Spectrum of Engagement in NEPA Decision-Making

INFORM

CONSULT

INVOLVE

COLLABORATE

Agency Commitment:

Provide parties with comprehensive, accurate and timely information about its NEPA decision-making.

Agency Goal:

Provide sufficient objective information for parties to understand the issues being addressed through the NEPA process.

Case Example:

Management Plan for Tuolumne River in Yosemite National Park: NPS issued a brochure in Spring 2006 informing the public of its upcoming two-year planning process for the Draft EIS.

NEPA Phase:

Scoping, draft and final review and comment periods

Processes:

Fact Sheets, Newsletter, Web Site, Open House, Panel Presentations, Public Meetings.

Agency Commitment:

Keep parties informed and consider their concerns and suggestions on the NEPA process. Provide documentation of how their input was considered in the decision-making process.

Agency Goal:

Obtain feedback on issues in NEPA process, the alternatives considered, and the analysis of impacts.

Case Example:

Mississippi National River and Recreation Area, Bureau of Mines project: On September 25, 2006 NPS and FWS jointly held meeting to receive comments on the draft EIS.

NEPA Phase

All phases

Processes:

Notice and Comment, Surveys, Focus Groups, Consultation, Tribal, State, Public Meetings.

Agency Commitment:

Communicate with parties to ensure that suggestions and concerns are addressed and reflected within legal and policy constraints when assessing environmental effects during the decision-making process. Provide iterative feedback on how their input is considered in the decision-making at various steps during the NEPA process.

Agency Goal:

Consistently solicit and consider parties' input throughout the NEPA process to ensure that parties' concerns are understood and addressed before the analysis of impacts is concluded and a final decision made.

Case Example:

Grand Canyon National Park, Colorado River Management Plan: Scoping meetings held throughout country to shape plan.

NEPA Phase:

All phases

Processes:

Workshops, Deliberate Polling, Individual and/or group consultations, advisory committee.

Agency Commitment:

Work directly with parties at one or more stages of the NEPA process, seeking their advice and agreement on: the purpose and needs statement, alternatives, collection and use of data, impact analysis, development of a preferred alternative, and/or recommendations regarding mitigation of environmental impacts.

Agency Goal:

Directly engage parties in working through aspects of the NEPA process potentially including the framing of the issues, the development of a range of reasonable alternatives, the analysis of impacts, and the identification of the preferred alternative – up to, but not including, the agency's Record of Decision.

Case Example:

FHWA and DOI, St. Croix River Crossing: Collaborative EIS process co-led by states of Wisconsin and Minnesota to reach agreement on bridge crossing St. Croix River.

NEPA Phase:

All phases

Processes:

Individual and/or group consultations, advisory committee, consensus-building, facilitation, interagency working groups, mediation, joint fact finding.