

**File Code:** 1920

**Date:** April 23, 2024

Dear Interested Party,

The Inyo National Forest has completed our second biennial Monitoring Report for the Inyo National Forest Land Management Plan as required of the 2012 Planning Rule at 36 CFR § 219.12(d). The Monitoring Report covers fiscal years 2022 and 2023 and evaluates monitoring questions and indicators presented in the 2019 Land Management Plan monitoring plan chapter, in relation to management actions carried out in the plan area. Providing timely, accurate monitoring information to the responsible official and the public is a key requirement of the plan monitoring program.

Monitoring results are evaluated to make *findings* on the status or existing conditions of plan components selected for monitoring. Based on the findings, *recommendations* can be made for changes needed in forest plan direction, such as plan components or other plan content that guide management of resources in the plan area (e.g. forest plan, management activities, monitoring program, or forest assessment). The Monitoring Report is designed to provide the necessary information to help the responsible official determine a course of action based on the recommended management adjustments of this report. *It is not a decision document.* Future management decisions with appropriate environmental documentation may occur based on the Monitoring Report recommendations.

The full 2022-2023 biennial Monitoring Report for the Inyo National Forest Land Management Plan is available at <https://www.fs.usda.gov/main/inyo/landmanagement/planning>.

There are no recommendations for changes to the Land Management Plan component language.

However, there are two minor recommended changes to the monitoring plan itself. Based on the monitoring report recommendations for changes to the Monitoring Plan, administrative changes are proposed for public notice and consideration of comments [36 CFR § 219.16(c)(6)]. These recommended changes are summarized below, in Table 1, and explained in the Monitoring Report. Only those changes to content in the Land Management Plan itself are included in Table 1.

Questions or comments on the monitoring findings and recommendations and/or the proposed administrative change may be directed to the Natural Resources and Planning Staff Officer, Nathan Sill at [Nathan.sill@usda.gov](mailto:Nathan.sill@usda.gov). Comments will be accepted until May 23, 2024 (FSH 1909.12, 21.5). Administrative changes are not subject to the objection process (36 CFR § 219.50). Upon considerations of comments, the proposed changes to the LRMP Monitoring Plan will be finalized and effective upon signature of the responsible official Lesley Yen, Forest Supervisor, and published to the Inyo National Forest Planning website: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/main/inyo/landmanagement/planning>.

Sincerely,

LESLEY YEN  
Forest Supervisor



Table 1. Recommended administrative changes to the monitoring plan in the Inyo National Forest 2019 land management plan.

Current Language			Proposed Changes to Plan Content			
Plan Component Evaluated	Monitoring Item and Question	Indicator(s)	Plan Component Evaluated	Monitoring Item and Question	Indicator(s)	Rationale for Change
WTR-FW-DC-03	WS01 To what extent are watersheds in proper functioning condition being maintained, and watersheds in altered or impaired condition being improved?	Watershed Condition Framework classification	No change	No change	No change	NA
WTR-FW-DC-05	WS02 To what extent has erosion from temporary and permanent roads and trails affected water quality and soil sustainability in the national forest?	Road and motorized trail condition Implementation and effectiveness monitoring results from the Best Management Practice Evaluation Program Number and type of stream crossing and bank stabilization projects	No change	No change	No change	NA
TERR-OLD-DC-03	TE01 What is the status and trend of large trees in the Sierra Nevada montane forest?	Proportion of area with large trees and old forest Number of large trees and snags per acre by forest type	No change	No change	No change	NA
TERR-PINY-DC-01	TE02 What is the status of pinyon-juniper woodlands?	Pinyon-juniper spatial extent Number, type, and extent of disturbance events in pinyon-juniper woodlands (such as wildfire, disease, drought)	No change	No change	No change	No change

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Plan Component Evaluated	Monitoring Item and Question	Indicator(s)	Plan Component Evaluated	Monitoring Item and Question	Indicator(s)	Rationale for Change
TERR-SAGE-DC-01	TE03 What is the condition of sagebrush communities?	Proportions of seral classes, sagebrush cover Acres of sagebrush regeneration Acres of treatment to improve age class distribution Acres of wildland fire Percent native understory vegetation	No change	No change	Revise indicator “acres of sagebrush regeneration” to “sagebrush seedling density”	Sagebrush seedling density is currently measured and provides more readily interpreted measure of sagebrush recruitment and resilience following disturbance.
RCA-MEAD-DC-05	AE01 What is the vegetative condition of selected grazed and ungrazed meadows?	Rangeland ecological condition Species richness, species diversity, and plant functional groups Range greenline monitoring Vegetation community types	No change	No change	No change	No change
MA-RCA-DC-05	AE02 To what extent are riparian areas functioning properly across different management areas and levels of disturbance.	Vegetation cover, structure, and composition Floodplain and channel physical characteristics	No change	No change	No change	No change
WTR-FW-DC-02	AE03 What is the status of water quality in national forest waterbodies?	Indicator bacteria levels in site-specific areas 303(d) status	No change	No change	Replace indicator with macroinvertebrate and other water chemistry and algal index data from Region 5 Broader-scale monitoring strategy.	Data for macroinvertebrates, algal index, and other water chemistry at the scale of the Southern Sierra ecological province is much more reliable and informative.
TERR-SAGE-DC-02 TERR-PINY-DC-01	FS01 How is the abundance of Cheatgrass and red brome (nonnative <i>Bromus</i> spp.) changing in sagebrush ecosystems?	Spatial extent and percent cover	No change	No change	No change	No change

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Plan Component Evaluated	Monitoring Item and Question	Indicator(s)	Plan Component Evaluated	Monitoring Item and Question	Indicator(s)	Rationale for Change
TERR-SH-DC-01	AR01 To what extent is the integrity of special habitats for at-risk plants and animals being maintained or improved?	Special habitat extent (acres) and health (e.g., species composition) Number, type, and extent of disturbance events (e.g., adverse effects from authorized or unauthorized use)	No change	No change	No change	NA
SPEC-SHP-DC-01	AR02 What is the quality of bighorn sheep critical habitat?	Acres of vegetation management in the critical habitat for bighorn sheep Tree cover in bighorn sheep critical habitat	No change	No change	No change	NA
SPEC-SG-DC-01	AR03 How is the condition of seasonal sage-grouse habitats and connectivity changing?	Sagebrush stand condition from monitoring plots (e.g., cover, species composition) Acres of treatment (e.g., conifer removal, meadow restoration, invasive removal)	No change	No change	No change	NA
REC-FW-DC-03	VU01 What are the trends in visitor use and satisfaction?	Visitor use and satisfaction (National Visitor Use Monitoring survey) Visitor recreational activity type	No change	No change	No change	NA
REC-FW-DC-11	VU02 To what extent are trails providing access to the activities as intended?	Total miles of motorized and nonmotorized roads and trails Percentage of miles maintained	No change	No change	No change	NA
VIPS-FW-DC-04	VU03 How effective have Forest communications with the public been in considering diverse backgrounds?	Number and types of public outreach activities Visitor demographics (National Visitor Use Monitoring survey)	No change	No change	No change	NA

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Plan Component Evaluated	Monitoring Item and Question	Indicator(s)	Plan Component Evaluated	Monitoring Item and Question	Indicator(s)	Rationale for Change
DA-WILD-DC-01	VU04 To what extent is designated wilderness being managed to preserve wilderness character?	Wilderness performance measures and elements classification	No change	No change	No change	NA
TERR-ALPN-DC-03	CC01 How are high-elevation white pines responding to the effects of climate change and other stressors?	Spatial extent, by forest type Tree mortality, incidence of insects, disease, and pathogens Spatial extent of tree regeneration	No change	No change	No change	NA
WTR-FW-DC-01	CC02 What changes have occurred to the timing, amount, and duration of natural and managed runoff into the national forest's waterways?	Annual in-stream flow regime (center of mass of runoff and highest mean daily flows) for selected waterways (not those regulated by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission)	No change	No change	No change	NA
FIRE-FW-DC-01	CC03 How are fire regimes changing compared to the desired conditions and the natural range of variation?	Fire return interval departure Number and acres of fire by ecological zone Fire severity by ecological zone	No change	No change	No change	NA
LOC-FW-DC-03	PC02 What are the economic conditions in local communities and what are the economic contributions of forest-based uses such as recreation, forest products, mining and grazing, and ecological services, to the local community?	Local economic conditions Forest contributions	No change	No change	No change	NA

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Plan Component Evaluated	Monitoring Item and Question	Indicator(s)	Plan Component Evaluated	Monitoring Item and Question	Indicator(s)	Rationale for Change
FIRE-FW-GOAL-01	PC03 What management actions are contributing to the achievement of desired conditions relating to fire regimes?	Acres of fires managed for resource objectives by ecosystem type Acres of fire by objective within each fire management zone Acres of prescribed fire, including pile burning Acres of mechanical and hand thinning	No change	No change	No change	NA
VIPS-FW-DC-01	PC04 To what degree is the national forest using partnerships to provide additional capacity for visitor services?	Number of agreements with partners, that are supporting visitor services Number of volunteers, partner personnel, hours contributed, and value of contributions by partners that are supporting visitor services.	No change	No change	No change	NA
WTR-FW-DC-04	PR01 How does soil disturbance differ from pre- and post-activity for timber management?	Soil compaction, displacement, and erosion	No change	No change	No change	NA