



MAKE YOUR COMMENT COUNT

Photo: James Parsons

WHEN TO COMMENT

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is required to offer public comment periods on public lands planning developed through environmental assessments (EA) or environmental impact statements (EIS). You have both the right and opportunity to share your thoughts on how public lands and resources should be managed during key steps of these planning processes. The first step, "scoping," is an opportunity to help shape the development of a "draft" plan. In the next phase, the public may comment on management alternatives presented in the draft plan. You don't need to be an expert to offer input at either phase – just informed.

Information about a given planning process and directions on submitting comments can be found on the BLM's ePlanning website: <https://eplanning.blm.gov>

TIPS FOR COMMENTING

- 1 KNOW THE SCOPE:** Any comment period pertains to a specific plan and set of issues, so make sure your comment is relevant to the issues the BLM is analyzing. Comments addressing issues outside the scope are not considered.
- 2 BE SPECIFIC:** Specifics help the agency to better consider and evaluate the issue or concern you've raised. Note details, cite precise locations, and use personal observations to make your case.
- 3 PRESENT SOLUTIONS:** You can also highlight what you think will work well. Identify potential solutions to problems you've identified.

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HOW TO CRAFT A SUBSTANTIAL COMMENT

BLM defines a substantive comment as one that:

1. Questions the accuracy of information, methodology or assumptions used in the agency's analysis,
2. Presents new information or reasonable alternatives not analyzed in a plan, or
3. Causes changes or revisions to analysis or management alternatives.

A substantive comment does one or more of the following:

- Provides new information relevant to analysis, a management alternative, or proposed management action
- Identifies a different way to provide for a management need
- Points out a specific flaw in analysis
- Suggests alternate methodology(s) and the reason(s) why they should be used to analyze and/or develop management alternatives
- Makes factual corrections to information or analysis
- Identifies new or different sources of credible research which, if used in the analysis, could produce new or different analysis and/or management alternatives

EXAMPLES OF SUBSTANTIVE COMMENTS

- The proposed land use claims to have no detrimental impact on water availability in the numerous creeks that flow throughout the area. However, there is very little data available on groundwater and streamflow in the basin. Where is the science indicating the proposed development will not deplete water resources?
- The area provides important habitat for greater sage-grouse, whose populations have declined 40 percent throughout Oregon since 2003. I am concerned that the proposed plan may not avoid impacts to sage-grouse and their habitat.

EXAMPLES OF NON-SUBSTANTIVE COMMENTS

- Protect our resources!
- BLM should not approve the proposed action.