

NEPA Public Input

THE PUBLIC INPUT PERIOD

Comment periods are a required step in the NEPA process for federal agencies. They must provide everyone interested in the project an opportunity to identify potentially significant impacts, alternative courses of action, and relevant information the agency may not be aware of. The NEPA process also facilitates the agency's respectful consideration of public input.

WHY COMMENT?

Sharing your perspective with a public servant or elected official is one of the most important steps in advocating for an issue or campaign. Whether it is a handwritten letter, email, or online comment, federal agencies are required to listen to the public. You have a right to voice how you think your public lands should be managed.

MAKE YOUR COMMENT COUNT

Land managers make thousands of decisions every year that impact our public lands. The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) gives you a chance to tell them what you think those decisions should look like. Agencies are required to consider substantive comments and information provided by the public.

What should you say in your comment?

- **USE YOUR OWN WORDS**
Online forms and any provided talking points are great guidance, but unique comments stand out and may carry more weight.
- **DESCRIBE YOUR CONNECTION TO THE PLACE AT STAKE**
Have you spent time hiking, camping, hunting, fishing, or exploring our national forests? Do you volunteer or work on public lands? Maybe you live far away but dream of the one time each year you get to appreciate these wide open spaces and breathe clean air. Whatever the connection, remind the agency that these lands are yours too, and that they are important to you.
- **CLEARLY IDENTIFY WHAT YOU THINK THE AGENCY'S DECISION SHOULD BE, AND WHY**
It's not enough to only voice agreement or opposition (your comment will not be considered a substantive comment). Articulate what the project proposal says or doesn't say, why this is a problem, and what should be done instead. Be as specific as possible. Ask for a specific action.
- **READ THE DOCUMENT THAT YOU ARE COMMENTING ON**
Reference their document when you point out errors or lack of consideration. You can also reference scientific studies, and, when possible, use data to support your claims.
- **REMEMBER WHO YOU ARE WRITING TO**
Be calm, be clear, and describe how these improvements will be better for everyone. Your comment does not have to be lengthy, but it should be polite, constructive, and meaningful.



GRAND CANYON
TRUST

"NEPA provides a powerful vision of a world built on respect—for animals, for land, and for each other. It doesn't just provide a vision; it provides a path to get there. It's up to us to follow it."

—Sharon Buccino, Natural Resources Defense Council