The EIS Process for a Plan of Operations
1. PoO Completeness Review (30 days)
   • Operator information
   • Description of operations
   • Reclamation plan
   • Monitoring plan
   • Interim management plan

1. Begin informal scoping

1. Draft NOI
2. Formal scoping

- Publish NOI in Federal Register
- Initiates formal public scoping period (45 days?)
  - 2 public meetings (Vale and Ontario)
    - Identify issues for use in alternatives development
  - Draft, review, finalize, and post scoping report to website
    - Identifies issues raised during scoping process,
    - Issues to be addressed in the EIS,
    - And issues not to be addressed in the EIS and why

2. Identify operational and baseline information necessary to conduct NEPA analysis
3. Develop Alternatives

• Workshop to develop alternatives
  ➢ Evaluate potential impact of the PoO
  ➢ Develop alternative(s) to address impacts of the PoO that may cause UUD
  ➢ Develop alternatives to address issues identified during internal, public, or agency scoping
  ➢ Usually at least 3:
    • No action
    • Operator’s PoO
    • Operator’s PoO with BLM-added mitigation needed to prevent UUD

• Draft, review, and finalize Alternatives Tech Memo with cooperating agencies
4. Prepare DEIS

• Analyze impacts of the alternatives
• Revise alternatives to prevent UUD or minimize resource conflict, if appropriate, and re-analyze
• Identify BLM’s preferred alternative
• Draft, review, and finalize DEIS w/ cooperating agencies
5. DEIS Public Review

• Distribute DEIS to agencies & requesting parties
• File DEIS with the EPA who publishes NOA in Federal Register
• Initiates public comment period (60 days min.)
  ➢ Public meetings
  ➢ Draft, review, and finalize comment responses with cooperating agencies
6. Prepare FEIS

• Address substantive agency or public comments
• Identify BLM’s proposed action
• Draft, review, and finalize FEIS w/ cooperating agencies
7. FEIS Public Review

• Distribute FEIS to agencies and requesting parties
• File FEIS with the EPA who publishes NOA in Federal Register
• Initiates required availability period (30 days min.)
  ➢ Not a formal public comment period, but may receive comments
8. Issue Record of Decision on the PoO

• Draft, review, and finalize ROD
  ➢ BLM’s decision on the PoO:
    • Approved as submitted, or
    • Approved subject to changes required to prevent UUD, or
    • Denied or approval withheld b/c does not meet content requirements or operations would cause UUD
  ➢ A list of any conditions of approval (*requires the operator to revise the PoO content*)
  ➢ Final financial guarantee amount
  ➢ Activities may not begin until bond instrument is accepted

• File ROD with EPA who publishes NOA to Federal Register