

Northwest Forest Plan Amendment

About the Northwest Forest Plan (NWFP)

- The Northwest Forest Plan provides landscape scale direction for over 24 million acres, across 17 national forests and other federal land in western Washington and Oregon, and northwestern California.
- The plan was adopted in 1994 to protect threatened and endangered species, such as the northern spotted owl, while contributing to regional social and economic sustainability.
- The plan set overall management direction and guidance for the plan area, identifying desired conditions and standards and guidelines to achieve them.

Why does the Plan Need an Amendment?

The NWFP was established nearly 30 years ago. Since then, there have been significant changes in local economic, social, environmental, and cultural conditions across the NWFP landscape, including changes in forest densities, climate change impacts, increased risks to forests and communities from wildfires, and changes in public uses of the area. Amending the NWFP will provide an updated framework to guide management that considers current science and local economic, social, and environmental conditions. This amendment will affect direction for a subset of the 1994 Northwest Forest Plan area – 19 million acres of National Forest System lands.



Process and Engagement Steps in Developing and Implementing an Amendment

Identify Need to Change

- Federal Advisory Committee (FAC) input
- Publish Notice of Intent for public input

Develop Proposed Amendment

- Consider prior public comment, tribal consultation, and FAC

Publish Draft Amendment & Consider Environmental Effects

- Publish Draft Amendment and Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for public review
- Receive public comments

Publish Amendment

- Publish Draft Record of Decision and Final Environmental Impact Statement
- Objection process

Approve & Implement

- Sign Record of Decision
- Implement monitoring program

Coordination and Consultation with Tribes



Amendment Process and Engagement

The USDA Forest Service Pacific Planning Service Group, the Pacific Southwest Regional Office (Region 5) and the Pacific Northwest Regional Office (Region 6) are working collaboratively through the process to amend the NWFP. The 2012 Planning Rule requires the agency to incorporate opportunities for public involvement early and through every step of the planning process. Aligned with this direction, the NWFP process will include close work with the NWFP Federal Advisory Committee (FAC), consultation with American Indian Tribes and regulatory agencies, and various participation opportunities from other government entities, the public, and interested parties. Where feasible, the Forest Service will seek to use existing data from prior assessments, feedback and monitoring of the NWFP's implementation.



We welcome your participation and input!

To find out more about this effort and sign up for future updates visit:

<https://shorturl.at/3us3j>



Why become engaged?

While the Forest Service cannot delegate its ultimate decision-making authority, a significant and valuable part of our work includes engagement and consultation with the public, as we work to understand the public's needs and interests. As we develop the Northwest Forest Plan amendment, we will offer ways for the public to engage in the process. Through our website and other outreach tools, we will keep the public informed of developments and opportunities to participate.

Public Engagement: Public involvement has already been a key part of efforts to implement and update the Northwest Forest Plan and opportunities will continue to be available. While seeking to increase public involvement, the 2012 Planning Rule also emphasizes meaningful engagement with populations historically absent from the planning process including youth and underserved communities.

Tribal Consultation and Coordination: Tribes have a unique and important role in this process as sovereign governments that have stewarded these lands since time immemorial. The Northwest Forest Plan amendment has included tribal staff in the amendment planning and writing process. We continue to engage and solicit feedback from tribes through avenues such as webinars, in-person tribal forums, and ongoing opportunities for consultation or staff-to-staff meetings.

Federal, State, Local, County Government Engagement: The 2012 Planning Rule seeks to engage federal, state, local, and county governments in land management planning to consider community impacts and how to most effectively integrate plans across landscapes and jurisdictional boundaries.

Federal Advisory Committee: The NWFP Federal Advisory Committee (FAC) was established by the Secretary of Agriculture in 2023 to provide advice and recommendations to the Forest Service regarding potential regional-scale land management planning approaches. The FAC will also weigh in on issues such as climate change, integration of Tribal values and Indigenous Knowledge, managing landscapes that are more resilient to wildfire, protecting old growth, and supporting communities. The FAC provides another way for communities, experts, Tribes, and interested parties to have representation and provide input for the NWFP amendment efforts. More info on the FAC can be found here at <https://tinyurl.com/2yj6ubsc>