

Tips for Writing Effective Comments

Public participation is an important part of the process in developing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The public plays a critical role by submitting substantive and concise comments during the designated public comment period to help inform the analysis in the Final EIS. Comments should be within the scope of the proposal, have a direct relationship to the proposal, and must include supporting reasons for the Responsible Official to consider.

Substantive comments do one or more of the following:

- **Present new information** relevant to the analyses.
- **Present reasonable alternatives** other than those analyzed in the EIS.
- **Suggest changes or revisions** in one or more of the alternatives.
- **Question the accuracy of information** provided in the EIS, with reasonable basis.
- **Question the adequacy of the methodologies and assumptions** used for the environmental analyses, with reasonable basis.

The Draft EIS comment period is from May 9, 2025, through June 23, 2025

Comment Submittal Options

- Submit comments electronically using the Public Comment Form at <https://hermosaproject.commentinput.com>
- Email comments to: sm.fs.r3cnfnepa@usda.gov with the subject line “Hermosa Critical Minerals Project”
- Mail written comments to:
Kerwin S. Dewberry, Forest Supervisor, Coronado National Forest,
ATTN: Hermosa Critical Minerals Project,
300 West Congress Street, Tucson, Arizona 85701
- Fill out the comment form provided at the public meetings.

The Draft EIS and supporting documentation are available at:
<https://usfs-public.app.box.com/v/PinyonPublic/folder/249404091619>



To submit your comments to the Forest Service, scan the QR Code ►



What is the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)?

Frequently Asked Questions

What is NEPA?

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) was signed into law on January 1, 1970. NEPA requires federal agencies to assess the environmental effects of their proposed actions prior to making decisions. Using the NEPA process, agencies evaluate the environmental and related social and economic effects of their proposed actions. Agencies also provide opportunities for public review and comment on those evaluations.

Who does NEPA apply to?

Every agency in the executive branch of the Federal Government has a responsibility to implement NEPA. Congress directed that, to the fullest extent possible, the policies, regulations, and public laws of the United States shall be interpreted and administered in accordance with the policies set forth in NEPA. To implement NEPA's policies, Congress prescribed a procedure, commonly referred to as "the NEPA process."

When does an agency have to implement NEPA?

NEPA's procedural requirements apply to a Federal agency's decisions for major federal actions, including financing, assisting, conducting, or approving projects or programs; agency rules, regulations, plans, policies, or procedures; and legislative proposals. NEPA applies when a Federal agency has discretion to choose among one or more alternative means of accomplishing a particular goal.

What does NEPA do?

The NEPA process must be completed before an agency makes a final decision on a proposed action. NEPA does not require the decision-maker to select the environmentally preferable alternative or prohibit adverse environmental effects. Indeed, decision-makers in Federal agencies often have other concerns and policy considerations to take into account in the decision-making process, such as social, economic, technical, or national security interests. But NEPA does require that decision-makers be informed of the environmental consequences of their decisions.



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National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Public Involvement

Steps in the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Process:

Notice of Intent to Prepare an EIS	May 10, 2024 Published in the Federal Register.
Public Scoping	May 10 – June 10, 2024 The Forest Service hosted public open houses to provide information and collect comments.
Preparation of the Draft EIS	June 10, 2024 – May 9, 2025 The Forest Service considered comments collected in scoping, identified alternatives for analysis, and evaluated issues of concern and environmental effects of analyzed alternatives.
Notice of Availability of the Draft EIS	May 9, 2025 Published in the Federal Register. The Forest Service finalized issues of concern to be analyzed in the EIS, determined alternatives, and conducted analysis of anticipated environmental effects of all alternatives.
Public Comment on Draft EIS	May 9 – June 23, 2025 Now that the Draft EIS has been released, the public has 45 days for review and comment. The Forest Service is hosting public open houses on May 27 and 28, 2025, to provide information and collect comments.
Preparation of the Final EIS	July 2025 – February 2026 The Forest Service will address public comments and incorporate changes into a Final EIS and Draft Record of Decision (ROD).
Final EIS and Objection Period	February 6 – March 23, 2026 After the Final EIS and Draft ROD are released, the public will have 45 days to review and file objections. The Forest Service will respond to eligible objections.
Final Record of Decision	July 2026 The Forest Service will document whether the Mine Plan of Operations and/or Special Use Permit for the transmission line are approved; if so, what modifications, mitigation measures, and monitoring, if any, are required. The Forest Service will also address any necessary amendment to the Coronado National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan.



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