

MANTI-LA SAL NATIONAL FOREST PLAN REVISION OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION Q&A

Does official scoping begin October 1st?

No, official scoping will commence when the Notice of Intent (NOI) is published in the Federal Register. However, beginning October 1, 2020 is an opportunity for public participation to review and comment on our draft documents in the process of developing a plan proposal.

Under what authority are you providing this opportunity for participation?

This is an opportunity for participation under 36 CFR 219.4(a) which states that the responsible official shall provide opportunities to the public for participating in the development of a plan proposal.

Why is the forest providing this opportunity for public participation under 219(a)?

Due to the situation surrounding Covid-19 we have delayed scoping our draft forest plan. Also, we are not able to currently engage with the public in-person. During a time that challenges us to engage virtually we desire to provide the public an extended window to review and become familiar with our draft plan and the associated documents.

Are you welcoming the public to comment during this opportunity for public participation?

Yes, we are welcoming comments during this participation time.

Regarding objection eligibility, will comments submitted during an opportunity for public participation count?

Yes, 36 CFR 218.5(a); 218.7(c)(2)(ii); and 219.62 give direction that "...objections will be accepted only from those who have previously submitted specific written comments regarding the proposed project during scoping or other designated opportunity for public comment..."

Do we have an estimate on when publication of the Notice of Intent in the Federal Register will occur?

We do not have an estimate currently. We intend to publish as soon as we are able to.

What is the time frame for this opportunity for public participation?

Our desire is that this opportunity begins October 1, 2020 and flows into the official scoping period (NOI publication in the Federal Register). However, if official scoping continues to be delayed well into 2021, we may consider an end date for the public participation opportunity and notify the public accordingly. Should that occur, those that did not submit comments during the public participation opportunity timeframe will be able to submit their comments during the official scoping period.

When I click on the comment link it says my comments are due by 12/31/2020, why?

The CARA comment system requires a date to request comments by, however, this date can be extended. We hope that by the end of December we better understand when official scoping will begin. Our intent is to adjust this date in the CARA comment system at that time to transition with the date of the official scoping period.

Will the draft plan receive changes prior to the closing of official scoping?

No, we will analyze and respond to comments and make any potential changes to documents after the official scoping period has closed.