



The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) has published a proposed rule that would revise the existing regulations regarding the importation, interstate movement, and environmental release of certain genetically engineered organisms.

New regulations will address the current and future needs of the agency and ensure a high level of environmental protection. The proposed changes will also improve regulatory processes so that they are more transparent to stakeholders and the public, make more efficient use of agency resources, and eliminate unnecessary regulatory burdens.

Public involvement leading to an informed Agency decision is the cornerstone of rulemaking. The purpose of a proposed rule is to:

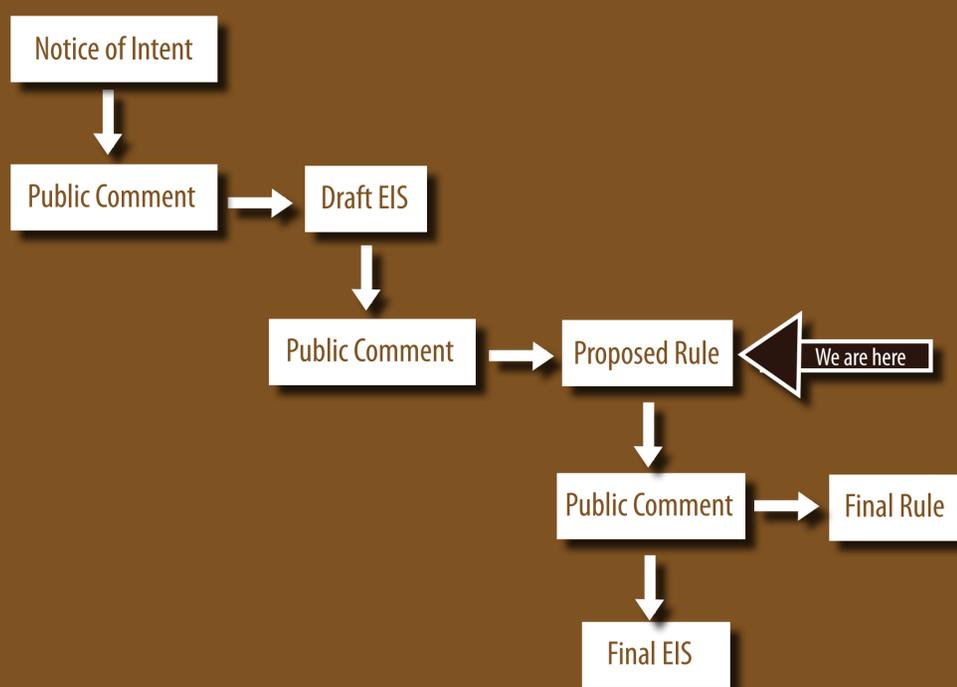
- Identify the proposed changes,
- Allow for public input and comment, and
- Inform the decisionmaking process in development of a final rule.

As part of the rulemaking process, and in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), APHIS prepared a draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to evaluate the environmental impacts of its current regulations and analyze the possible impacts of potential revisions to its regulations.

APHIS used the public comments received on the draft EIS and the latest scientific information to formulate the proposed rule.



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NEPA guides Federal agencies on the integration of environmental and public considerations into their decisionmaking processes.