



# Consultation and Coordination

CHAPTER 5



## **CHAPTER 5: CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION**

The intent of the NEPA is to encourage the participation of federal and state involved agencies and affected citizens in the assessment procedure, as appropriate. This section describes the consultation that occurred during development of this plan/EIS, including consultation with stakeholders and other agencies. This chapter also includes a description of the public involvement process and a list of the recipients of the draft document.

### **HISTORY OF PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**

The public involvement activities for this plan/EIS fulfill the requirements of NEPA and NPS Director's Order 12 (NPS 2011a).

#### **THE SCOPING PROCESS**

The NPS divides the scoping process into two parts: internal scoping and external, or public, scoping. Internal scoping involved discussions among NPS personnel regarding the purpose of and need for management actions, issues, management alternatives, mitigation measures, appropriate level of documentation, available references and guidance, and other related topics.

Public scoping is the early involvement of the interested and affected public in the environmental analysis process. The public scoping process helps ensure that people have an opportunity to comment and contribute early in the decision-making process. For this plan/EIS, project information was distributed to individuals, agencies, and organizations early in the scoping process, and each was given the opportunity to express concerns or views and to identify important issues or other alternatives.

Taken together, internal and public scoping are essential elements of the NEPA planning process. The following sections describe the various ways scoping was conducted for this plan/EIS.

#### **Internal Scoping**

An internal scoping meeting was held at the Lake Meredith National Recreation Area Administration Building/Headquarters in Fritch, Texas, from October 16 to 18, 2007. Internal scoping involves discussions among NPS staff to decide what should be analyzed in an EIS. Personnel from Lake Meredith National Recreation Area and the NPS Environmental Quality Division attended this meeting to define the purpose, need, and objectives of the plan, identify potential issues, discuss preliminary alternatives, and define data needs.

Various roles and responsibilities for developing the ORV management plan were also clarified. The results of the meetings were captured in a report now on file as part of the administrative record. Representatives from the NPS–Washington Office / Environmental Quality Division, NPS–Southeast Arizona Group, Lake Meredith National Recreation Area, and the Louis Berger Group participated in the internal scoping meetings.



## **Public Scoping**

### **Public Meetings and Comments**

Public scoping efforts for this planning process focused on the means or processes to be used to include the public, major interest groups, and local public entities. Based on past experience, national recreation area staff placed a high priority on meeting the intent of public involvement in the NEPA process and giving the public an opportunity to comment on proposed actions.

The public scoping process began on June 11, 2008, with the publication of a Notice of Intent in the Federal Register (FR, Volume 73, Number 113). In support of this effort, the NPS hosted three public scoping meetings intended to initiate public involvement early in the planning stages of the plan/EIS and to obtain community feedback on the initial purpose, need, and objective statements for ORV management at Lake Meredith National Recreation Area. The meeting schedule, locations, and attendance figures follow.

- On Tuesday, July 8, 2008, a public meeting was held in Fritch, Texas, at the Sanford-Fritch Middle School Cafeteria from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Seventy-two people attended.
- On Wednesday, July 9, 2008, a public meeting was held in Dumas, Texas, at the First State Bank Community Room from 6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Twenty-nine people attended.
- On Thursday, July 10, 2008, a public meeting was held in Amarillo, Texas, at the Ambassador Hotel from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. One hundred fifteen people attended.

Each of the meetings began with an open house, allowing the public to circulate between information stations. Each station had display boards and other informational materials describing the project background, legislative framework such as the park's enabling legislation, the purpose of and need for the plan, objectives of the plan, and issues to be addressed in the plan/EIS. NPS staff members were available at each station to answer any questions or concerns presented by the community and to record comments. During each meeting, NPS staff members gave a brief presentation to explain the project and the NEPA process.

Each information station had a flipchart where an assigned staff person could take comments on a particular topic, or any other topic on which a community member had concerns or questions. If commenters chose not to make comments at the stations, comment sheets were provided to be completed and returned later. If attendees chose not to fill out the comment sheets at the meeting, a return address was provided on the sheets to mail to the park at a later date. Those attending the meetings were also given brochures providing additional opportunities for comment on the project, including directing comments to the NPS Planning, Environment, and Public Comment (PEPC) website at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/lamr/>. Comments were accepted through July 28, 2007.

### **The Comment Analysis Process**

Comment analysis is a process used to compile and correlate similar public comments into a usable format for decision makers and the plan/EIS interdisciplinary planning team. Comment analysis assists the team in organizing, clarifying, and addressing technical information pursuant to NEPA regulations. It also aids in identifying the topics and issues to be evaluated and considered throughout the planning process.

A comment analysis report was prepared to summarize concern statements as well as the full text of all comments corresponding to the appropriate concern statement. All scoping comments were considered to

be important as useful guidance and public input to the public scoping process. With regard to developing the plan/EIS, comments in favor of or against the proposed action or alternatives, those that only agree or disagree with NPS policy, and those that offer opinions or provide information not directly related to the issues or impact analysis were considered non-substantive comments. Non-substantive comments can provide background for a draft or final EIS but do not require a specific response. Although the analysis process attempts to capture the full range of public concerns, the content analysis report should be used with caution. Comments from people who chose to respond do not necessarily represent the sentiments of the entire public.

Of the 180 comments received during public scoping, 77 were related to alternative elements; 24 to the affected environment at the national recreation area; 63 to preliminary management concepts; 3 to the national recreation area's purpose and significance; and 4 to the impact of the proposal and alternative elements. Nine comments were miscellaneous.

## **PUBLIC SCOPING ON THE PRELIMINARY RANGE OF ALTERNATIVES**

In the spring of 2010, Lake Meredith National Recreation Area released a range of preliminary alternatives for the plan/EIS for public review and comment. The draft range of alternatives, which was developed in part with the input received during public scoping, was presented in a brochure that was available locally at the park and on the NPS PEPC website (<http://parkplanning.nps.gov/lamr>). In addition, brochures were mailed to a list of park stakeholders. The public was invited to submit comments on the scope of the planning process and potential alternative elements from April 7 through May 19, 2010.

The NPS held meetings to inform the public about the preliminary alternatives for the plan/EIS. The dates, locations, and attendance figures follow.

- On April 20, 2010, a public meeting was held in Fritch, Texas, at the Sanford-Fritch Schools Business Office from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Thirty-three people attended.
- On April 21, 2010, a public meeting was held in Dumas, Texas, at the First National Bank from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Seventeen people attended.
- On April 22, 2010, a public meeting was held in Amarillo, Texas, at the Ambassador Hotel from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Forty-six people attended.

Each of the meetings was conducted in the same format as the earlier public scoping meetings, except the information provided and the discussions focused on the range of alternatives.

All comments were reviewed and analyzed in the same manner as previously described. During the comment period for the preliminary range of alternatives, 31 pieces of correspondence were received, containing 121 comments. Pieces of correspondence were received at the public meeting (on flipcharts), entered directly into PEPC by the commenter, or received through the mail.

## **AGENCIES, ORGANIZATIONS, AND INDIVIDUALS CONSULTED**

The following governmental, tribal, and private groups and individuals were consulted in the development of this plan/EIS.

## **FEDERAL AGENCIES**

- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- National Park Service, River, Trails, and Conservation Assisting Program, Santa Fe, New Mexico

## **STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS**

- Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
- Texas Historical Commission

## **AFFILIATED NATIVE AMERICAN GROUPS**

- Apache Tribe of Oklahoma
- Caddo Nation of Oklahoma
- Comanche Nation
- Cheyenne-Arapaho Tribe of Oklahoma
- Delaware Nation of Oklahoma
- Fort Sill Apache Tribe of Oklahoma
- Jicarilla Apache Nation
- Kiowa Indian Tribe of Oklahoma
- Mescalero Apache Tribe
- Wichita and Affiliated Tribes

## **ORGANIZATIONS/OTHER**

- High Plains Off-road Association
- Oklahoma Cross Country Racing Association
- Texas Off-road Association (TORA)
- Wildlands CPR
- Libraries, newspapers, and other media

## **CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATES**

- U.S. Senator Kay Bailey Hutchinson
- U.S. Senator John Cornyn
- U.S. Representative District 13 William “Mac” Thornberry

## LIST OF PREPARERS AND CONSULTANTS

Name	Title	Experience	Responsibility
<b>National Park Service, Lake Meredith National Recreation Area</b>			
Cindy Ott-Jones	Former Superintendent	Thirty-three years with the NPS, 9 of those years as a national park superintendent; has worked in 9 national parks and monuments throughout the country  BS in natural resource management from Kansas State University	Overall review and development of the plan/EIS
Arlene Wimer	Chief of Resource Management	Twelve years with the NPS, 5 years as an independent biological monitor for the state of Texas in the oil and gas industry  BS in biology, MS in environmental science	Overall review and development of the plan/EIS, with emphasis on natural and cultural resources
Paul Jones	Chief Ranger	Responsible for oversight of the law enforcement program at Lake Meredith National Recreation Area and Alibates Flint Quarries National Monument; has over 14 years in the ranger ranks with the NPS, 5 of those years as Chief Ranger; worked in five national parks and monuments throughout the country  Degree in engineering and criminal justice	Park operations, law enforcement, document review
<b>National Park Service, Environmental Quality Division</b>			
Lindsay Gillham	Project Manager/ Environmental Protection Specialist	Twelve years of NEPA experience  BS in natural resources recreation tourism; JD	Project management, document review, NEPA compliance
<b>National Park Service, Intermountain Region</b>			
Chris Turk	Regional Environmental Coordinator	Thirty-three years in the NPS BAAS in biological sciences	Regional coordination and review of documents.
<b>The Louis Berger Group</b>			
Lori Fox, AICP	Project Manager / Senior Planner	Master's in community planning; BS in environmental planning	NEPA compliance, document oversight and review, development of purpose, need, objectives, and alternatives, review of resource specialist sections
Nancy Van Dyke	Senior Consultant / Quality Assurance / Quality Control	MS in environmental sciences; BA in biology and geography	Quality control review

Name	Title	Experience	Responsibility
Jacklyn Bryant	Deputy Project Manager	MS in watershed sciences / water resources planning and management; certificate in international development; BS in natural resources management	Resource specialist, soundscapes
Josh Schnabel	Environmental Planner	MA in geography; BA in sociology	Soils and water quality
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Lia (Peckman) Jenkins	Environmental Scientist	BS in biology and BA in Spanish	Wildlife and wildlife habitat; threatened and endangered species / species of concern
Lucy Bambrey	Senior Archeologist	MA in anthropology; BA in sociology; paralegal certificate	Archeological resources
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<b>RTI International</b>			
Carol Mansfield	Senior Economist	PhD in economics	Socioeconomic analysis
<b>The Final Word</b>			
Juanita Barboa	Technical Editor	Twenty-two years' editing, documentation, and formatting experience	Editing/Formatting
Sherrie Bell	Technical Editor / Document Designer	Twenty-two years' editing, documentation, and formatting experience	Editing/Formatting





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## GLOSSARY

**action**—Any federal activity including, but not limited to, acquiring, managing, and disposing of federal lands and facilities; facilitating human occupation or visitation; providing federally undertaken, financed, or assisted construction and improvements; and conducting federal activities and programs affecting land use, including, but not limited to, water and related land resources planning, and regulating and licensing activities.

**action alternative**—An alternative that proposes a different management action or actions to address the purpose, need, and objectives of the plan; one that proposes changes to the current management. Alternatives B, C, and D are the action alternatives in this planning process. See also *no-action alternative*.

**adult**—An organism that is fully grown or developed and capable of sexual reproduction.

**affected environment**—Existing natural, cultural, and social conditions of an area that are subject to change, both directly and indirectly, as a result of a proposed human action.

**alternatives**—Sets of management elements that represent a range of options for how or whether to proceed with a proposed action. An environmental assessment or environmental impact statement analyzes the potential environmental impacts of the range of alternatives, as required under National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

**appropriate use**—A use that is suitable, proper, or fitting for a particular park, or to a particular location within a park.

**archeological resource**—Any material remains or physical evidence of past human life or activities which are of archeological interest, including the record of the effects of human activities on the environment. An archeological resource is capable of revealing scientific or humanistic information through archeological research.

**anthropogenic**—Resulting from the influence or actions of human beings.

**A-weighted decibel (dBA)**—A unit of measure for relative sound intensity as experienced by the human ear. See also *decibel (dB)*.

**code**—A grouping public comments centered on a common subject. The codes were developed during the scoping process and were used to track major subjects.

**comment**—A comment is a portion of the text within a correspondence that addresses a single subject. It could include such information as an expression of support or opposition to the use of a potential management tool, additional data regarding the existing condition, or an opinion debating the adequacy of an analysis.

**compaction**—The process by which a sediment progressively loses its porosity due to the effects of loading. This forms part of the process of lithification. When a layer of sediment is originally deposited, it contains an open framework of particles, with the pore space usually being filled with water. As more sediment is deposited above the layer, the effect of the increased loading is to increase the particle-to-particle stresses, resulting in porosity reduction primarily through a more efficient packing of the particles and to a lesser extent through elastic compression and pressure solution.

**compendium**—See *Superintendent's Compendium*.

**concern**—Concerns are statements that summarize the issues identified by each code. Each code was further characterized by concern statements to provide a better focus on the content of comments. Some codes required multiple concern statements, while others did not.

**conserve**—To protect from loss or harm; preserve. Historically, the terms conserve, protect, and preserve have come collectively to embody the fundamental purpose of the NPS—preserving, protecting and conserving the national park system.

**correspondence**—A piece of correspondence is the entire document received from a commenter. It can be in the form of a letter, email, written comment form, note card, open house transcript, open house flip chart or petition.

**Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ)**—Established by Congress within the Executive Office of the President with the passage of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969. The CEQ coordinates federal environmental efforts and works closely with agencies and other White House offices in the development of environmental policies and initiatives.

**cumulative effect or impact**—The impact on the environment which results from the incremental impact of the action when added to other past, present and reasonably foreseeable future actions regardless of what agency (federal or nonfederal) or person undertakes such other actions. Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor but collectively significant actions taking place over a period of time (40 CFR 1508.6).

**decibel (dB)**—A unit of measure of sound intensity.

**ecology**—The pattern of relations between organisms and their environment.

**ecosystem**—A natural unit consisting of all plants, animals, and micro-organisms (biotic factors) in an area functioning together with all of the physical (abiotic) factors of the environment, considered as a unit. Ecosystems can be permanent or temporary. An ecosystem is a unit of interdependent organisms that share the same habitat. Ecosystems usually form a number of food webs.

**enabling legislation**—National Park Service (NPS) legislation setting forth the legal parameters by which each park may operate.

**endangered species**—“Any species (including subspecies or qualifying distinct population segment) that is in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range (ESA Section 3(6)).” The lead federal agency, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), for the listing of a species as endangered is responsible for reviewing the status of the species on a five-year basis.

**Endangered Species Act (ESA) (16 USC 1531 et seq.)**—An act to provide a means whereby the ecosystems on which endangered species and threatened species depend may be conserved and to provide a program for the conservation of such endangered and threatened species.

**environment**—The sum total of all biological, chemical, and physical factors to which organisms are exposed; the surroundings of a plant or animal.

**environmental assessment (EA)**—An environmental analysis prepared pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act to determine whether a federal action would significantly affect the environment and thus require a more detailed environmental impact statement (EIS).

**environmental consequences**—The environmental effects of project alternatives, including the proposed action, any adverse environmental effects which cannot be avoided, the relationship between short-term uses of the human environment, and any irreversible or irretrievable commitments of resources that would be involved if the proposal should be implemented (40 CFR 1502.16).

**environmental impact statement (EIS)**—A detailed NEPA analysis document that is prepared, with extensive public involvement, when a proposed action or alternatives have the potential for significant impact on the human environment. An EIS must meet the requirements of NEPA, CEQ, and the directives of the agency responsible for the proposed project or action.

**erosion**—Removal of surface material from the earth's crust, primarily soil and rock debris, and the transportation of the eroded materials by natural agencies from the point of removal.

**executive order**—An official proclamation issued by the president that may set forth policy or direction or establish specific duties for federal agencies in connection with the execution of federal laws and programs.

**fauna**—All the animal life of any particular region or time.

**Federal Register**—Published by the Office of the Federal Register, National Archives and Records Administration, the Federal Register is the official daily publication for rules, proposed rules, and notices of federal agencies and organizations, as well as executive orders and other presidential documents (<http://www.gpoaccess.gov/fr/>).

**federally listed endangered species**—An endangered species is one that is in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range. Before a species can receive protection under the ESA, it must first be placed on the federal list of endangered species. All actions leading up to and including the listing of a species as endangered are published in the Federal Register (USFWS Endangered Species Program).

**habitat**—The environment in which a plant or animal lives (includes vegetation, soil, water, and other factors).

**herbaceous**—Characteristic of a non-woody herb or plant part

**invasive species**—Nonnative species that disrupt and replace native species.

**migratory**—Moving from one spatial unit to another periodically, usually for feeding or breeding purposes.

**mitigation**—Defined in NPS Director's Order 12 as a modification of the proposal or alternative that lessens the intensity of its impact on a particular resource. The definition references 40 CFR 1508.20, which states that mitigation can include

1. Avoiding the impact altogether by not taking a certain action or parts of an action.
2. Minimizing impacts by limiting the degree or magnitude of the action and its implementation.

3. Rectifying the impact by repairing, rehabilitating, or restoring the affected environment.
4. Reducing or eliminating the impact over time by preservation and maintenance operations during the life of the action.
5. Compensating for the impact by replacing or providing substitute resources or environments.

**monitoring**—A process of collecting information to evaluate if an objective and/or anticipated or assumed results of a management plan are being realized (effectiveness monitoring) or whether implementation is proceeding as planned (implementation monitoring).

**National Register of Historic Places (National Register)**—A register of districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects important in American history, architecture, archeology, and culture, maintained by the Secretary of the Interior under authority of Section 2(b) of the Historic Sites Act of 1935 and Section 101(a)(1) of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended.

**NEPA process**—The objective analysis of a proposed action to determine the degree of its impact on the natural, physical, and human environment; alternatives and mitigation that reduce that impact; and the full and candid presentation of the analysis to, and involvement of, the interested and affected public – as required of federal agencies by the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969.

**no-action alternative**—The alternative in which baseline conditions and trends are projected into the future without any substantive changes in management (40 CFR 1502.14(d)). Alternative A is the no-action alternative in this planning process.

**nonnative species**—Any introduced plant, animal, or protist (tiny life forms that are neither plant nor animal) species that is not native to the area and may be considered a nuisance.

**off-road vehicle (ORV)**—Any motorized vehicle designed for or capable of cross-country travel on or immediately over land, water, sand, snow, ice, marsh, swampland, or other natural terrain, with the following exclusions: this term excludes (a) any registered motorboat; (b) any fire, military, emergency, or law enforcement vehicle when used for emergency purposes, and any combat or combat support vehicle when used for national defense purposes; and (c) any vehicle whose use contrary to restrictions proposed in this plan is expressly authorized by the superintendent or the refuge manager under a permit, lease, license, or contract.

**Organic Act (NPS)**—The 1916 law (and subsequent amendments) that created the National Park Service (NPS) and assigned it the responsibility of managing the national parks.

**ORV route**—A designated location, typically linear in nature (e.g., from point A to point B), where ORV travel may be authorized by the superintendent, but which may be temporarily closed to ORV use to protect park resources, provide for visitor safety, or prevent user conflicts.

**park**—Any one of the hundreds of areas of land and water administered as part of the national park system. The term is used interchangeably in this document with “unit,” “park unit,” and “park area.”

**planning**—An interdisciplinary process for developing short- and long-term goals and alternatives for visitor experience, resource conditions, projects, facility type and placement, and other proposed actions.

**pollutants**—Contaminants introduced into an environment that cause instability, disorder, harm, or discomfort to the ecosystem (i.e., physical systems or living organisms). Pollution can take the form of chemical substances or energy, such as noise, heat, or light. Contaminants, the elements of pollution, can



be foreign or naturally occurring substances or energies; when naturally occurring, they are considered pollutants when they exceed natural levels.

**population (or species population)**—A group of individual plants or animals that have common characteristics and interbreed among themselves and not with other similar groups.

**preferred alternative**—The alternative in an environmental assessment or EIS that the agency believes would best fulfill the purpose of and need for action.

**preserve**—To protect from loss or harm; *conserve*. Historically, the terms preserve, protect and conserve have come collectively to embody the fundamental purpose of the NPS—preserving, protecting and conserving the national park system.

**riparian**—Of, relating to, or located on the banks of a natural watercourse (as a river or stream), or sometimes of a lake or a tidewater.

**route**—See *ORV route*.

**scoping**—An early and open process for determining the extent and variety of issues to be addressed and for identifying the significant issues related to a proposed action (40 CFR 1501.7).

**sediment**—Any particulate matter that can be transported by flow and that eventually is deposited. Sediments are most often transported by water (fluvial), wind (eolian), and glaciers (glacial). Beach sands and river channel deposits are examples of fluvial transport and deposition, although sediment also often settles out of slow-moving or standing water in lakes and oceans.

**soundscape (natural)**—The aggregate of all the natural, nonhuman-caused sounds that occur in parks, together with the physical capacity for transmitting natural sounds.

**substrate**—The earthy material that exists in the bottom of a marine habitat, like dirt, rocks, sand, or gravel.

**superintendent**—The senior on-site NPS official in a park. Used interchangeably with “park superintendent,” “park manager,” or “unit manager.”

**Superintendent’s Compendium**—A document, updated yearly, that provides a list of the special designations, closures, public use limits, permit requirements, and other restrictions under the discretionary authority of the superintendent in a park unit, as provided for in 36 CFR 1.7(b).

**threatened or endangered species**—Plants or animals that receive special protection under federal or state laws, including the Endangered Species Act. Species may be listed as threatened or endangered in the state, but not by the federal government (USFWS), or vice versa. Some USFWS regional offices also maintain a list of those species of special concern, either nationally or locally, which may be being or may have been previously considered for listing as threatened or endangered.

**unacceptable impacts**—Impacts that, individually or cumulatively, would

- Be inconsistent with a park’s purposes or values, or impede the attainment of a park’s desired future conditions for natural and cultural resources as identified through the park’s planning process.
- Create an unsafe or unhealthful environment for visitors or employees.

- Diminish opportunities for current or future generations to enjoy, learn about, or be inspired by park resources or values.
- Unreasonably interfere with
  - Park programs or activities.
  - An appropriate use.
  - The atmosphere of peace and tranquility, or the natural soundscape maintained in wilderness and natural, historic, or commemorative locations in the park.
  - NPS concessioner or contractor operations or services.

**visitor**—Anyone who physically visits a park for recreational, educational, or scientific purposes, or who otherwise uses a park’s interpretive and educational services, regardless of where such use occurs (e.g., through Internet access or at a library).

**visitor experience**—The perceptions, feelings, and reactions a park visitor has in relationship with the surrounding environment.

**visitor use**—The types of recreation activities engaged in by visitors, including the type of activity, visitor behavior, timing, and distribution of use.

**winch**—A stationary motor-driven or hand-powered machine used for hoisting or hauling, having a drum around which is wound a rope or chain attached to the load being moved (e.g., off-road vehicle). In the context of this planning process, a winch point is a location in the recreation area where a winch is set up to assist vehicles that may be stuck.

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