

“How to Comment”

Under the regulations at 36 CFR 218, a person must provide SPECIFIC WRITTEN COMMENTS during a comment period in order to have standing to object to the draft decision later in the process. Please consult 36 CFR 218 to determine any and all requirements for participating in the objection process. An electronic copy of the Code of Federal Regulations can be found at www.ecfr.gov. To access 36 CFR 218, you will need to select Title 36 (Parks, Forests and Public Property), then select parts 200-299 (Forest Service, Department of Agriculture), and finally select part 218 (Project-level Pre-decisional Administrative Review Process).

The following information comes from “A Citizen’s Guide to the NEPA: Having your Voice Heard (CEQ, 2007) (emphasis added):

*Comments may be the most important contribution from citizens. Accordingly, **comments should be clear, concise, and relevant to the analysis of the proposed action.** Take the time to organize thoughts and edit the document submitted. As a general rule, the tone of the comments should be polite and respectful. Those reviewing comments are public servants tasked with a job, and they deserve the same respect and professional treatment that you and other citizens expect in return. **Comments that are solution oriented and provide specific examples will be more effective than those that simply oppose the proposed project.** Comments that contribute to developing alternatives that address the purpose and need for the action are also effective. They are particularly helpful early in the NEPA process and should be made, if at all possible, during scoping, to ensure that reasonable alternatives can be analyzed and considered early in the process.*

In drafting comments, try to focus on the purpose and need of the proposed action, the proposed alternatives, the assessment of the environmental impacts of those alternatives, and the proposed mitigation. It also helps to be aware of what other types of issues the decisionmaker is considering in relationship to the proposed action.

***Commenting is not a form of “voting” on an alternative.** The number of negative comments an agency receives does not prevent an action from moving forward. Numerous comments that repeat the same basic message of support or opposition will typically be responded to collectively. In addition, general comments that state an action will have “significant environmental effects” will not help an agency make a better decision unless the relevant causes and environmental effects are explained.*

*By providing all of the information requested in this template, you will ensure that you provide comments that are helpful to the agency’s process and that will give you standing to object to the draft decision, should you choose to do so. **You may delete all of the blue, italicized text prior to submitting your comments.***

Project Information

Project Name*:	
Forest*:	
District Project is Located On*:	
Responsible Official Name*:	
Responsible Official Title*:	

Commenter Information

Name:	
Organization (if any):	
Title (if any):	
Address*	
Phone (if available)	
Email Address (optional)	
Co-commenter Name(s)/ Organization(s)* (if any):	

Summary of your involvement in the project so far:

NOTE: This is not a required section for an objection but many commenters like to describe for the Responsible Official how they have been involved with the project up to this point, how they are personally involved with the project area and/or the affected resources and how the project will impact them.

Issues & Suggested Remedies

If you think that you will want to file an objection to the draft decision, please note: 36 CFR 218.8(d)(5 and 6) require your objection to include (emphases added):

218.8(d)(6) A statement that demonstrates the connection between prior specific written comments on the particular proposed project or activity and the content of the objection, unless the objection concerns an issue that arose after the designated opportunity(ies) for comment (see 218.8(c)).

36 CFR 218.8(c) states:

218.8(c) Issues raised in objections must be based on previously submitted specific written comments regarding the proposed project or activity and attributed to the objector, unless the issue is based on new information that arose after the opportunities for comment. The burden is on the objector to demonstrate compliance with this requirement for objection issues (see paragraph 218.8(d)(6)).

We have provided a format to help you craft comments that are related to issues of concern to you. This will help the Responsible Official understand your concerns and how they might be addressed in the draft decision document. Please feel free to add additional sections as you see fit to allow you to best express your concerns and suggested remedies.

Issue 1

Issue statement* (i.e. a description of those aspects of the project that concern you, how you believe the project violates law/reg/policy and supporting reasons for the Responsible Official to consider):

Suggested remedy (if any):

List of attachments or citations (date, page, and section) that support your position:

NOTE: If there are no attachments or citations applicable to this issue, you can delete this section.

Issue 2

Issue statement* (i.e. a description of those aspects of the project that concern you, how you believe the project violates law/reg/policy and supporting reasons for the Responsible Official to consider):

Suggested remedy (if any):

List of attachments or citations (date, page, and section) that support your position:

NOTE: If there are no attachments or citations applicable to this issue, you can delete this section.

Issue 3

Issue statement* (i.e. a description of those aspects of the project that concern you, how you believe the project violates law/reg/policy and supporting reasons for the Responsible Official to consider):

Suggested remedy (if any):

List of attachments or citations (date, page, and section) that support your position:

NOTE: If there are no attachments or citations applicable to this issue, you can delete this section.

Don't forget to include all applicable attachments when filing your objection.

You may delete all of the blue, italicized text in this document prior to submitting your objection.