discuss a way to greatly improve and streamline daily business practices, and provide for a more effective land use planning process.

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Automating the Workflow Processes

Improving business practices and decision making: automating the workflow processes. We will discuss the creation and utilization of four databases that, used in cooperation with each other, have increased efficiency and improved performance within the Carlsbad Field Office. These databases include: 1) The NEPA Database, 2) The Realty Database, 3) The Archaeology Database and, 4) The Vegetation Monitoring Database.

Carlsbad Field Office Panel Discussion

Presenters from the Carlsbad Field Office will hold a question and answer period further discussing their lessons learned and the automation of their workflow process.

GeoPDFs and ePlanning (2 talks)

1) *GeoPDF concepts and solutions for field mapping support.* This presentation will explore the GeoPDF dynamic of the publication, distribution and collaboration of vector and raster data in connected and disconnected digital workflows.

2) *Decision support tools component of ePlanning.* The ePlanning process will streamline the land use planning process, and this presentation will discuss how the software can incorporate decision support data and tools into the land use process.

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C. Addressing Long-Term Strategy

Theme Lead: Josh Hanson & Jenna Sloan

Ecoregional Assessments

This session will present information on the eco-regional assessments as related to the Healthy Lands Initiative. Presenters will explain how eco-regional assessments can be useful in developing land use plans, plan revisions, and environmental impact statements.

Developing an Implementation Strategy for a Land Use Plan

Implementation of land use plans is essential to achieve resource objectives. This session will focus on how development of an effective implementation strategy for each land use plan will allow us to prioritize, track, and budget for implementation actions.

Implementation Strategy Workshops

This session will focus on the process of hosting an implementation strategy workshop through the development of an implementation plan. Panel presenters will discuss the process from the Washington Office, State Office, and Field Office perspectives.

Land Use Plan Evaluation

Evaluation of land use plans is a critical component of the cyclic planning process. This session will provide new information and strategies for assessing the effectiveness of BLM land use plans and determining when maintenance or amendments are necessary.

Assessment, Inventory, and Monitoring

Presenters will provide an overview of the Assessment, Inventory, and Monitoring (AIM) Strategy, developed as a means to manage the collection, storage, and use of information about the resources the agency manages. Implementation of the strategy will be addressed through a panel discussion with participants.

Creating Consistency through ePlanning

This session will focus on the practical benefits of ePlanning including increased consistency Bureau wide in NEPA documents. The ePlanning Asset Library will be showcased as the repository for reusable information that may be easily incorporated and propagated across multiple planning documents.

Land Use Planning Program – Past, Present, and Future

This panel session will provide a management update of the major accomplishments and lessons learned in the BLM land use planning program since 2001. The session will be an opportunity for participants to discuss the program's strategic plan for out-year challenges, workload, and performance transformation.

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Adaptive Management

Presenters will provide the new developments and guidance relating to adaptive management as well as its latest use within BLM offices. The lessons learned on adaptive management within the NEPA framework will be discussed.

D. Collaborating with Cooperators and Forming Partnerships

Theme Lead: John Cossa

Using Collaborator Work Groups to Help Develop Alternatives

This session will use the joint Glenwood Springs and Kremmling Field Offices' Resource Management Plan process to demonstrate effective ways of engaging key stakeholders during the alternatives-development process to create a reasonable range of alternatives. The session will discuss methods for involving stakeholders early in the process, vesting the public in the plan outcome, and reducing the need to "go back to the drawing board" during the comment process.

VISTA Decision Support Tool

This session will present VISTA, a decision support tool that is an extension of ArcGIS, as developed collaboratively by NatureServe, The Nature Conservancy and the Colorado natural Heritage Program. VISTA can be used in land use planning to evaluate the impacts of multiple types of land uses, such as livestock grazing or natural gas development, as well as policies on biological resources and indicators.

Collaboration from the Other Side of the Fence: COUNTIES

This session was developed in coordination with Cynthia Moses-Nedd, BLM's Liaison to the National Association of Counties (NACO). The session is one component of the three-part series on collaboration with various stakeholders. This session will focus on the county planner perspective on collaboration with the BLM on land use planning and resource management issues. It will also address challenges and benefits of county collaboration.

Collaboration from the Other Side of the Fence: TRIBES

This session is one component of the three-part series on collaboration with various stakeholders. The presentation will focus on the Tribal perspective on collaboration with the BLM on land use planning and resource management issues. Challenges and benefits of Tribal collaboration will also be discussed.

Collaboration from the Other Side of the Fence: STATE GOVERNMENTS

This session is one component of the three-part series on collaboration with various stakeholders. The presentation will focus on the Governor's perspective on collaboration with the BLM on land use planning and resource management issues. Challenges and benefits of collaborating with state governments will also be discussed.

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Socioeconomic Analysis – A Collaborative Effort with a Nonprofit Research Group

This session will showcase the Economic Profile System (EPS), a user-friendly, comprehensive, and graphically-driven tool for establishing socioeconomic baselines for any and every county in the country. Comparative in nature, this tool was designed to constitute the backbone of plan- and implementation-level socioeconomic analyses at the BLM. Developed over a number of years in cooperation with Headwaters Economics, EPS will be released and implemented as a decision support tool for land use planning in early 2009.

Land Use Planning Requirements for Geospatial Data

Presenters will describe the partnership between USGS and BLM for identifying and meeting the land use planning requirements for geospatial data. The session will explain how the requirements have been developed and met, provide participants with an update on currently unavailable information, and explain how relevant and important information can be found.

Alternative Dispute Resolution in the Planning Process

This session will provide relevant information for BLM land use planners on innovative ways to engage stakeholders. The session will focus on conflict prevention strategies in the land use planning process. Presenters will additionally share information on Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) based negotiation strategies.

Involvement of Office of the Solicitor

This session will focus on the involvement of the Office of the Solicitor in the BLM land use planning program. The local, regional and/or Washington Office-level Solicitors have been closely involved in the development and release of many of our most recent Resource Management Plans. This session will discuss the varying amount of Solicitor involvement at various times in the planning process as well as at within different levels of the organization.

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E. Improving NEPA in Changing Environments

Theme Lead: Meagan Conry

The Environmental Protection Agency's Role in the NEPA Process

Representatives from the EPA will present their review and comment process for EISs. A focus will be on the EPA's alpha-numeric Rating System and NEPA EIS Filing System. The concurrence process will be explained as well as addressing adverse ratings.

Integrating Implementation and Planning Decisions in One Programmatic Document

This session uses a real case study, the Geothermal Leasing PEIS, to evaluate the challenges and solutions for integrating site-specific implementation and plan level analysis into a single NEPA document. The challenges and benefits of the programmatic approach will be discussed.

Differences Between Programmatic & Project Level NEPA

An essential session for anyone preparing or considering programmatic NEPA, this session explores the differences in approach between project level and programmatic NEPA. The presentation will focus on defining alternatives and addressing impacts at multiple scales.

Addressing Climate Change in NEPA

The focus of this session is climate change considerations in NEPA documents. Presenters will focus on issues for climate change analysis in BLM NEPA documents and what planners should consider in addressing climate change.

Six Steps to a Solid Cumulative Effects Analysis

This session will present a logical and simple approach to cumulative effects analysis. The session will be presented jointly from the BLM Planner and DOI Solicitor perspectives.

Writing Defensible Decisions in Planning

NEPA provides the opportunity for informed decision-making. This session will present lessons learned in defining implementation and planning decisions. The session will present strategies for drafting well-written, defensible decisions based on the underlying NEPA.

Addressing Change Management in ePlanning

This session will provide open opportunity for addressing questions about ePlanning's affect on the traditional NEPA process. The panel will focus on the ePlanning's effect on the ID Team interactions and dynamics, the role of the planner on the ID Team, and the changes in public interaction and participation.

Building a Strong Record

BLM and DOI Solicitor presenters will focus the discussion on how to maintain project files and build administrative records for land use planning efforts. The session will answer questions as

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to which documents to keep during and after the NEPA process as well as tips to keep records organized. Ample opportunity will be provided for questions and answers.

F. Closing the Gaps - Training Opportunities on How to Get There from Here

Theme Lead: Cathy Humphrey

Note: the following proposed training opportunities are subject to change depending on participant sign-ups and interest. Additional sessions may be included in-lieu of the sessions listed.

Developing and Writing Effective Documents

Hours: 8

Highlights from the National Training Center 3-day course (1620-06). Topics may include: determining type and purpose of document; analyzing your audience; planning your document; citing sources; writing an effective paragraph; using words and phrases properly.

Facilitation

Hours: 8

Topics may include: facilitating community meetings and internal RMP meetings; presenting a united front when working with cooperators; strategies for overcoming challenges arising within the RMP team setting.

Land Use Planning for Priority Species & Vegetation (PPSV)

Hours: 1-2

Overview of the NTC online and classroom course. This planning tool, developed by The Nature Conservancy (TNC), will help BLM planning teams incorporate and analyze biological information for vegetation, special status species, other priority species, and their habitats into RMPs.

ePlanning

Hours: 4

Overview of ePlanning for NEPA projects. Topics may include: how does it work; basic components; what will it do for me; a walk-through of a NEPA project (CX or EA). This will be a presentation-style course.

Contracting Officer's Representative (COR) for Resource Management Plans

Hours: TBD

Topics may include: how to write a statement of work; how to successfully administer a contract; what is the selection process; how to working with the National Operations Center for contracting. This course could potentially be used as part of the COR's required annual training.

Visual Resource Management (VRM) in Resource Management Planning

Hours: 3 part series, each 2 hours

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Part 1 topics to include: Addressing VRM before RMP begins. Part 2 topics to include: considering VRM during RMP development. Part 3 topics to include: managing VRM during RMP implementation. These training sessions would be practical how-to, based on BLM guidance and what instructors have seen from their reviews of multiple RMPs, lessons learned, Best Management Practices.

NEPA Training Series

Hours: 3 part series, each 4 hours

Part 1 topics may include: Writing the Perfect Purpose & Need. Part 2 topics may include: Writing the Perfect Cumulative Effects Analysis. Part 3 topics to include: Writing the Perfect Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI).

Crystal Reports

Hours: 4

Training and use of Crystal Report for Resource Management Planning will be presented. This tool generates tabular reports of acreages for an RMP's land use allocations and all other features, and provides a means of recording how the numbers are generated.

Project Management Essentials for Planners

Hours: 8

This course is a summary of the 4.5-day extended course at the National Training Center. This short-course will hit the highlights of project management for developing land use plans or other major projects.