

Region 2 Planning Rule Roundtable

Laramie, Wyoming on April 13, 2010

19 participants addressed the following questions.

5. How consistent should plans be across the country?

There needs to be some consistency – we're not islands.

Forests and Grasslands have a broad range of diversity and should be managed for their unique values.

Need to have a landscape scale level of planning.

Common issues should be addressed consistently.

7. When and how should plans be evaluated to see if they are working? What should trigger plan amendments?

Need to clarify what "working" means, and what are the criteria.

Spell out in the rule how to monitor plans. Establish monitoring criteria.

Involve scientists in the discussions.

Utilize technical review committees.

8. What is the best way to involve stakeholders in the planning process. 9. How should the Forest Service collaborate with adjacent landowners, partners, and other agencies and governments in developing Forest Plans?

The Forest Service duty is to the U.S., not just immediate neighbors - remember the whole.

It's O.K. to have different levels of collaboration, local vs. the whole. There are two levels: local and broader.

Need to consider that with more involvement there will be an extension of time in the planning process.

Better define collaboration – need to define what collaboration consists of.

The rule should focus on principles of collaboration, and how to bring it into the process.

All organizations and landowners have to be at the table.

Need to utilize the established process and principles that are established.

Sometimes local input can be only for economic reasons.

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

Where do you restore back to – what point? How far back?

Need clear definition of restoration in the rule – what does restoration mean?

Identify employment opportunities.

You don't "restore" natural processes.

11. What, if any, climate change assumptions should be used when developing forest plans?

Shouldn't be a requirement in the rule.

Beetles and fire threats should be incorporated into plans through the rule.

Drought should be taken into consideration.

Must be adaptive, key parameters used for monitoring to adapt and adjust.

Levels of what you can provide and promise.

Need to use adaptive management with science based assumptions.

Be careful about using climate change, too much disagreement in studies, and no one agrees what is going to happen. Which science? – there are always two sides.

Error on the side of caution. Use caution on assumptions.

At a local level, develop criteria.

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

Need to take into account the relationship of lands around public lands, private, state, etc.

Continue collaborative efforts with Game and Fish in the rule.

Monitoring must be maintained in the new rule – actual populations.

Viability is difficult to address. Distribution of habitat is easy to measure – both are needed.

Need to look at lands outside Forest and Grassland boundaries.

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?

Jobs are being lost, timber harvest is decreasing. Rule needs to maintain flexibility.

Questions 10 and 14 are related – lots of work to be done if the Forest Service could hire people from local communities to help.

Need to balance goals with future generations – will we have trees or low productivity tree farms?

Can the rule take into consideration things occurring in other areas like timber harvest in Canada and prices.

Be more responsive on a quicker basis.

Use a process that is locally based.

The planning process bogs us down right now.

When the F.S. finished a plan, it needs to be able to be implemented.

People using goods and services need certainty.

Be careful with forests – act with caution.

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

Economic impacts should be tied into the rule.

There should be equal access (and equal representation in planning processes) for all people who want to enjoy the Forest.

Address all forms of recreation, including winter motorized use.

Address fees in Forest Plans and through the rule.

The Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) system needs updating – maybe in the rule.

Look at the impacts of recreational use on the health of the forest or grassland. Balance goods and services with the impacts.