

Public Involvement Plan

Elements of a Public Involvement Plan

Projects conducted by federal agencies and the private sector must produce results that that will directly benefit the surrounding communities at project sites. Involvement of tribal and public representatives in the evaluation of technologies to be considered can ensure that these projects will not only be improved as a result of such collaboration, but will gain community acceptance in the long term.

Inclusion of tribal and public participation in technology assessment, development and deployment activities can be accomplished by providing meaningful, consistent and quality approaches to creating decision making partnerships with tribes and the public. This means going beyond traditional public relations or community outreach activities and doing more than the regulations require. Although the public does not make final decisions, it is important that public representatives become partners in the decision-making process. Decisions developed through partnerships established early in the process will result in successful projects and demonstrations that will save dollars and resources by solving problems early, before decisions become policy.

Objectives

Public participation objectives must be identified. An action plan, including local public involvement should be considered. Native American and tribal participation in the project (where applicable) should also be considered.

- **Decision Making**
A clear definition of the decision-making process should be identified. A realistic expectation regarding all parties' roles should be considered.
- **Information Requirements**
An analysis of the types and forms of information for effective participation should be considered.
- **Education**
An education element that addresses the needs of the group should be considered.
- **Accountability**
A two-way accountability process should be considered. This should include an approach for responding to all input received. Actions taken should be documented. Integration of public involvement in the process should be defined.
- **Schedules**
Schedules, milestones and time-lines for public involvement activities should be considered.
- **Resources and Costs**
Resources required to implement the plan, including staffing and financial needs, should be identified. Other cost estimates, such as travel and per diem, should be considered.