

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS
March 21, 2005

Revised Land Use Planning Handbook

Why did the BLM revise its Land Use Planning Handbook?

- A number of BLM planning-related Instruction Memorandums (IMs) and Instruction Bulletins (IBs) have issued policy and direction to BLM staff since the original Land Use Planning Handbook (H-1601-1, Release 1-1667) was released November 22, 2000. This revised handbook incorporates pertinent policies and direction from those IMs and IBs.
- BLM Manual 1601 (Release 1-1666) and the Land Use Planning Handbook (H-1601-1, Release 1-1667) were released on November 22, 2000. Only one minor change has been made to the Handbook since then: Release 1675 on August 22, 2002.
- The revised Handbook includes additional “how to” instructions that will guide local interdisciplinary teams through specific steps in the planning process.
- To review all planning-related guidance, please go to <http://www.blm.gov/planning/library.html>

If the revised Handbook incorporates previously issued guidance, does that mean the Land Use Planning Handbook will replace all the directives issued?

The Handbook incorporates some, but not all, of the directives. Therefore, the directives remain valid until their stated expiration date.

What are the most significant changes in this revised Handbook?

- Chapters containing the most significant changes are I through V, covering Land Use Plan Decisions; Land Use Planning Process and Products; Implementation; and Monitoring, Evaluation and Adaptive Management.
- Chapter III, Land Use Planning Process and Products (formerly called Development of Land Use Plan Decisions), has been completely re-written.
- Chapter IV on Implementation has been revised to more clearly distinguish between land use plan and implementation decisions.
- Chapter V, Monitoring, Evaluation and Adaptive Management, has been revised to incorporate recent Departmental guidance on adaptive management.
- Program-specific guidance in Appendix C has been substantially revised in some program areas (particularly Recreation and Travel Management).
- The Appendices on Social Science Considerations (Appendix D) and Protest and Appeal Provisions (Appendix E) have been substantially revised.

- A new Appendix has been added: Standard Formats for Land Use Plan Documents (Appendix F)

Is any new policy introduced in the revised Handbook?

No, the Handbook only incorporates supplemental planning guidance from a number of IMs and IBs issued since its original release in 2000.

Why was Chapter III, Land use Planning Process and Products, rewritten?

To provide more clarity and direction to the process used in planning for both Environmental Assessment-level plan amendments and Environmental Impact Statement-level Resource Management Plans, plan revisions, and plan amendments.

How will this revised Handbook affect plans already in progress?

Work that has been done on plans started prior to the completion of this revised Land Use Planning Handbook does not have to be redone. Planners will follow the guidance contained in the revised handbook only for the portions that are yet to be completed.

How will this revised handbook affect new plans?

The revised Land Use Planning Handbook will increase the efficiency of new planning efforts because all land use planning-related guidance will be in one place.

Where can I find the revised Handbook on the Internet?

Go to www.blm.gov to find the link to the document on the BLM Home Page. The document can also be found at www.blm.gov under What We Do-Planning (Land Use Planning)-handbook.