

# Las Vegas

## Resource Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement

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### Final Scoping Report Availability

In January 2010, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Southern Nevada District Office, Las Vegas and Pahrump Field Offices, published a Notice of Intent (NOI) initiating a planning process to revise the Las Vegas Resource Management Plan (RMP). As part of this revision, public input was sought through a public scoping process. The purpose of this scoping effort was to determine the scope and significance of issues to be addressed during the development and implementation of this RMP revision. The issues identified during scoping will guide the development of a range of alternatives that will be evaluated in the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

Scoping also provided the public the opportunity to learn about the management of public lands and help the BLM to identify the public's concerns regarding the resources and uses within the planning area.

The formal public scoping period closed February 28, 2010. The *Final Scoping Report for the Las Vegas/Pahrump RMP/EIS* documents the scoping process. The report summarizes the comments provided by the public and identifies the issues to be carried forward in the alternative development process. The *Final Scoping Report for the Las Vegas/Pahrump RMP/EIS* is available for download via links at the Southern Nevada District website at [www.blm.gov/nv/st/en/fo/lvfo.html](http://www.blm.gov/nv/st/en/fo/lvfo.html). Paper copies of the Final Scoping Report are available at the Las Vegas/Pahrump Field Office reading room for those who desire to review a hard copy, or should access to the web site not be available.

There will be additional opportunities for focused public input throughout the planning process. It should also be noted that comments can be provided during the entire planning process as long as they are not intended for a specific review of a document (such as the 90-day comment period on the Draft EIS).



### What You'll Find in the Scoping Report

**Chapter 1** describes the scoping process and a general overview of the current situation in the planning area.

**Chapter 2** summarizes the BLM's public outreach and reports the results of public scoping. A general summary of public comments received and a description of each scoping meeting are included, as well as summaries of public comments received outside the public meetings.

**Chapters 3 and 4** present the issues identified in the public comments that will be carried forward in the RMP Revision (3) and that are outside the scope of this process (4), and explains why these issues will not be considered.

**Chapters 5, 6 and 7** identifies the planning criteria that act as sideboards for this process (5), reports on the data that was provided by the public during scoping (6), and shows the schedule for the Las Vegas/Pahrump RMP Revision/EIS (7).





## Summary of Public Participation



Seven public scoping meetings were held over a two-week period in February 2010. Public scoping meetings provided an opportunity for interested parties to learn about the scope of the RMP Revision, hear a brief presentation about the process, speak directly with a variety of BLM specialists, and submit scoping comments in person (written or orally). A total of 50 comments were received from registered meeting attendees in Las Vegas (66 people), Henderson (63 people), Mesquite (81 people), Pahrump (28 people), Beatty (5 people), Laughlin (8 people), and Overton (31 people). Additionally, 263 individuals submitted written comments during the scoping period. These comments were accepted via mail (82), e-mail (143), and orally (38). Identical comments were grouped together for analysis purposes. Throughout the scoping period, more than 300 individuals provided comments concerning the future management of the planning area. Analysis of more than 530 unique comments resulted in the identification of issues to be addressed during development of the Las Vegas/Pahrump RMP Revision.

To generate the issues from public comments, each comment was analyzed and key points were identified. A wide range of opinions were expressed through the public scoping process. It is important to note that Congress and federal regulations do not intend scoping to be a voting process, but a process to identify what issues should be addressed in an EIS. To accommodate this intent, issues were developed from public comments and opinions as position-neutral statements or questions to be addressed and/or answered through development of alternative solutions or analysis in the EIS.

A majority of public comments raised off-highway vehicle (OHV) management issues, including concerns with area and route designations, the effects of OHV use, and concerns with the effects of renewable energy development on OHV opportunities. Another dominant theme throughout the public issues was where and how renewable energy development should occur, including the identification of a variety of specific areas where commenters felt special management was needed to either encourage development or restrict it to protect a variety of resources. A wide array of issues was identified beyond these. All RMP-level issues, whether raised by one individual or by 1,000, will be addressed during the RMP Revision process. Beyond the most repeated issues identified above, issues were raised dealing with the following resources and resource uses:



- Soil, Water and Air Resources, including Water and Air Quality
- Special Management Area Designations
- Threatened and Endangered Species
- Vegetation
- Visual Resources Management
- Wild Horses and Burros
- Wildland Fire Management
- Wilderness Characteristics
- General Comments
- Access and Travel Management

- Cultural Resources
- Fish and Wildlife
- Lands and Realty Management (e.g., rights of way, disposal areas, renewable energy development)
- Livestock Grazing
- Mineral Resources
- OHV Use
- Paleontology
- Recreation
- Social and Economic Values



## Next Steps:

### Wild and Scenic Rivers

Section 5(d)(1) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act directs federal agencies to consider the potential for national wild, scenic, and recreational rivers in all planning for the use or development of water and related resources. Previous BLM planning identified the Virgin River in Arizona as eligible and suitable for designation in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System (NWSRS) for possessing remarkable scenic, geologic, fisheries, and wildlife values. The existing Las Vegas Resource Management Plan (October 1998) provides interim management protection for the Virgin River in Nevada as an eligible river with a tentative classification of "recreational". To comply with federal law and BLM policy, this RMP Revision includes a review of all rivers to determine their eligibility and suitability for inclusion in the NWSRS.

A team of BLM specialists began the Wild and Scenic review process in April of 2010. Major streams reviewed for eligibility were Carson Slough, Hiko Springs, Meadow Valley Wash, Muddy River, and three Virgin River segments (mile 0-14, mile 14-24, and mile 24-30). All of the 7 segments reviewed were deemed eligible and will be further analyzed to determine their suitability for congressional designation into the NWSRS.

Preliminary eligibility findings are contained in the Wild and Scenic Rivers Report available for public review at <http://www.blm.gov/nv/st/en/fo/lvfo.html>. The public is encouraged to provide comments related to the findings, and to identify any potentially eligible rivers or information that may have been overlooked in the initial review. Comments can be emailed to [SNDO\\_RMP\\_Revision@blm.gov](mailto:SNDO_RMP_Revision@blm.gov).



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### Developing Alternatives

A key component of the RMP Revision will be development of a wide range of alternatives to address the issues identified in the Scoping Report and the Analysis of the Management Situation (AMS). NEPA states that alternatives "...are the heart of the environmental impact statement." NEPA also directs agencies to "rigorously explore and objectively evaluate all reasonable alternatives."

All RMP-level issues raised during scoping will be considered when creating a range of management alternatives. An interdisciplinary team comprised of BLM resource specialists representing all areas of management has been assembled to review the current RMP and the issues identified during scoping to create the range of alternatives.

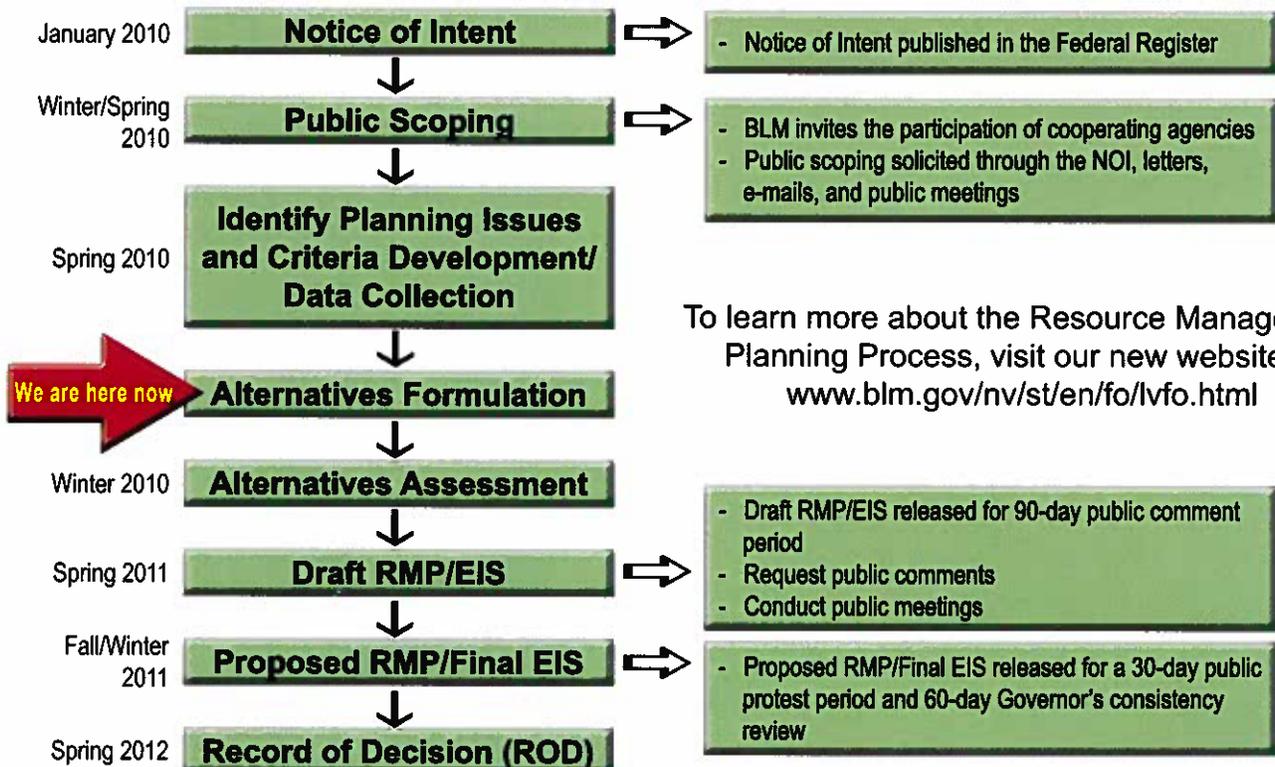
Cooperating agencies with special expertise and legal responsibilities will also ensure a broad range of alternatives is considered. Each issue identified during scoping will be matched to a specific management action or actions. Where current management is silent on the public issue, a range of alternative management actions will be developed to address the issue. In this manner, the Draft RMP Revision/EIS will be directed by the issues raised during public scoping.

Watch for planning bulletins, like this one, to announce public involvement opportunities, provide an update on plan development, and keep you informed during the process.

The BLM is committed to maximizing community involvement in the RMP development effort in order to achieve agreement from diverse interests on goals, purposes, and needs of the plan.



## Las Vegas/Pahrump RMP and EIS Process and Public Participation Components



To learn more about the Resource Management Planning Process, visit our new website at [www.blm.gov/nv/st/en/fo/lvfo.html](http://www.blm.gov/nv/st/en/fo/lvfo.html)