

Forest Service Planning Rule Meeting

Possible Discussion Topics

Notes from Sheridan, WY meeting April 15, 2010

General Discussion

1. What do you think a great planning rule would look like?
2. What works now; what concepts would you like to continue into the next planning rule?
3. What doesn't work; what concepts would you like to leave behind?

Plan Content

4. What kind of information should be included in Forest Plans, and should they include standards and guidelines? If so what kind?

NOTES:

- They (stds/guides) can be a "hook" for the public to communicate with Fson what needs to be done and hold FS accountable
- National standards bogs down FS plan completion; may not be local; can tie FS hands locally. Guidelines would be better than standards
- Allow Forests to be flexible and allow for local variety and changes
- Rule should say stds. and guidelines are adopted
- Rule should be flexible
- Are standards based on law? Often, but not always – could hold the forest accountable
- Plans content should be more accessible / understandable
- Leave stds. and guidelines to local level
- Standards need to reflect current science.
- Standards and guidelines should consider long term sustainability not short term use.

5. How consistent should plans be across the country?

Process Topics

6. What suggestions do you have for making forest planning faster, simpler, more straightforward and less expensive?
7. When and how should plans be evaluated to see if they are working? What should trigger plan amendments?

NOTES:

- Allow for reasonable time frame to evaluate the plans and amend them

- **Timeframe of evaluation may differ from forest to forest and even within a forest**
- **Allow each forest to evaluate each use separately**

8. What is the best way to involve stakeholders in the planning process?

NOTES:

- **Define stakeholder and put parameters on who they are in the rule**
 - **Part of that definition should include state and Federal and city governments to assure broad economic value (ties to #14) and the interconnectivity is accounted for**
 - **Rule needs to account for changes in publics (across the life of a plan) as it defines stakeholder**
 - **Definition should not be rigid, not be exclusive and not be secretive**
 - **Use ideas from areas/forests where plans are working well.**
9. How should the Forest Service collaborate with adjacent landowners, partners, and other agencies and governments in developing Forest Plans?
- **Involve local government in developing Forest Plans.**
 - **Viability of local economic operations needs to be considered.**
 - **Need to consider and solicit input from non-governmental organizations for providing input, particularly conservation input.**
 - **Maintain respect for all people providing input. No hierarchy of contributors.**
 - **No second class citizens.**

Substantive Topics

10. How can the next planning rule foster restoration of NFS lands?

11. What, if any, climate change assumptions should be used when developing Forest Plans?

NOTES:

- **Assumption is like a mud puddle— humans are here for such a short period of time that to base a plan on that would be unrealistic – eg. national level – no; local level – yes**
- **Global climate affects everyone and should be in a national rule to force forests to do something – we should err on the side of caution**
- **Carbon sequestration may make big changes that others wouldn't like (ie – need young trees which means more timber management)**
- **National rule should take into consideration how not to contribute to climate change**
- **Change question #11 to read with word assessment instead of assumption**

- **Use Assessments in roadless and wilderness areas**

12. How should the Forest Service take into account water availability, and water quality factors, that are outside of Forest Service control?

13. How should the planning rule guide monitoring and protection of at-risk species of animals and plants and their habitats?

NOTES:

- **Integrate public interest groups into the monitoring**
- **Think about the interconnectivity of all the uses**
- **Use more than science – use historic use and knowledge – use local knowledge in the monitoring**
- **Continue interactive discussions of monitoring – structure dialogue**
- **Use local based science**
- **Requirement that monitoring needs to consider resources, both people and money, required to implement.**
- **Recognize local groups for their efforts and contributions in monitoring.**

14. What should the planning rule say about how Forest Plans deal with providing goods and services that contribute to vibrant local, regional, and national economies?

NOTES:

- **Trickle up not down; tourism effects economy – NFS affects local economy because people spend \$ in towns – make sure there is listening process**
- **Place more emphasis on economic impacts the NF can have on local communities**
- **Measure wild places and place value; eg. clean drinking water**
- **Emphaize local users versus non-local users**
- **Consider long range sustainability of the forest versus short range**
- **Make the rule more local with weighted system toward local versus national**

15. What should the planning rule say about recreational access, and visitor facilities and services?

NOTES:

- **Make certain there is adequate staffing to implement – make it implementable and funded**
- **Consider adjacent impacts – cumulative impacts**
- **Right size to the activity across the forest versus one local place that has concentrated use**
- **Provide for public access to NFS lands and educate the public how they can access and what is available**

- Guarantee access to NFS land
- Distribute recreation across the forest
- Plan should require standards and guidelines for all resources
- Rule should address budget to assure for places to recreate
- Consider adjacent landowners and effects that lack of knowledge recreationist have
- Diversity around the edge of NFS lands
- Provide for taxes to be available to be spent on public lands.
- Fewer user fees.
- Fewer information stations on national forest. More information stations in adjacent towns.

16. Is there anything else you would like to suggest about the forest planning rule?

NOTES:

- Keep 82 regs on reviewing roadless areas for wilderness values
- Rule should require timely completion of forest plans with a 3 year cap (takes three years to write a plan)
- Be consistent with Laws – MUSYA, NFMA
- Use objection process before versus appeal process after
- Use science to advise and inform vs make decision
- Require accountability
- Rule should not consider direct or indirect effect
- Desired future condition should be the corner stone of planning
- Collaboration process for planning and implementation great
- Climate change, restoration etc. does not belong in a rule
- Manage for long term sustainability
- Grassroots – listen to locals
- Educate people and communicate
- Recognize the forest for what it is
- Stakeholder, economics, etc. define the word
- Use the rule to put accountability into the process
- More local and regional control versus national
- Listen to the public
- Lot of work to do
- Keep collaborating
- Flexibility with accountability
- Recognize economic benefit of recreation and sustainability.