

## Chapter 5: Consultation and Coordination

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Blue Grama  
*Boutelous gracilis*



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# CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

## PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT EFFORTS IN THE PLANNING PROCESS

Governmental agencies and the public have been invited to help during the scoping phase of this planning process to identify purpose, need, alternatives, and environmental issues. The scoping process began with a notice of intent to prepare an environmental impact statement, which was published in the *Federal Register* on April 2, 2003. The monument then conducted four open houses to inform the public of the planning process and to invite comments on work to date. The open houses were held in June 2003 and November 2003. Each time, one open house was conducted in Los Alamos and a second in Santa Fe.

The first set of open houses in June 2003 presented the need for action, a summary of research results to date, and a summary of existing NPS and national monument policies regarding resource conservation, wilderness management, and other topics relevant to whether action should be undertaken. Comments from these sessions, as well as written comments received as a result of the *Federal Register* notice, were integrated into the scope of the planning effort to refine purpose, need, and objectives; to produce a range of reasonable alternatives; and to supplement the list of issues and impact topics. Written and oral comments were received at these open house sessions.

After the need for action, purpose, objectives and constraints were further refined based on the results of the first set of open houses, a second set was held in November 2003. These sessions presented very specific objectives for each vegetative community (see *Desired Future Conditions for Piñon- Juniper Woodland [Purpose of and Need for the Plan* section]) in this EIS, and a preliminary set of alternatives for review and comment. They also introduced the concept of adaptive management. Written and oral comments were received. Impact topics or issues and suggestions for new alternatives either resulted in additions or changes to the existing scope, or were considered and rejected for reasons described in , *Impact Topics Dismissed from Further Analysis* (see *Purpose of and Need for the Plan* section), or *Alternatives Dismissed from Further Analysis* (see *Alternatives* section).

Any substantive comments (e.g., those bearing on the analysis in this environmental impact statement) are summarized below.

Summary of Comments received during public scoping workshops:

- 11 comment documents were received; five from first scoping session and six from second.
- All commented on whether intervention was necessary to restore piñon- juniper in a designated wilderness; 91% supported intervention, 9% suggested that additional substantiation was needed to support the need for mechanical action in the face of the piñon die- off.

- Nearly three- quarters of the respondents directly addressed whether intervention in the wilderness was acceptable to achieve stated objectives. Of this group, 50% said it was acceptable or desirable to sacrifice wilderness values to return the wilderness to a more natural state or to slow erosion and save cultural resources. Thirty- seven percent indicated caution should be used or disturbance minimized. One of eight who commented on this issue, or 11%, indicated it was not acceptable to use mechanized means to treat wilderness (“Mechanical treatment will destroy wilderness character, and impacts will persist for many decades or even centuries.”) This person did not comment on the acceptability of treatment with hand tools.
- Of those who indicated a preference for one or another alternative, 72% (five of seven) indicated they preferred mechanized tools to accomplish the restoration more quickly; the other 28% said hand tools were preferable.
- Five of the commenters directly or indirectly addressed prescribed burning in the park. All indicated prescribed fire was desirable; two of these five asked that the park consider prescribed burning either instead of mechanical treatment (one) or in addition to mechanical treatment (one).

The remainder of the comments fall in the category of “miscellaneous.” They include comments on the planning process (e.g., The first scoping hearing was vague and had no alternatives; The park is correct in designing alternatives to meet the Desired Future Conditions, as DFCs should not change from alternative to alternative; The park should include a strong minimum requirement analysis as per DO 41; The plan should have a zoning map and identify the maximum use of motorized tools in each zone; The park should coordinate with USFS and LANL in this effort; How is this related to the wilderness EIS, etc.); money (e.g., Bandelier National Monument should have more money to educate, assess and mitigate impacts from erosion); and suggested alternatives beyond those presented (e.g., widespread reseedling; reestablish beaver; hand remove exotics; inject herbicides in junipers; allow bark beetles to kill off trees.).

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Name	Title/Role	Education	Experience
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Wavy Leaf Oak  
*Quercus undulata*



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2006c Personnel communications and unpublished data on long term vegetation and soil monitoring efforts

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