

Presentation Agenda

- Welcome and Introductions
- Presentation
 - Description of the actions analyzed in the EA
 - Short history of the EA
 - How BIA ENA will use the EA
 - How others may use/reference the EA
- Question/Answer and Comment period
- Closing remarks by BIA ENA



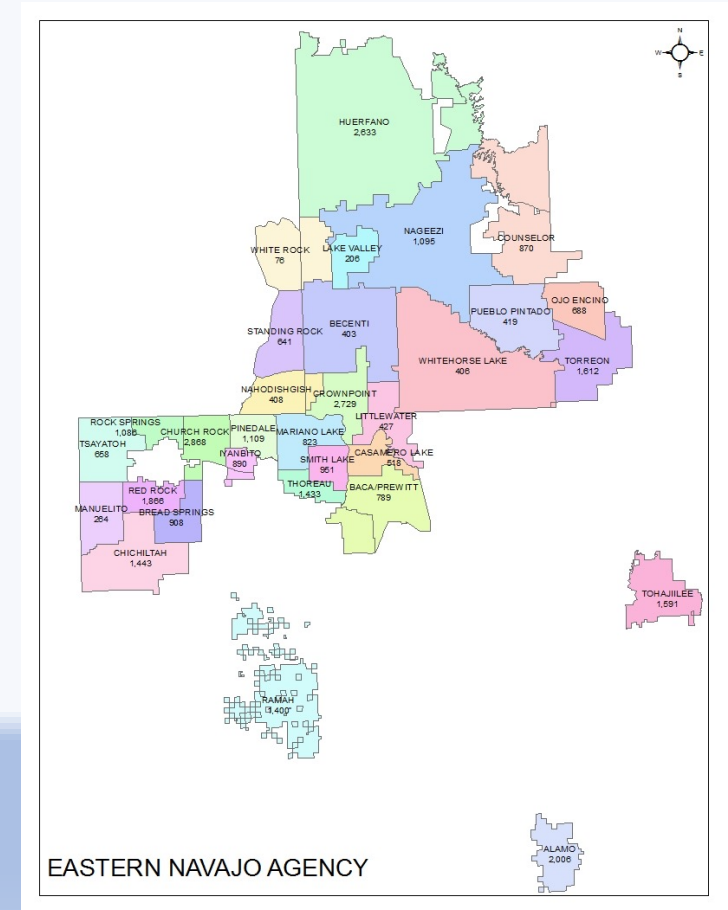
Presentation Objectives

- Inform the public and the permittees of the NEPA regulations
- Grazing Permit approval is a federal action, all federal action require NEPA documents.
- Protection of sensitive area and cultural resource areas.
- The first EA done on Navajo Nation for livestock grazing permit approval.



Agency Natural Resources Oversight

- Branch of Natural Resources (BNR) provides direction and guidance for planning, management, conservation, and development activities
- This project showcases BIA's oversight responsibility in protection of soil, water, farmland, rangeland, fish and wildlife resources, and threatened and endangered species
- BNR complies with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in approving grazing permits



Authorities

- National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), 43 CFR Part 46
- Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ) 40 CFR Parts 1500-1508
- The EA complies with:
 - 25 CFR 166 and 167,
 - The American Indian Agricultural Resource Management Act,
 - Navajo Nation laws (NNC Title 3), Clean Water Act, Endangered Species Act, and several other laws and policies



Purpose and Need for the BIA ENA Action

- Goals
 - Ensure long-term, sustained livestock grazing as an integral part of the culture, lifestyle, and economy of the Navajo people
 - Ensure that issuing grazing permits promotes sustainable rangeland management practices
- Two parts to the planned actions
 - Continue regulatory responsibility to approve, grant, and administer grazing permits
 - Design and implement Agency Protective Action Projects to avoid, minimize, or mitigate grazing impacts on sensitive areas and resources



Planned BIA ENA Actions

Part 1

Continue to approve, grant, and administer grazing permits:

- Maximum carrying capacities will continue to be established through scientific measurement of rangeland health
- Carrying capacities could be adjusted up or down based on analysis
- Conservation Plans for each range unit will continue to be required for permit approval

Part 2

Consider Agency Protective Action Projects to control grazing impacts:

- **Fencing Projects:** (e.g., range unit, interior, or exclusion fencing)
- **Water Development Projects:** (e.g., windmill/drinker infrastructures, livestock watering points, or earthen basins)
- **Erosion Control Projects:** erosion control structures
- **Rangeland Improvements:** (e.g., deferred grazing, grazing rotation, or practices to rest pastures)



History of the Livestock Grazing EA

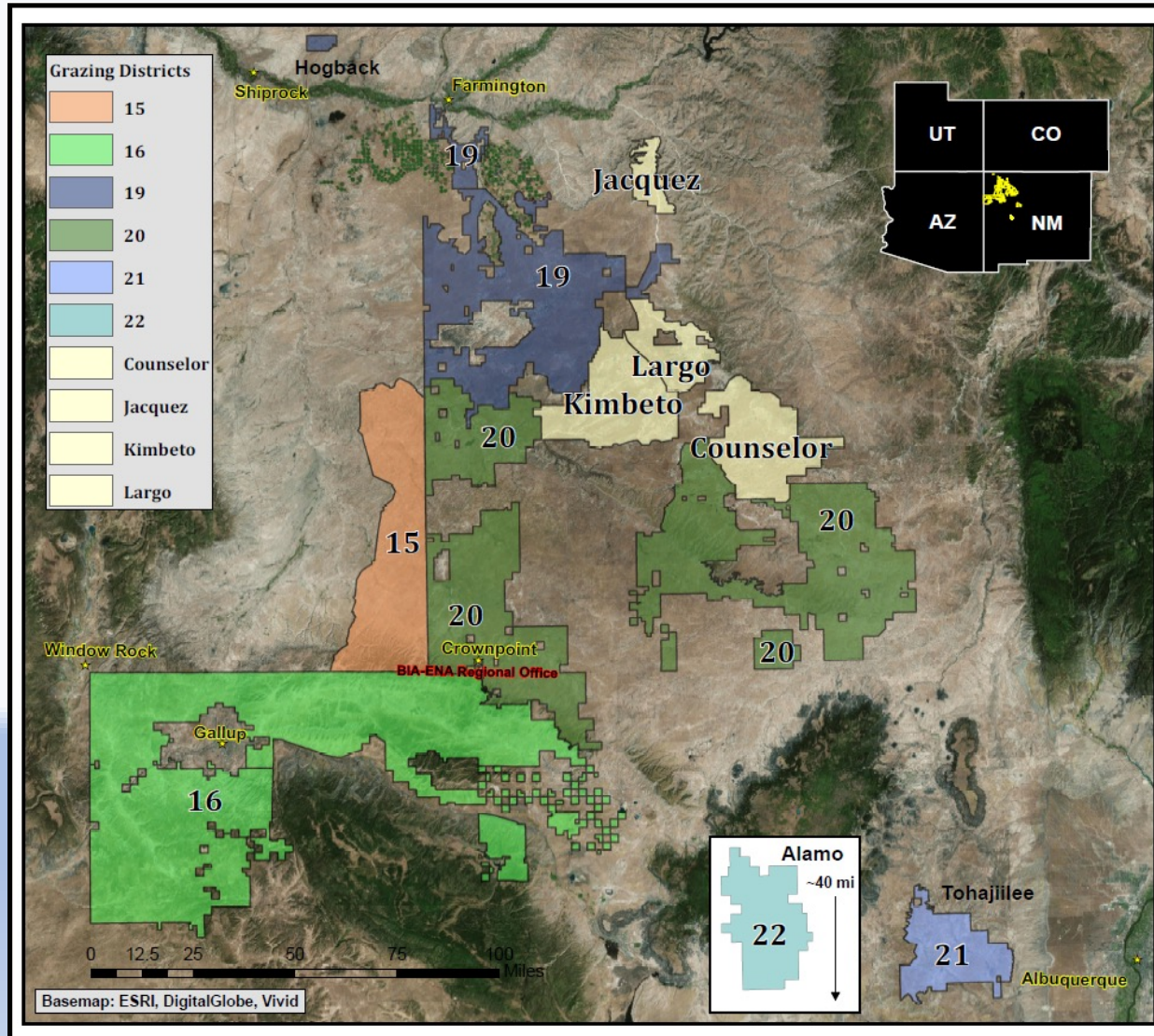
- Planned Agency actions required preparation of an EA under NEPA (required by U.S. regulations)
- BIA ENA contracted for EA preparation support, which started in March 2018
- BIA ENA actively engaged the public during scoping (spring 2018) and Draft EA review (December 2018)
- The Final Livestock Grazing EA was published on May 20, 2019
- BIA Navajo Region Office completed a Finding of **Decision document by July, 2019**

Resources Analyzed

- Geologic Setting
- Soils
- Water Resources
- Air Resources
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Socioeconomics
- Environmental Justice
- Public Health
- Infrastructure
- Land Use
- Visual Resources
- Noise and Light



Areas Included in the EA



- Land Management Districts:
 - 15
 - 16
 - 19
 - 20
 - 21 (Tohajiilee)
 - 22 (Alamo)

Tribal trust, homesteads, and individual Indian allotments in BLM Grazing Allotments:

- Counselor
- Jacquez
- Kimbeto
- Largo



Public Involvement

- BIA ENA actively sought public participation in the NEPA process
- The public was invited to scoping meetings in April and June 2018
- BIA ENA presented information on development of the EA at important Navajo meetings
- The Draft EA was made available to the public on a publicly accessible website from December 11, 2018 through January 11, 2019
- A Draft EA public meeting was held in Crownpoint on December 19, 2018
- All relevant comments were considered and addressed in the Final EA



Significance of the EA

The Planned Actions:

- Complies with NEPA, CEQ regulations, 32 CFR 651, and other applicable Federal, state, and local environmental regulations
- Continues culturally significant Navajo subsistence and business economies
- Results in NO significant adverse impact on Navajo Nation resources
- Promotes implementation of mitigation measures
- Provides long-term benefits for some resources:

Geologic Setting and Soils

Surface Water

Natural and Cultural Resources

Visual Resources

Socioeconomic Conditions

Environmental Justice



BIA ENA's Use of the EA

Conclusion of the EA and Decision Document

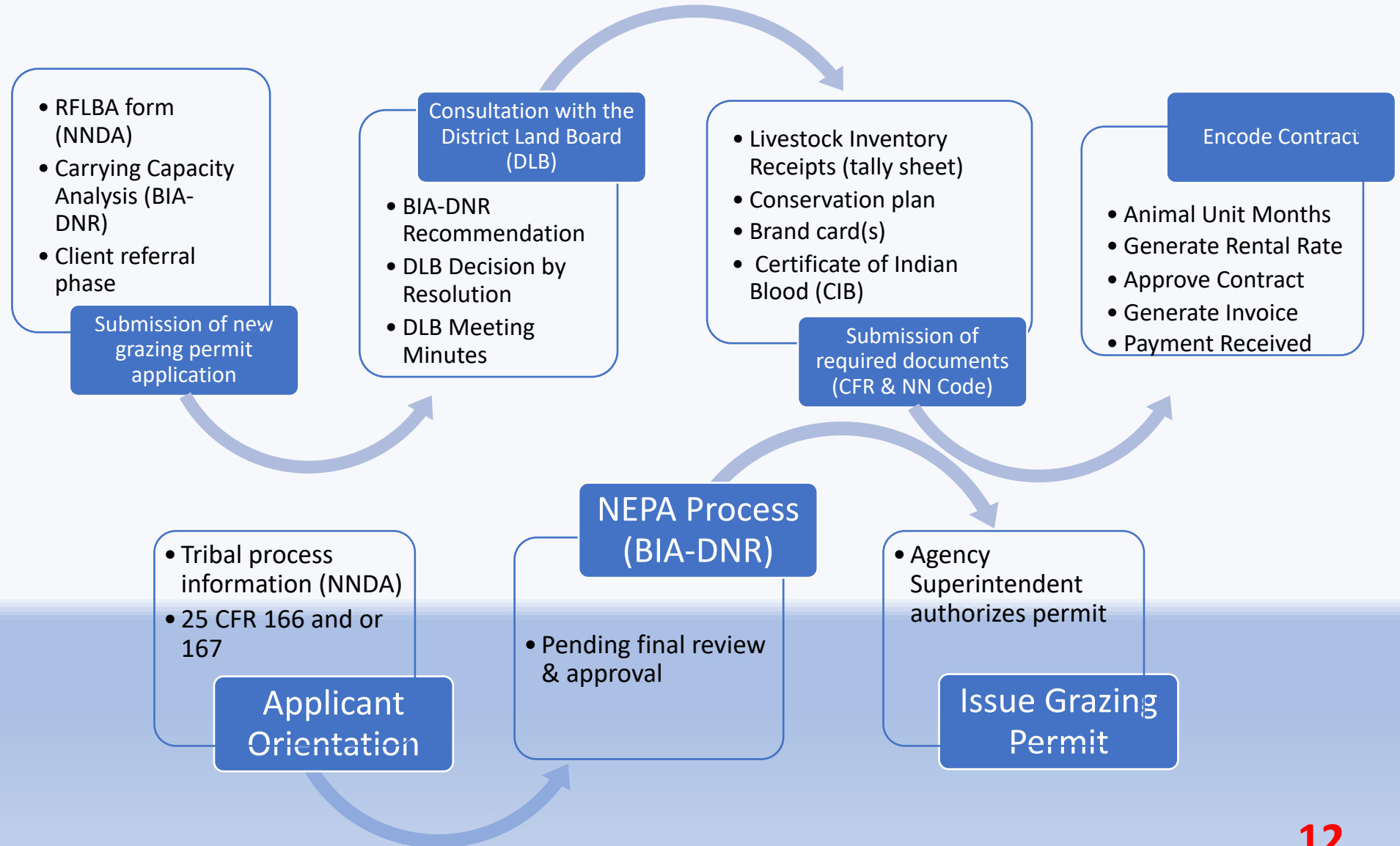
No resource areas would experience a significant adverse impact; therefore, no significant adverse direct, indirect, or cumulative impacts on the natural or human environment would result from implementation of the Proposed Action.

- The Decision Document (based on the results of the impact analysis) provides BIA the NEPA documentation for making decisions about current and future grazing permits
- BIA ENA can design and implement Agency Protective Action Projects without conducting further NEPA analysis



Grazing Permit Approval Process

§ 941; § 944
 § 708; § 781; § 784; § 785
 25 CFR 166, Subpart B,
 Subpart C, and Subpart D



Use of the EA by Others

- The EA does NOT meet NEPA requirements for permittees who initiate projects with financial assistance from another Federal agency; for example, under the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG) Program. The project will need NEPA clearance for site specific.
- USDA NRCS regulations require that an environmental review be prepared for project actions where the Agency provides financial assistance.
- The EA contains extensive information on human and environmental conditions in each of the BIA ENA Districts.
- Permittees will find the EA a useful reference document in working with other Federal agencies in meeting NEPA requirements.



Land Board Take Aways

- Eastern Navajo Land Board could educate the permittees at their monthly Permittee Meetings on the EA.
- ENA BNR will host 7 Chapter public work sessions to educate the public on the EA. Land Board should be available at the work sessions.
- District 15, 19 and 20 Land Board members should be informed of the potential Habitats of the Mesa Verde Cactus and the Mancos Milk Vetch; conservation measures be provided to the Permittees or amend conservation plans with mitigation measures.



What does the EA mean for the Permittees?

- The EA is an enhancement to the current science-based grazing permit approval process support Navajo Nation and Federal agriculture decisions related to livestock grazing permitting.
- The EA protects sensitive areas through the conservation measures included in the conservation plan to ensure sustainable rangeland health.
- The EA serves to preserve for the future generation livestock producers.



What does the EA mean for the Land Board?

- Reaffirms Federal support and close working relationship
- Assists BIA's statutory responsibility to issue grazing permits.
- Uses the EA as reference for carrying capacities and conservation measures for each permit allocation.

