

Gila National Forest Plan Revision



What is a Forest Plan?

- A forest plan is a comprehensive document that guides forest resource management, use, and protection for a period of 15 years.
- It aims to balance and integrate multiple uses with restoration and maintenance of forest and watershed resources.
- It identifies potential areas that may be suitable for special designations, such as research natural areas, wild and scenic rivers, and wilderness.

Why is the Gila NF revising its Forest Plan?

- The forest and surrounding land areas have experienced significant environmental, social, and economic changes since the current plan was published in 1986.
- The revised plan will follow the “2012 Planning Rule,” which:
 - Strengthens the role of public participation and collaboration
 - Incorporates the best available science
 - Takes into account the use of wildland fire; prescribed fire and wildfire, across the landscape for restoration.
- Plan revision is an opportunity to increase public participation, and to strengthen relationships and partnerships.

Where does the plan apply?

- Management direction applies on National Forest System land within the boundaries of Gila National Forest.
- The plan takes into consideration the goals and uses of surrounding lands and communities.

Why revise now?

- National US Forest Service policy requires plans be revised periodically, usually every 15 years.
- The Gila Forest Plan has been amended over the years as needed to adapt to changes in management, but significant changes now warrant plan revision.

How can I be involved?

- There will be many opportunities to get involved in the multi-year revision process, from public meetings and collaborative workshops, to virtual engagement and communication.
- Upcoming public participation meetings and collaborative workshops, as well as information updates, will be posted on our website <http://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/gila/home/?cid=STELPRD3828671>
- Email gilaplan@fs.fed.us with any comments, questions or additional ideas.

Why does the revision process matter?

- The Gila National Forest is the largest National Forest in New Mexico with the first designated wilderness area. Every National Forest offers its own unique beauty; the Gila’s beauty is in its diversity.
 - It encompasses mountains, forests, lakes and rivers, meadows, wilderness, road and trail systems, and varied plant and animal life
 - It is a forest of many uses, including hunting, hiking, camping, grazing and firewood collecting
 - It provides opportunities for recreation and solitude and is the source of water for wildlife, fish, grazing, and other downstream uses.
- Decisions in this plan directly affect environmental health, economic vitality, and quality of life.
- We will confirm what is working with the 1986 plan, and identify where there is a need for change.
- All subsequent proposals and projects must comply with the approved forest plan.

What is the new rule?

- The Forest Service recently adopted at the national level an improved process and direction for revising forest plans. Features include:
 - A three phase process: assessment, revision, and monitoring.
 - Enhanced commitment to collaboration and public engagement
- Continued emphasis on multiple use

Gila National Forest

3005 E. Camino del Bosque
Silver City, NM 88061

<http://www.fs.usda.gov/gila>

Phone: 575-388-8201

