



U.S. Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management

# News Release

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## **BLM Finalizes Rule to Make Land Use Plans More Responsive to Community Needs**

*Rule reinforces BLM's relationship with tribes, state and local governments, and the public*

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) today issued an updated rule that will make its land use planning more accessible to the public, more responsive to the changing conditions on the public lands, and more efficient.

The BLM developed this rule through years of work with state and local governments, cooperators, communities, stakeholders, and the public at large. The rule updates regulations that are more than 30 years old, provides additional and more robust opportunities for input into the agency's planning process, and ensures that science is a cornerstone of the BLM's planning work. The BLM launched this effort after hearing from stakeholders that the current planning process is too slow and cumbersome.

"Planning is the cornerstone of managing our nation's public lands and balancing their many uses and values," said Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Management Janice Schneider. "Allowing additional opportunities for public engagement will improve responsiveness at the local level and help address the challenges of managing public lands in the 21<sup>st</sup> century."

The BLM manages 10 percent of the nation's land and 30 percent of its subsurface minerals. Federal law requires the BLM to develop land use plans, which are essential tools for balancing the many competing uses and values of the nation's public lands.

"Under the current system, it takes an average of eight years for the BLM to finish a land use plan. Too often, by the time we've completed a plan, community priorities have evolved and conditions on the ground have changed as well," said BLM Director Neil Kornze. "This update to our planning rule allows for a more streamlined process that also increases collaboration and transparency."

The final rule recognizes the vital partnerships that exist between the BLM and tribal, state, and local governments by providing special opportunities for cooperation and collaboration. The rule also enhances the consistency between the BLM's land use plans and the plans of other governments.

The rule creates a new, up front process to gather data and hear concerns from all parties, and gives the public access to early draft plans. The agency anticipates that this early engagement will help make planning efforts significantly more efficient. The rule also continues to support the use of high quality information, including the best available science. This information will be critical as the agency works to address the major challenges facing our nation's public lands, including increasingly severe droughts and wildfires, the planning and development of clean energy sources, and changing conditions for key wildlife species like sage grouse.

This year is the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act, which directed the BLM to develop land use plans for all of the areas under its care. Using the critical lessons learned from those decades of planning work and close collaboration with communities and partners across the country, this rule will lead to ever-better stewardship of the places that the BLM has the privilege of managing.

The final Planning 2.0 rule can be accessed at [www.blm.gov/plan2](http://www.blm.gov/plan2)

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