

Suggested Pre-Plan of Operations (43 CFR 3809) Coordination Process

Suggested Steps

1. **Operator contacts the BLM.** The operator contacts the Field Office to provide a summary of the proposed operation and may include conceptual drawings and maps. This notification may occur one or more years before an actual submittal of a Plan to the BLM.
2. **Project Presentation.** The operator presents the proposed project to the BLM. As appropriate, BLM managers and interdisciplinary team members attend the presentation. With the operator's concurrence, other relevant agencies should be informed of the presentation and may choose to participate.
3. **BLM Feedback.** Based on the presentation, the BLM should provide the operator with guidance on what to include in the final Plan submission, what may be needed to support the NEPA analysis, and how the review process will be conducted. Feedback may be verbal if provided at the time of the presentation. If more time is needed, written feedback may be provided, but will not be in the form of a decision. The BLM should communicate to the operator any potential baseline studies that may be required, including those that may require significant time to complete. These include but are not limited to (1) rock characterization for acid rock drainage (ARD) analysis, (2) hydrologic baseline studies, (3) wildlife and plant inventories, and (4) cultural resources inventories.
4. **Ongoing Coordination.** After the initial meeting, the BLM may continue to meet with the potential operator as often as requested to provide additional information and coordination. The BLM, at the operator's request, may informally review a pre-plan, conceptual plan, or study plan prior to the formal filing of the Plan of Operations. With the operator's concurrence, other relevant agencies should be informed of the presentation and may choose to participate.
5. **Pre-Plan of Operations Project Schedule.** It may be helpful for the operator to develop a project schedule including dates for the submittal and review of the baseline reports, applications for permits (state and local), and submission of the plan to the BLM. The BLM will provide feedback when requested.
6. **Submittal of the Plan of Operations.** The operator submits a Plan to the BLM. The BLM's regulations, policy, and NEPA guidance will govern the remainder of the review and approval process.