

# *Eastern Navajo Agency Livestock Grazing Environmental Assessment FONSI Rollout*



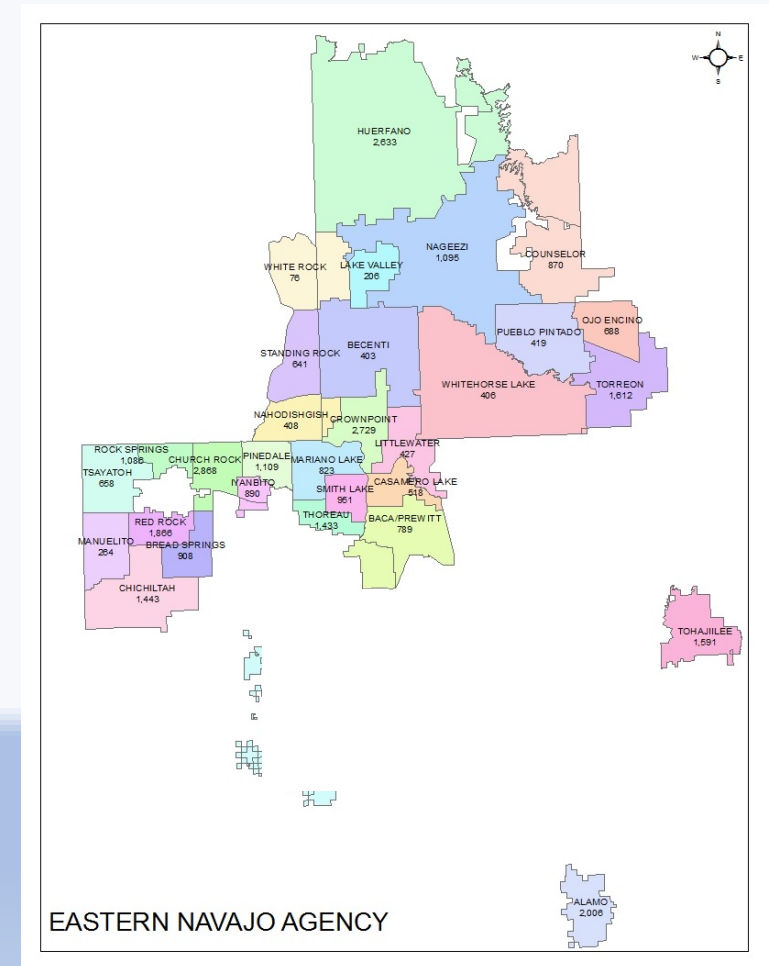
**Navajo Sustainable Agriculture Zoom Meeting**

*August 29, 2022*

5:30 PM

# ENA Branch of Natural Resources Oversight

- Provides direction and guidance for planning, management, conservation, and development activities
- Responsibility in protection of soil, water, farmland, rangeland, fish and wildlife resources, threatened and endangered species and their habitat, and cultural resources
- Ensures compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in approving grazing permits



# Authorities

- The American Indian Agricultural Resource Management Act, 1993 (As Amended)
- 25 Code of Federal Regulations Parts 162 (Leasing), 166 (Grazing Permits) and 167 (Navajo Grazing Regulations)
- Title 3 Navajo Nation Code, Clean Water Act, Endangered Species Act, and several other laws and policies
- National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), 43 CFR Part 46
- Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ) 40 CFR Parts 1500-150



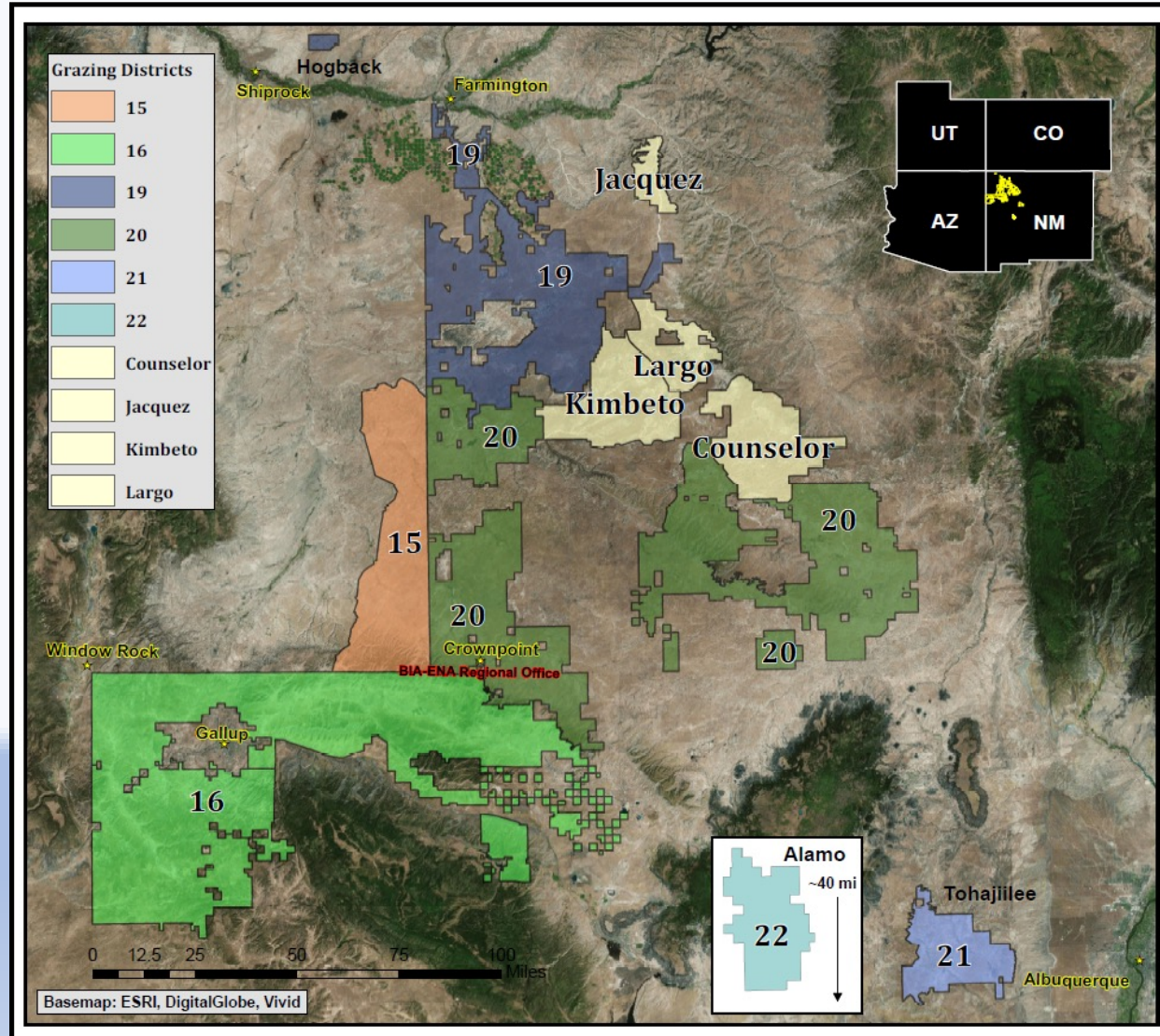
# Presentation Objectives

- Areas Affected by the Menefee Formation
- Agency Protective Action Projects (APAPs) design and implementation.
- Programmatic approach to environmental protection.
- Conservation Measures
- Enhance grazing permit process





# Areas Included

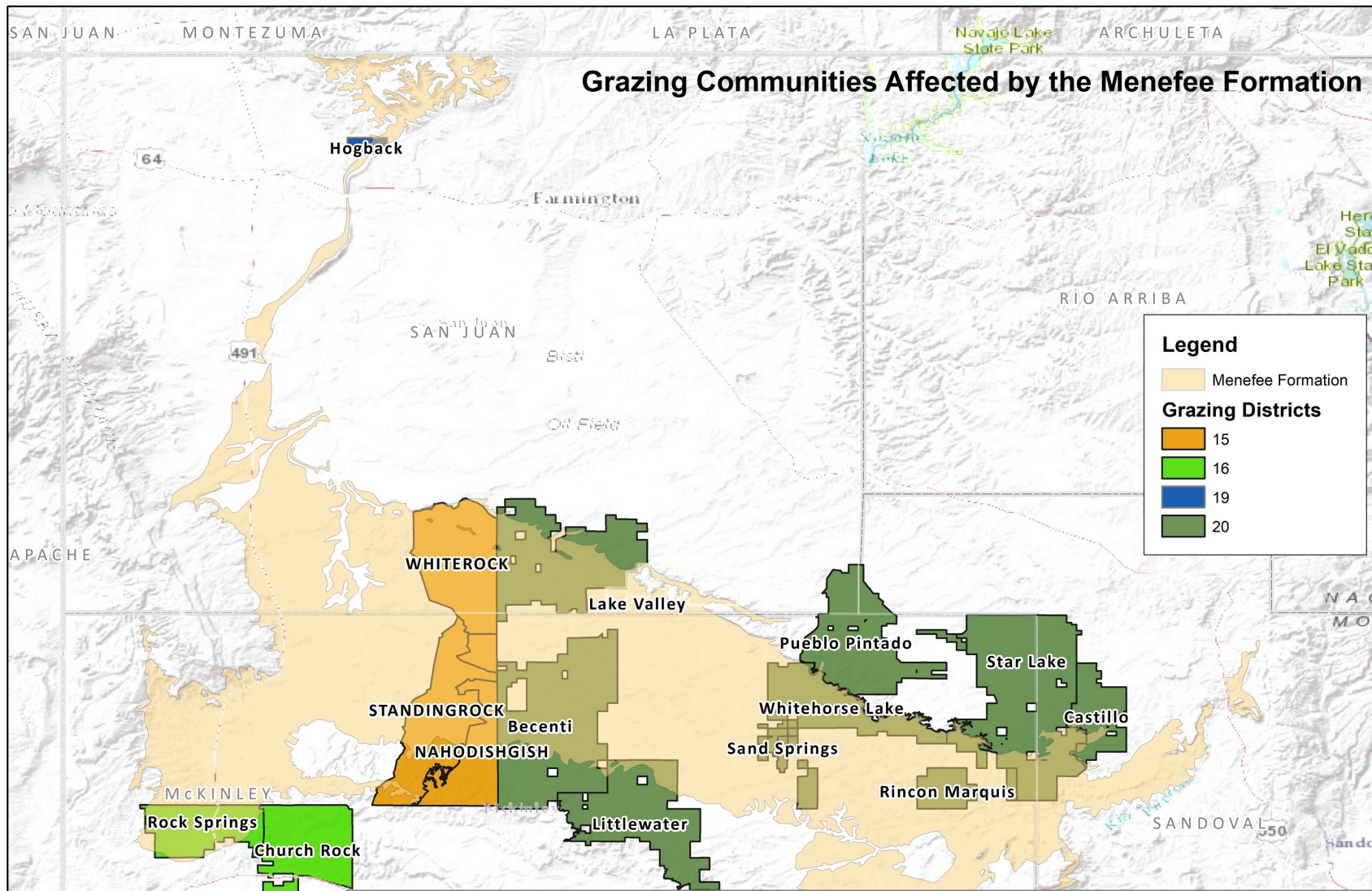


- 2,226,470 acres
- Trust lands (tribal trust, homesteads, and individual Indian allotments) in Land Management Districts:
  - 15
  - 16
  - 19
  - 20
  - 21 (Tohajiilee)
  - 22 (Alamo)
- BLM Grazing Allotments:
  - Counselor
  - Jacquez
  - Kimbeto
  - Largo

Lands that were not covered include tribal fee lands, public (BLM) lands, state lands.







## Areas Affected by the Menefee Formation

A geologic formation found in the New Mexico San Juan Basin Region. Formed from sediment deposits from a retreating inland sea.

# Grazing Communities Affected by the Menefee Formation

LMD	Grazing Community	No. of Range Units	Acreage
15	White Rock	13	69,005
15	Nahodishgish	9	27,048
15	Standing Rock	26	66,797
16	Church Rock	2	1,878
16	Rock Springs	16	36,664
19	Hogback	1	4,544
20	Becenti	38	66,874
20	Castillo	4	3,420
20	Lake Valley	31	59,497
20	Littlewater	9	8,408
20	Pueblo Pintado	3	11,766
20	Sand Springs	9	7,409
20	Star Lake	16	49,253
20	Whitehorse	25	36,443
	Total	202	449,006



# Environmental Assessment (EA) Findings

- Emphasis on protection of sensitive areas to approve, grant, and administer grazing permits and leases.
- Implement effective planning based on results of the EA for Agency Protective Action Projects (APAP).





# EA Findings continued...

Sensitive areas include the following:

- Cultural Resources
- Threatened and Endangered Species and their habitat
- Water Resources



# EA Findings continued...

Agency Protective Action Projects (APAPs) design and implementation will be based on:

- Need
- Funding
- Potential projects that could be planned and performed to support improved rangeland health



## EA Findings continued...

Maintain a programmatic approach to environmental protection:

- Apply conservation measures whenever actions have a potential to affect threatened and endangered species.
- Use determined appropriate carrying capacities and acreages of grazeable land for each Land Management District to ensure sustainable rangeland health.



# EA Findings continued...

## Grazing permit or lease approval requirements:

- Approved conservation plan
- Based on current available field inventory
- Periodic monitoring of rangeland health and update rangeland inventory data
  - As BIA resources allow, but not less than every 10 years.





# EA Findings continued...

1. Establish a new grazing permit or lease authorization process considering identified environmental concerns and issues.
2. Implement an enhanced protection approach for approving grazing permits or leases.
3. Continue to promote best management practices (BMPs) and appropriate mitigation measures through implementation of the Conservation Plans.



# EA Findings continued...

4. Practice conservation measures.
5. Address individual permitting actions and APAP impacts to specific cultural resources, including ground surveys, if necessary.
  - Future determinations can be made consistent with the 2015 memorandum of understanding (MOU) entitled “Section 106 Clearances for Grazing Leases/Permits, Agricultural Leases/Permits, and Herding Improvements.” The MOU outlines steps necessary to preserve cultural resources and provides NHPA, Section 106, guidance for grazing permit issuance, renewal, or modification.



## EA Findings continued...

6. There is no adverse impact on public health and safety.
7. Mitigate Potential Socioeconomic and Environmental Justice impacts by implementing measures



## EA Findings continued...

8. Implement mitigation measures to prevent impacts to floodplains and wetlands as prescribed in Conservation Plans.
9. None of the less-than-significant impacts would contribute to cumulative impacts in the region.
10. Provide an enhanced grazing permitting process that preserves livestock grazing as an integral aspect of traditional Navajo culture, lifestyle, and economy for the project area residents.





## EA Findings continued...

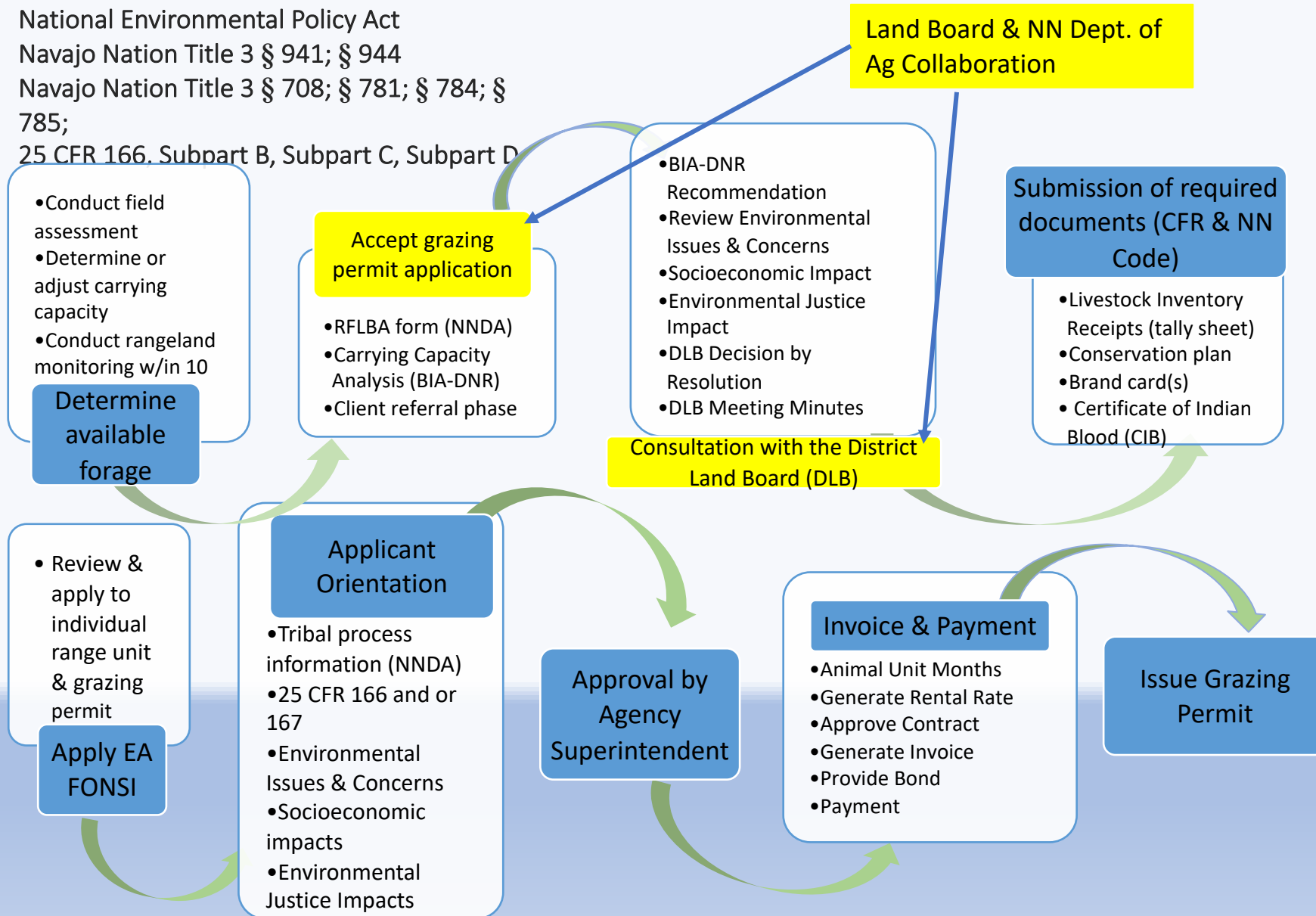
BIA ENA must update Conservation Measures if...

- New information reveals may affect listed species in a manner or to an extent not previously considered,
- The proposed action is subsequently modified to include activities which were not considered during the consultation, or
- Consider obligations under Section 7 when new species are listed or critical habitat is designated that may be affected.

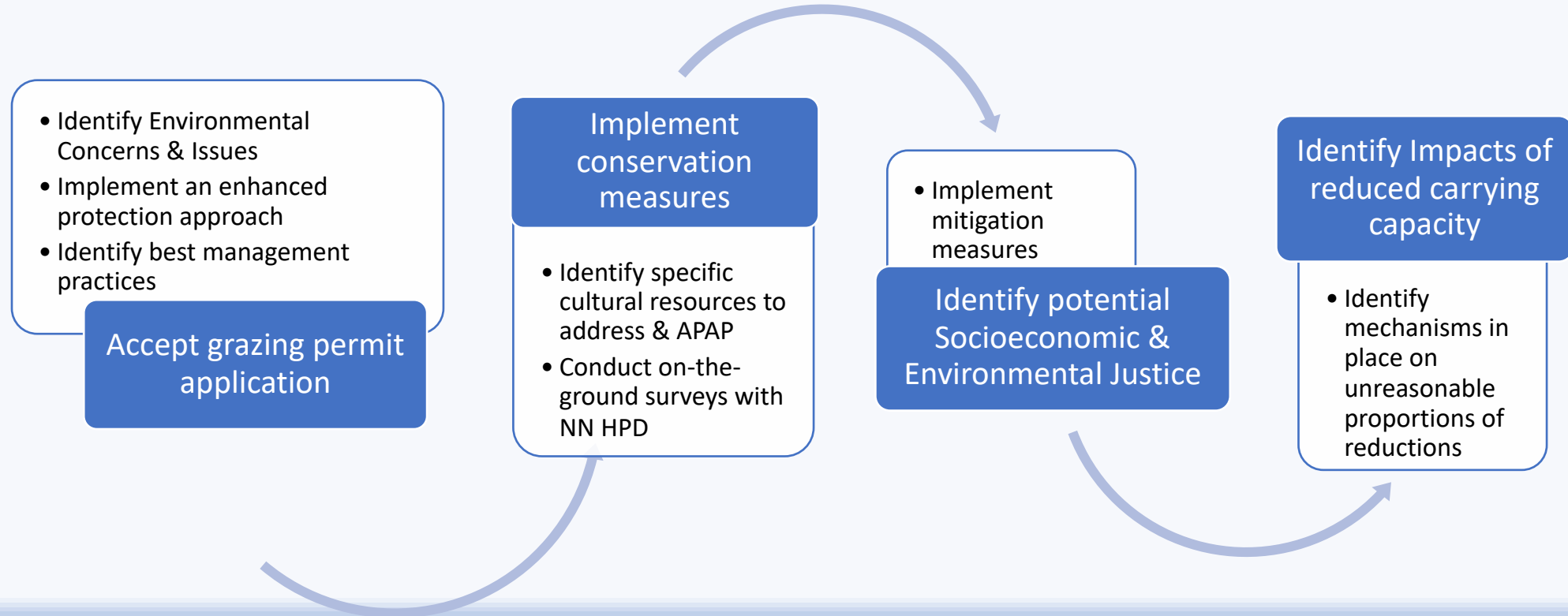


# Enhanced Grazing Permit Approval Process

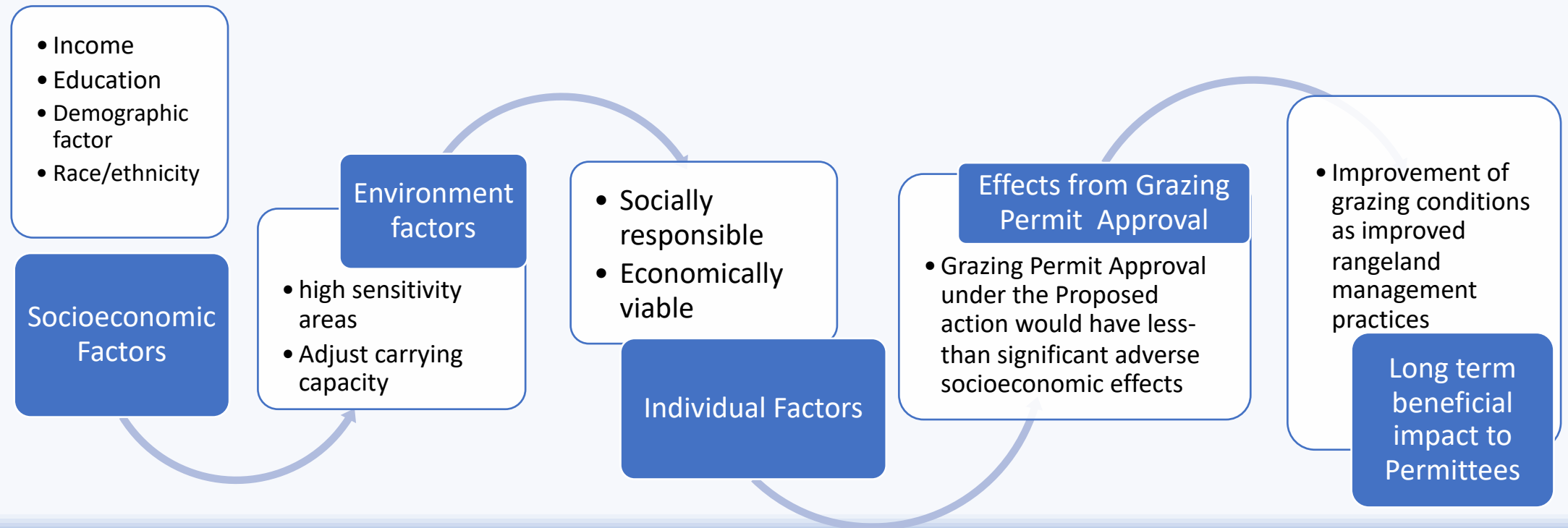
National Environmental Policy Act  
 Navajo Nation Title 3 § 941; § 944  
 Navajo Nation Title 3 § 708; § 781; § 784; § 785;  
 25 CFR 166. Subpart B, Subpart C, Subpart D



# Environmental Concerns & Issues

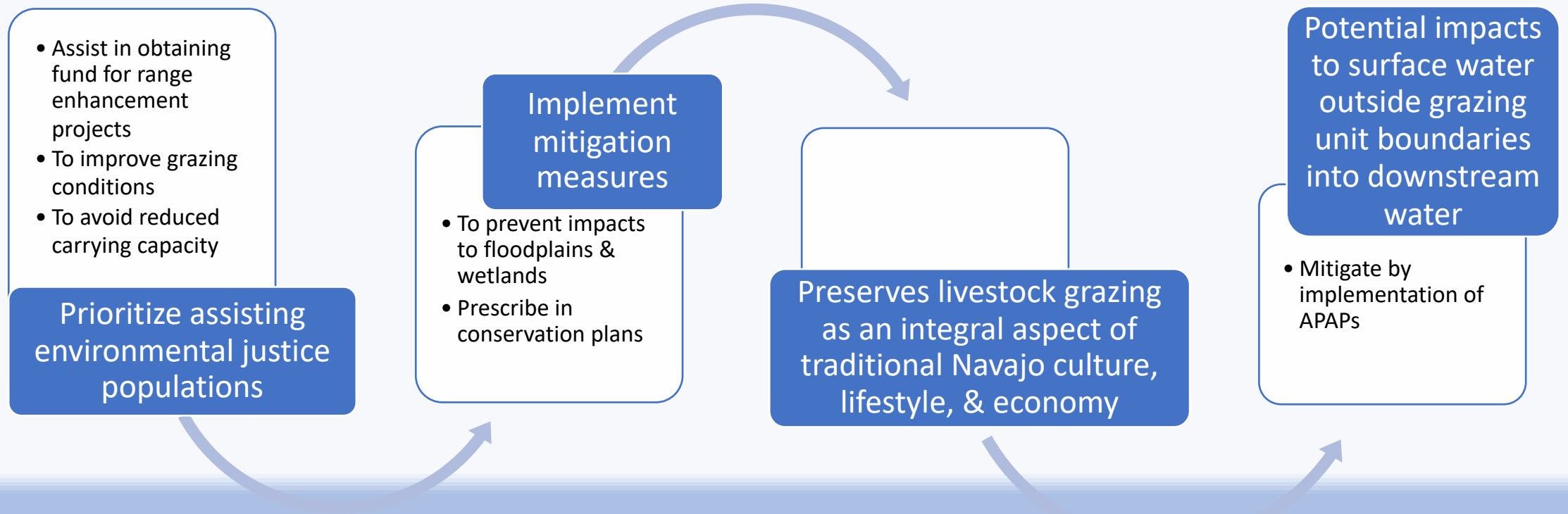


# Socioeconomic Impact

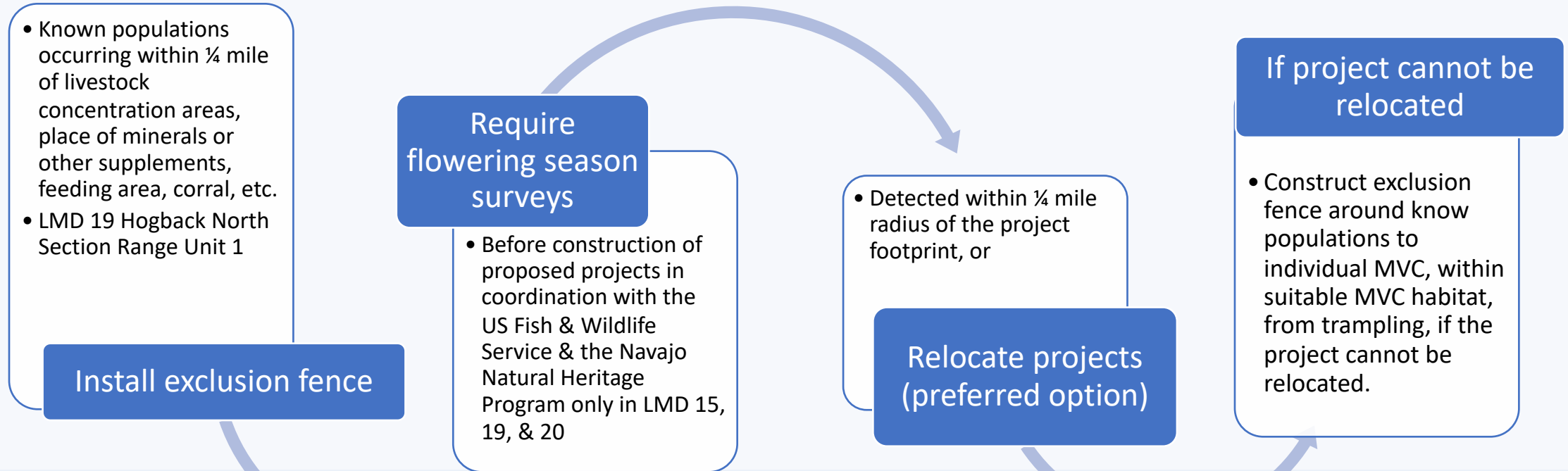




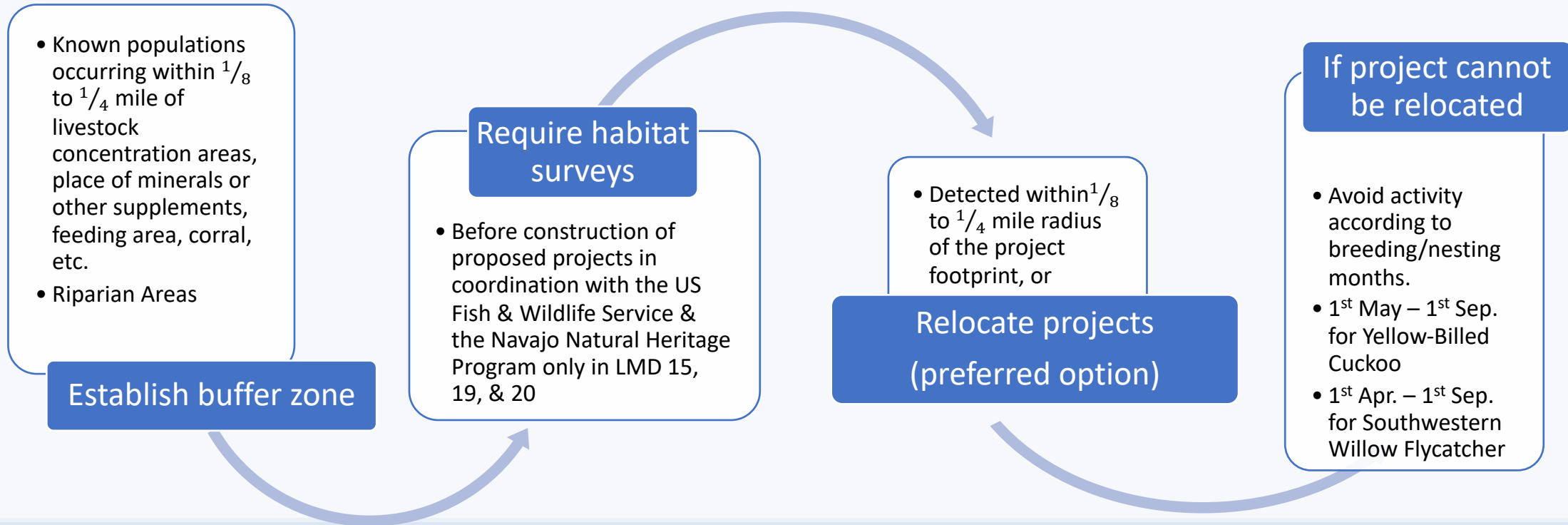
# Conservation Development



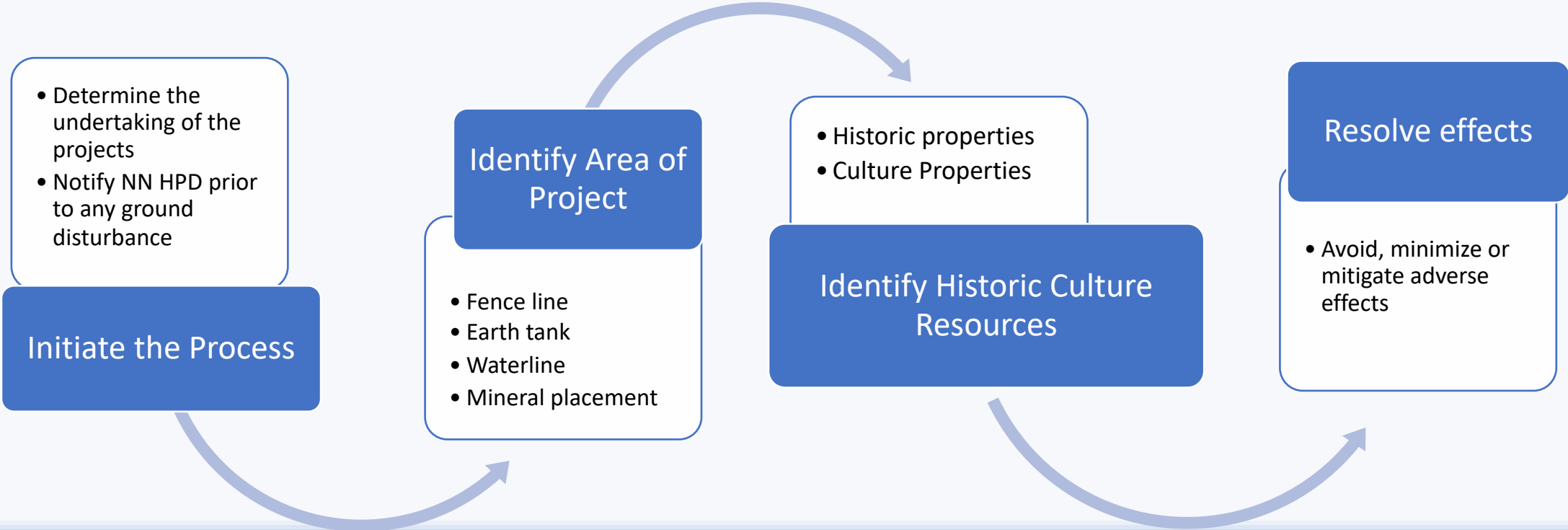
# Conservation Measures – Mancos Milk-Vetch & Mesa Verde Cactus



# Conservation Measures – Yellow-Billed Cuckoo & Southwestern Willow Flycatcher




# Culture Resource



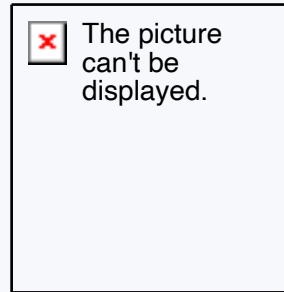
# Contact Information

For more information, contact:  
Bureau of Indian Affairs  
Eastern Navajo Agency  
Branch of Natural Resources  
(505) 786 – 6100

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# QUESTIONS?






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# Endangered

Southwestern Willow  
Flycatcher  
(*Empidonax traillii extimus*)



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# Threatened

*Yellow-billed Cuckoo*  
*(Coccyzus americanus)*



Threatened

Mesa Verde Cactus  
(*Scleracatus mesa-verdae*)





Threatened

Mancos Milk-vetch  
(*Astragaulas humilimus*)