

INTERNAL DRAFT

Chapter 5

Consultation and Coordination

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Chapter 5. Consultation and Coordination

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter documents the consultation and coordination efforts undertaken by the BLM throughout the process of preparing the RMP and developing the EIS. Title II, Section 202 of FLPMA directs the BLM to coordinate planning efforts with American Indian tribes, other federal departments, and agencies of the state and local governments as part of its land use planning process. Also to be involved are interest groups and individuals.

The BLM is also directed to integrate NEPA requirements with other environmental review and consultation requirements to reduce paperwork and delays (40 CFR 1500.4-5).

5.2 PUBLIC SCOPING MEETINGS, INPUT, AND OTHER INITIAL MEETINGS

A Notice of Intent (NOI) published in the *Federal Register* on February 29, 2008, formally announced the intent of the BLM to revise the existing plan and prepare the associated EIS. Publication of the NOI initiated the scoping process and invited participation by affected and interested agencies, organizations, and the general public to provide input on the scope and issues to be addressed in the EIS.

A Notice of Availability (NOA) published in the *Federal Register* on July 13, 2012, formally announced the solicitation for public comment on the alternatives and impacts of those alternatives on the human environment. The BLM distributed the Draft RMP/EIS to relevant agencies and the interested public for review and comment. The comment period ended on October 3, 2012, but was extended to November 26, 2012. The comments and the BLM's responses to substantive comments are addressed in this Proposed RMP/Final EIS. The following sections of this chapter describe the public involvement, consultation, and coordination process, including key activities undertaken to prepare a comprehensive Proposed RMP/Final EIS for the Rio Puerco Field Office.

5.2.1 Scoping, Draft RMP/EIS Meetings, and Public Comments

The formal scoping period was scheduled to end May 31, 2008, but at the public's request, it was extended through September 30, 2008. The BLM sent a scoping notice to governmental agencies, interested organizations, and individuals for this planning process, in addition to placing paid notices in local newspapers. **Table 5-1** lists the eight public scoping meetings held. The scoping report is available at the Rio Puerco RMP revision website, cited below (**Section 5.2.5**).

For the Draft RMP/EIS, nine public meetings were held (see **Table 5-1**). In addition to the public meetings, the BLM traveled to 11 various Pueblo governments and one Navajo Chapter to present the Draft RMP/EIS.

Table 5-1: Public Scoping and Draft RMP/EIS Meetings

Scoping Meeting Date	Location	Attendance
Wednesday, April 2, 2008	Albuquerque Marriott Pyramid Hotel	42
Thursday, April 3, 2008	Los Lunas Museum of Heritage and Arts	5
Monday, April 7, 2008	Cuba Senior Center	17
Tuesday, April 8, 2008	Bernalillo High School Gymnasium	41
Wednesday, April 9, 2008	Moriarty Civic Center	2
Thursday, April 10, 2008	Loma Colorado Library, Rio Rancho	9
Wednesday, April 16, 2008	Grants Convention Center	7
Thursday, April 17, 2008	University of New Mexico, Gallup Campus	1

Draft RMP Meeting Date	Location	Attendance
Monday, August 27, 2012	University of New Mexico Gallup	6
Wednesday, August 29, 2012	Multi Agency Com. Center Grants	0
Tuesday, September 4, 2012	Cuba Ranger Station	9
Wednesday, September 5, 2012	Moriarty Convention Center	5
Monday, September 10, 2012	Los Lunas Transit Center	5
Wednesday, September 12, 2012	Albuquerque Marriot Pyramid Hotel	48
Monday, September 17, 2012	Bernalillo High School	148
Wednesday, October 3, 2012	Placitas Library	5
Saturday, October 17, 2012	Placitas Community Center	104

32 **5.2.2 Planning Themes Raised in Scoping Comments**

33 Over 95 percent of the comment submissions were from individuals. The majority of comments were nearly
 34 evenly divided between four major land or resource uses, referred to as Planning Themes: minerals and
 35 energy development, off-highway vehicle use, recreation and visitor services, and special area designations.
 36 These four themes were addressed in the comments of approximately 90 percent of responding individuals.

37 In reviewing the scoping comments, the BLM ID Team assigned each comment received to one or more of
 38 the following five categories.

- 39 1. Addressed through RMP revision planning decisions. (These comments are being addressed in this
 40 document, either through new decisions or decisions carried forward from the 1986 RMP.)
- 41 2. Resolved outside the RMP revision process by following policy or taking administrative action (in
 42 compliance with national laws, regulations, and BLM policies).
- 43 3. Addressed outside the RMP revision process as part of existing BLM staff work (e.g., Wilderness
 44 Study Areas, “stand-alone” amendments to the 1986 RMP completed since its adoption).
- 45 4. Addressed independent of the RMP revision through national planning and environmental analysis
 46 efforts (e.g., for the West-Wide Energy Corridor, renewable energy development).
- 47 5. Determined to be outside the scope of the BLM’s RMP revision—considered but not addressed
 48 (e.g., the proposed Northeast Loop Road, Sandoval County Plan, proposed Wild Horse State Park;
 49 refer to **Chapters 1** and **2** for further explanation).

50 **5.2.3 Economic Profile System Workshops**

51 In addition to scoping meetings, the BLM held two Economic Profile System (EPS) workshops, inviting local
 52 citizens and community leaders to develop a common economic understanding. The first EPS workshop was
 53 held in Albuquerque on July 29, 2008, with the second held in Grants on July 31, 2008. Both workshops
 54 covered topics including the changing economy in the western US, trends in local economies, adapting to
 55 change, an EPS demonstration, the EPS profile of local counties, and the role of public land management in
 56 local economies.

57 **5.2.4 Training Sessions**

58 The agency also conducted two training sessions for agency staff and members of the public, “BLM Planning
 59 Concepts,” and “Nuts and Bolts of the Planning Process.” Both sessions were held in Albuquerque, with the
 60 first on November 27–29, 2007, and the second on February 25–28, 2008.

61 **5.2.5 Website**

62 A website for the Rio Puerco RMP revision continues to help facilitate public notification and involvement
 63 at: <https://eplanning.blm.gov/epl-front-office/eplanning/planAndProjectSite.do?methodName=renderDefaultPlanOrProjectSite&projectId=64954&dctmId=0b0003e880beb5fd>.
 64

65 5.3 SUMMARY OF COMMENTS RECEIVED ON THE DRAFT RMP/EIS

66 A summary of all comments received on the Draft RMP/EIS is included below. Responses to all substantive
67 comments received can be viewed in **Appendix R**.

68 5.3.1 Summary of Comments

69 The following is a summary of the 8,436 responses received on the Draft RMP/EIS and reflects public
70 sentiment on a variety of issues both diverse and interrelated regarding the proposed changes to
71 management in the Rio Puerco Field Office. These issues range in nature from the strictly procedural to the
72 technically specific.

73 **Table 5-2: Comments by Source Category**

Category	Number Received	Notes
Total responses received	8,436	All types.
Total comments received	45,308	Approximately 70% of all comments were in form letters.
Total substantive comments	351	All resource categories included.

74 Overall, the respondents are clearly very engaged in the potential management changes to BLM-administered
75 lands in the Rio Puerco Planning Area. Issues surrounding the management of lands around Placitas are of
76 particular concern. This includes the management of horses on what the public refers to as the “Buffalo
77 Tract” and the effects of potential gravel and oil and gas development.

78 Respondents are also concerned about potential changes in the ownership of BLM-administered lands and
79 how those lands will be managed both in advance of potential transfers and by the eventual landholders. A
80 number of respondents express particular concern about the potential effect of proposed mineral
81 developments on wildlife corridors. Additionally, many are concerned about the proposed plan’s effects on
82 recreation in the region. Some respondents support continued provisions for motorized recreation, but
83 others suggest that entire areas be closed to nearly all motorized travel.

84 5.4 DESCRIPTION OF CONSULTATION AND COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS

85 This section describes consultation and collaborative efforts with local federally recognized tribes, federal,
86 state, and local agencies, and interest groups.

87 5.4.1 Cooperating Agencies

88 Potential cooperating agencies were identified and invited to enter formal agreements early in the planning
89 process. The criteria used to identify potential cooperators were that they be governmental entities that
90 have jurisdiction by law, or special expertise with respect to potential impacts (40 CFR 1506.1). Federal
91 agencies that manage lands adjacent to BLM-administered lands within the Planning Area were also invited
92 to cooperate.

93 The RPF0 extended invitations for cooperating agency status to 45 federal, state, and local agencies and
94 jurisdictions, in addition to the leaders of 35 American Indian tribes, nations, and pueblos. Those entities
95 that have agreed to formal cooperation status under a Memorandum of Understanding are listed in **Table**
96 **5-3** below.

97 **Table 5-3: Agencies Cooperating in the BLM Planning Process for this RMP Revision**

Federal Agency	State Agencies
US Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service	New Mexico Department of Agriculture
Local Agency	New Mexico Department of Game and Fish
City of Albuquerque, Open Space Division	

98 The BLM invited the cooperating agencies to participate in developing RMP alternatives, supplying existing
 99 data and other information relative to their agency responsibilities, goals, mandates, and expertise. Agency
 100 representatives provided input during the initial scoping process on issues of special expertise or legal
 101 jurisdiction. In addition, they participated in a series of alternative formulation workshops, reviewed draft
 102 information and documents, and periodically met with BLM managers and resource specialists to discuss
 103 planning issues and give input. A cooperating agency meeting on the Proposed RMP/Final EIS was held on
 104 July 21, 2020.

105 **5.4.2 Federally Recognized Tribes**

106 Thirty-five tribes, tribal organizations, pueblos, and Navajo Chapter houses have lands within the Planning
 107 Area or contiguous to it. These entities are listed in **Table 5-4**, below.

108 Tribal consultation began with a letter announcing the start of the RMP revision process and inviting local
 109 tribes, nations, and pueblos to participate in the process. Subsequently, 25 meetings were held with various
 110 American Indian leaders, soliciting input and hearing their concerns. The concerns included but were not
 111 limited to land tenure, energy corridors, and access to various parcels. Additionally, the tribes were invited
 112 to several planning training sessions and alternatives development and analysis workshops, with several tribal
 113 members participating.

114 **Table 5-4: Federally Recognized Tribes Contacted for Plan Participation**

Tribes and Nations	
Comanche Tribe Fort Sill Apache Tribe Jicarilla Apache Nation Mescalero Apache Tribe White Mountain Apache Tribe	Hopi Tribe Southern Ute Tribe Ute Mountain Ute Tribe Navajo Nation* and Navajo Nation Historic Preservation Department
Pueblos	
Acoma Cochiti Isleta Jemez Laguna San Felipe	Sandia Santa Ana Santo Domingo Zia Zuni
Pueblos That Accepted a Draft RMP/EIS Meeting	
Acoma Cochiti Isleta Jemez Laguna	San Felipe Santa Ana Santo Domingo Zia Zuni

*Navajo Chapters contacted include Alamo, Baca/Haystack, Break Springs, Cañoncito Band, Casamero Lake, Counselor, Little Water, Ojo Encino, Pueblo Pintado, Ramah, Red Rock, To'hajiilee, Torreon, Tsayatoh, and Whitehorse Lake. Ojo Encino also accepted a Draft RMP/EIS meeting.

115 RPFO managers and staff are continuing to consult with federally recognized tribes on a government-to-
 116 government basis throughout the planning process. American Indian governments have been encouraged to
 117 identify issues, express concerns, and provide information they would like the BLM to consider in its
 118 decision-making process. The agency has provided the entities with information about the plan for developing
 119 the cultural resource component of the Draft RMP/Final EIS, and requested that they identify any traditional
 120 cultural places and resources that should be considered. Agency staff and managers continue to seek
 121 opportunities to develop cooperative management partnerships with these groups where appropriate.

122 During the comment period for the Draft RMP/EIS, all tribes that were initially contacted for plan
 123 participation were contacted to discuss the Draft RMP/EIS. Eleven of the Pueblos and one Navajo Nation
 124 Chapter agreed to a meeting.

125 Due to the ongoing nature of government-to-government consultation, the RPFO routinely communicates
 126 with federally recognized tribes concerning the long process of developing and implementing the new RMP.
 127 Many tribes have expressed concerns with the delay of approval and implementation. Specifically, the Ojo
 128 Encino Chapter and the Pueblos of Acoma, Santa Ana, and San Felipe have requested regular updates.

129 **5.4.3 Federal Agencies and Members of Congress**

130 The RPFO has initiated consultation with the USFWS. Informal consultation has been occurring since May
 131 2010. Formal consultation began when the BLM submitted a biological assessment (BA) to the USFWS in
 132 ~~summer 2020~~ February 2022 (NOTE: BLM will revise this date after the BA is sent via certified mail.) for their
 133 review and concurrence.

134 Other federal agencies contacted and invited to participate in this planning process include those listed in
 135 **Table 5-5**, below.

136 In addition to the agencies listed in the table, the BLM also informed the Honorable Senators and
 137 Representatives Jeff Bingaman, Pete V. Domenici, Tom Udall, Heather Wilson, Martin Heinrich, and Ben
 138 Lujan of the Rio Puerco RMP revision process. These individuals currently serve or have served the citizens
 139 of New Mexico in the US Congress.

140 **Table 5-5: Federal Agencies Contacted for Plan Participation**

Federal Agency	
US Department of the Interior	
Bureau of Indian Affairs	El Malpais National Monument
Bureau of Reclamation	El Morro National Monument
National Park Service	Fish and Wildlife Service
Bandelier National Monument	Geological Survey
US Department of Agriculture	
Forest Service	Natural Resources Conservation Service
Cibola National Forest	
US Environmental Protection Agency	
US Army Corps of Engineers	

141 **5.4.4 State and County Agencies and Other Local Entities**

142 Staff and managers at the BLM RPFO have contacted other interested agencies or governments by telephone,
 143 email, and formal correspondence to share information regarding the BLM’s RMP revision process. Agencies
 144 contacted are listed in **Table 5-6**, below.

145 Consistent with legislation protecting state-listed species, the BLM has contacted the NMDGF and the New
 146 Mexico Energy, Mineral, and Natural Resources Department regarding the potential presence of state-listed
 147 threatened and endangered plant and animal species in the Planning Area.

148 The BLM notified the New Mexico State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) in March 2008 and in January
 149 2015 that an EIS was being prepared for management of public lands in Bernalillo, Cibola, McKinley, Sandoval,
 150 Tarrant, and Valencia Counties. In 2008, the BLM conferred with the SHPO regarding the extent of the
 151 area of potential effect, data sources, and appropriate tribal consultation. In accordance with the BLM
 152 National Programmatic Agreement and New Mexico Protocol, BLM staff will continue to consult on
 153 undertakings pursued in accordance with an approved RMP once the planning process is complete.

154 **Table 5-6: State, County, Local, and Private Entities Contacted for Plan Participation**

State Government Agencies	Cities, Towns, and Villages
Governor of New Mexico	Albuquerque
Attorney General	Bernalillo
Bureau of Geology and Mineral Resources	Corrales
Bureau of Mines	Cuba
Department of Agriculture	Estancia
Department of Cultural Affairs	Gallup
Department of Energy, Minerals, and Natural Resources	Grants
Forestry Division	Ojo Encino
Parks and Recreation Division	Placitas
Department of Finance and Administration	Rio Rancho
Department of Game and Fish	San Luis
Department of Health	San Ysidro
Department of Indian Affairs	Torreon
Department of Tourism	Soil and Water Conservation Districts
Department of Transportation	Claunch
Environment Department	Cuba
Farm and Livestock Bureau	East Torrance
Oil Conservation Division	Edgewood
Soil and Water Conservation District and Commission	Lava
State Engineer	Pinto
State Historic Preservation Office	Valencia
State Land Office	
State Monuments	
Counties	Local Entities
Bernalillo	Las Huertas Watershed Group (Placitas)
Catron	Las Placitas Association
Cibola	Livestock Water Associations
McKinley	Placitas Board of Realtors
Sandoval	San Luis Domestic Water Association
Santa Fe	Private Companies
Socorro	Jemez Electric Cooperative
Torrance	La Farge
Valencia	Public Service Company of NM

155 The BLM consulted with the SHPO on the Proposed RMP, Alternative [EC](#). **[NOTE: BLM will add dates and**
 156 **other information after consultation takes place.]**

157 **5.4.5 Interest Groups**

158 An effective means of sharing information and collecting input for the RMP revision has been one-on-one or
 159 small-group discussions with interested parties, at their request. BLM staff and managers have engaged in
 160 discussions with a variety of special interest groups during the planning process. Coordination has occurred
 161 with the East Mountain Regional Trails Council, New Mexico Off-Road Vehicle Association, New Mexico
 162 Wilderness Alliance, San Antonio de Las Huertas Land Grant, San Juan Badlands Group, Western
 163 Watersheds Project, Wild Earth Guardians, Wilderness Society, and Wild Horse Observers Association.

164 **5.5 LISTS OF PREPARERS AND REVIEWERS**

165 Reviewers and preparers of the Proposed RMP/Final EIS (including members of the Interdisciplinary Team)
 166 are listed in **Table 5-7** through **Table 5-12**, below.

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Table 5-7: Rio Puerco Field Office/New Mexico State Office Interdisciplinary Team

Name	Title/Responsibility
Dawn Chavez	Acting RMP Team Lead, Planning and NEPA Coordinator, Geographical Information Systems, Visual Resources
Angel Martinez	RMP Team Lead, Planning and NEPA Coordinator (Former)
Melanie Barnes	RMP Team Lead (Former), Surface Protection
Joe Blackmon	RMP Team Lead (Former)
Sabrina Flores	RMP Team Technical Coordinator (Former)
Kent Hamilton	Planning and NEPA Coordinator (Retired)
Matt Atencio	Rangeland Management, Vegetation (Former)
Alec Bryan	Rangeland Management, Vegetation
Angel Martinez	Cave and Karst Resources (Former)
Mike Bilbo	Cave and Karst Resources
Andrea Chavez	Fish and Wildlife, Special Status Species, Threatened and Endangered Species Consultation (Former)
Josh Freeman	Fish and Wildlife, Special Status Species, Threatened and Endangered Species Consultation
Jack River	Acting New Mexico State Office Ecologist
Donna Dudley	Recreation, Wilderness, and Wilderness Study Areas (Retired)
J. J. Gallegos	Facilities
Jamie Garcia	Recreation, Wilderness, and Wilderness Study Areas
Jennifer Merino	Wilderness and Wilderness Study Areas, Visual Resource Management, Wild and Scenic Rivers, Recreation
Brittany Gaudette	Geology (Former)
John Gilmore	Geology (Retired)
Calvin Parson	Geology
Cynthia Herhahn	American Indian Tribal Interests, Cultural Resources (Former)
Sean Daugherty	American Indian Tribal Interests, Cultural Resources, Paleontological Resources
Pat Hester	Paleontological Resources (Retired)
Jeanne Hoadley	Air Quality (Retired)
Sharay Dixon	Air Quality
Jeremy Kruger	Woodland and Forest Management (Former)
Jack River	Woodland and Forest Management
David Mattern	Air Quality, Soil Resources, Water Resources
Joe Mirabal	Geology, Public Safety (Retired)
Todd Richards	Fire Management
Yvonne Lovato	Land Tenure Adjustments
Arlene Salazar	Land Tenure Adjustments, Land Use Authorizations, Utility Corridors/Communication Sites, Withdrawals, Renewable Energy (Retired)
Pamela Reed	Land Tenure Adjustments, Land Use Authorizations, Utility Corridors/Communication Sites, Withdrawals, Renewable Energy

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Table 5-8: Technical and Administrative Support Team

Name	Title/Responsibility
M'Lee Beazley	Desktop Publishing, Photography, and Printing (Retired)
Yarida Estrada	Policy and Technical Services (Former Student)
Melissa Goldin	Desktop Publishing (Former)
Theresa Nallick	Geographical Information Systems (Former)
Sarah W. Spurrier	Records Administrator (Retired)
Martin Visarraga	Geographical Information Systems (Former)
Benjamin Vaccaro	Department of the Interior Solicitor

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Table 5-9: Managers and Reviewers—State Office Management Team

Name	Title/Responsibility
Jesse Juen	BLM State Director (Retired)
Tim Spisak	BLM State Director
Aden Seidlitz	BLM Associate State Director (Retired)
Steve Wells	BLM Associate State Director
Linda S. C. Rundell	BLM State Director (Retired)
Bill Merhege	Deputy State Director, Resources (Retired)
Melanie Barnes	Deputy State Director, Resources
Ron Dunton	Deputy State Director, Resources (Former)
Melanie Barnes	State Planning and Environmental Coordinator (Former)
Dave Goodman	State Planning and Environmental Coordinator (Former)
Mark Spencer	State Planning and Environmental Coordinator (Former)
Dave Alderman	State Planning and Environmental Coordinator

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Table 5-10: Albuquerque District/Rio Puerco Field Office Management Team

Name	Title/Responsibility
Mark Matthews	Acting Albuquerque District Manager
Danita Burns	Albuquerque District Manager (Retired)
Edwin J. Singleton	Albuquerque District Manager (Retired)
Thomas E. Gow	Rio Puerco Field Manager (Retired)
Ruben Sanchez	Acting Rio Puerco Field Manager
Calvin Parson	Acting Assistant Field Manager, Multiple Resources (Former)
Adam Lujan	Assistant Field Manager, Renewable Resources
Chip Kimball	Assistant Field Manager, Renewable Resources (Former)
Elaine Lopez	Assistant Field Manager, Multiple Resources

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Table 5-11: State Office Review Team

Roger Cumpian (Retired)	Powell King (Retired)	Sarah Schlanger (Retired)
Nathan Combs	James Glover	Cynthia Herhahn
Brad Higdon	Signa Larralde (Retired)	James Sippel (Former)
Rebecca Hunt	Debby Lucero	John Sherman
Roger Jaggars (Retired)	Marikay Ramsey	Jay Spielman (Retired)
Terry Heslin	McKinney Briske	Deena Lentz

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Table 5-12: Environmental Management and Planning Solutions, Inc. (EMPSi)

Name	Title/Responsibility
Holly Prohaska Molly McCarter	Project Manager, Cultural, Health and Safety, Paleontological Resources, Soil and Water NEPA Specialist, Quality Assurance/Control, Fire, Forests and Woodlands, Lands and Realty, Livestock Grazing, Public Health and Safety, Soil and Water, Travel Management, Health and Safety, Soil and Water
Angie Adams	NEPA Specialist, Caves and Karsts, Lands with Wilderness Characteristics, Minerals, Recreation and Visitor Services , Renewable Energy, Riparian, Special Designations, Special Status Species, Vegetation, Visual, Wildlife and Fisheries
Amanda Biedermann, JD	Assistant Project Manager
Amy Cordle	Air Resources
Zoe Ghali	Social and Economic Resources Conditions
Jenna Jonker	GIS Specialist
Kim Murdock	Technical Editor
Katie Patterson, JD	NEPA Specialist
William Penner	Cultural Resources, Paleontological Resources
Holly Prohaska	NEPA Specialist, Quality Assurance/Control, Fire, Forests and Woodlands, Lands and Realty, Livestock Grazing, Travel Management
Cindy Schad	Word Processing
Josh Schnabel	NEPA Specialist, Quality Assurance/Control, Air Resources, Recreation and Visitor Services, Social and Economic Conditions Resources
Andy Spellmeyer	508 Compliance
Randolph Varney	Technical Editor
Meredith Zaccherio	Special Status Species

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Note: EMPSi helped compile the Proposed RMP/Final EIS and Record of Decision/Approved RMP.

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