

Shoshone National Forest
Need for Change Evaluation

Prepared by the Shoshone National Forest plan revision team



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Table of contents

Preface..... 1
 What is forest plan level direction?..... 1
 What the planning team did with the comments 2
 About this document 2
Preliminary need for change 3
 Fire and fuels management 3
 Highway corridor management 3
 Invasive plants..... 3
 Minerals 4
 Recreation uses and opportunities..... 4
 Reevaluate grazing suitability 5
 Roaded access 5
 Special areas and designations 5
 Special uses 6
 Timber management..... 6
 Vegetation management..... 6
 Water quantity management..... 7
 Wildlife habitat management 7
Update 8
 Air quality 8
 Clarks Fork Wild River 8
 General watershed management..... 8
 Heritage 8
 Implementation/mitigation of timber activities..... 9
 Land exchange, acquisition, and disposal 9
 Laws and regulations..... 9
 Public access to national forest lands 9
 Rangeland management 9
 Reclamation..... 10
 Recreation residences..... 10
 Riparian management..... 10
 Scenery management 10
 Transportation 10
 Wilderness management 11
Revision planning and process..... 11
 Consider impacts to the economies and culture of local communities 11
 Improve monitoring 11
 Other considerations..... 11
 Analysis tools and best science 12
 About the components of the revised forest plan 12
 Cooperation with state and local governments and other national forests 12
 Decision considerations 12

Items not addressed during forest plan revision.....	13
Items that are dependent on funding levels	13
Partnerships and coordination	13
Information and education	14
How programs and projects are implemented.....	14
Forest Special Orders and Handbook Direction.....	14
Other plans	15
Outside the control of the Forest Service	15
Appendix	17
Need for change comments.....	17
Update comments.....	34
Revision planning and process comments	41
Items not addressed during forest plan revision comments	48

Need for Change Evaluation

Preface

The forest plan revision process is based on need for change—we keep the things in the current Forest Plan that are working and change the things that are not working. During May and June 2005, we received about 320 comments regarding what needed our attention during forest plan revision. Based on what we heard from the public, local government agencies, and Forest Service employees, and considering past monitoring and new scientific information, we are in the process of developing the need for change. The Responsible Official (Forest Supervisor) will decide what items will be carried forward and addressed during the revision process after considering all the comments, the information in this report, feedback that we get from the public and other agencies, and input from the forest interdisciplinary team.

This is a preliminary assessment. The focus of our public participation during the next month is to determine if we heard the public correctly and to hear about anything we may have missed.

What is forest plan level direction?

To help clarify how we determined whether a comment described something that should be changed in the revised forest plan, here is a brief explanation of what the revised forest plan will contain¹.

Forest plan level direction is broad and strategic—plans provide general guidance to be followed when projects are designed and implemented. Plans provide a starting point for projects. Forest plans do not approve projects or determine the methods that will be used to implement projects.

The revised plan will be streamlined. The Forest Service must comply with all applicable laws, regulations, and policies and the specific requirements of those laws, regulations, and policies do not have to be repeated in the plan to be in effect and apply to the Forest's projects and activities. This kind of direction will be incorporated by reference into the revised forest plan. Additionally, the revised plan will link with and integrate other plans.

Components of the revised forest plan

The Shoshone's revised forest plan must comply with the 2005 planning regulations that describe the components of forest plans. All of the revised plan's components will be developed with public participation.

Desired conditions describe what we want the Forest to look like, or the conditions that we would like to achieve over time. They characterize the outcome of land management. Here is an example of desired conditions for watersheds: *The Shoshone National Forest has productive and healthy watersheds, clean water, quality aquatic habitats, and strong populations of native aquatic species. Watersheds in good conditions are maintained in that condition. Watersheds below potential are improved.*

Objectives are measurable steps we will take to achieve or maintain the desired conditions. They describe the amount of work we think we can accomplish, within expected budgets and during a set time frame, to move toward the desired conditions. For example, *In the next 10 years, 30% of the watersheds below potential will be improved to a good condition.*

Guidelines provide the sideboards that we must work within to achieve the desired conditions. They provide the recommended technical and scientific specifications that will be used in designing projects and activities that contribute to the achievement of the desired conditions and objectives. For example, *Design and construct all stream crossings and other instream structures to provide for passage of flow and sediment, withstand expected flood flows, and allow free movement of resident aquatic life.*

¹ For complete descriptions of the components of a forest plan, or to read the procedural and technical details about how forest plans are developed, please see the Forest Services Directives System, specifically FSM (Forest Service Manual) 1920 in ID 1920-2005-2 and FSH (Forest Service Handbook) 1909.12 at ID 1909.12-2005-1, which are available at <http://www.fs.fed.us/im/directives>. Or, contact the Shoshone National Forest at 307.578.1214 and copies will be sent to you.

Suitability of Areas is identified through mapping or narrative descriptions and describes the general suitability of lands for various uses and management practices. Suitability is a decision involving social, economic, and ecological considerations. Areas may support a variety of suitable uses.

Special Areas are places that have characteristics that warrant special management. The revised forest plan will only *recommend* special area designations; the actual designations are made by Congress (wilderness, wild and scenic rivers, national monuments, national trails, national recreation areas, and national scenic areas), the Regional Forester (research natural areas and experimental forests), or the Forest Supervisor (special interest areas) after additional environmental analysis.

The revised forest plan will also include a monitoring program and plan.

What the planning team did with the comments

First, the comments were sorted by subject, e.g., water, vegetation, recreation, etc. We then began to analyze the comments, that is, to determine the existing Forest Plan direction that a comment addressed, and what part of that direction needs to be changed. As work progressed, it became clear that not all the comments could be considered true need for change because not all the comments were related to direction that can be placed in a forest plan.

We responded to the comments, and then sorted them again; this time the subject area comments were sorted based on whether the comment identifies a need to change existing Forest Plan direction or addresses some other aspect of management of the Shoshone. We developed five categories for the comments.

About this document

For this document, the comments were summarized and sorted into categories. Some comments have aspects of more than one category; if so, they are shown in only one category. Some comments, shown in italics, are included to provide a flavor for the actual comments rather than our interpretation. All the comments and responses are shown in the appendix. The indicator in parentheses at the end of each comment shows whether the comment came from an internal source (i) (Forest Service employee) or external source (e).

The categories are:

Preliminary need for change. We think these areas represent the topics that would require changes in or additions to management direction to be addressed in the revised forest plan. Items reflecting the theme of change are in the form of questions that the revised forest plan needs to answer. These areas were of concern to both Forest Service employees and the public. After more discussion with the public and employees, the Responsible Official will decide whether these items will be addressed in revision. If not carried forward, these issues could be considered for change in the future.

Update. Update items represent aspects of direction in the current Forest Plan. Rather than being *changed* in the revised forest plan, they will be carried over and *updated*. The update may be due to new laws and regulations, incorporation of the most recent analysis techniques and scientific information, or formatting the direction to conform to the new components of the revised plan. The planning team determined that most if not all of these comments relate to current Forest Plan management direction that will be carried over and included in the revised forest plan.

Revision planning and process. A number of comments did not specifically relate to forest plan level direction represented by one of the five plan components (desired conditions, objectives, guidelines, suitable uses, or special area designations). Though not tied to plan direction, they do relate to important things that need to be considered during the development of plan direction and the final decision on that direction.

Items that will not be addressed in the revision process. Some of the comments were only indirectly related to forest plan level direction. Many of these comments deal with implementation of forest plan direction; some deal with items that influence the implementation, but are issues over which the Forest Service has no control. Shortened descriptions of the categories are included under each heading.

Preliminary need for change

Management direction for these topics will be addressed through forest plan revision. The revised forest plan will reflect this new direction in desired conditions, objectives, guidelines, designations for suitable uses, designations of special areas, or in the monitoring program.

Fire and fuels management

Develop plan to address fuels build ups before they occur (e)

The buildup of fuels and related increased risks of large fires have changed since direction in the existing Forest Plan was developed, and new plan direction is needed to address these changed conditions. Additionally, recent scientific knowledge and information on how fire should be managed needs to be reflected in the revised plan.

Clear existing road rights-of-way for use as fuel breaks (e)

The revised plan will describe the types of activities and tools that are appropriate to deal with hazardous fuels. Using road rights-of-way could be used, though separate project plans and environmental analyses would be completed before specific methods are approved and used.

Expand fire use areas (i)

Continue fire use in wilderness (e)

The revised plan will identify how fire use will be used to address fire and fuels management issues. A fire use policy is in place for the five wilderness areas on the Shoshone. Under this policy, fire starts are evaluated and, where appropriate, are managed for fire use to maintain fire dependent ecosystems. Other areas where fire use would be suitable for the health of fire dependent ecosystems will be considered during forest plan revision.

Emphasize defensible space concept for fuels management (e)

Issues about fire and fuels management in the wildland urban interface received a lot of comment, as these issues are important ones for public and firefighter safety. The revised forest plan will address how fire and fuels will be managed in the wildland urban interface.

Revision question: How should hazardous fuels, fire use, fire, and wildland urban interface areas be managed?

Highway corridor management

Specific direction for highway corridors (i)

In the existing Forest Plan, management direction for highway corridors is no different than management direction for the area through which the highway passes. If unique direction for a corridor is desired, new plan direction needs to be added to the revised plan.

Revision questions: Should management direction specific to highway corridors be included in the revised forest plan? If yes, what is the direction?

Invasive plants

Chase invasive species more than we have been (e)

Address how the spread of invasive species will be controlled (i)

The current Forest Plan provides limited direction for management of invasive plant species. Given the continued spread of invasives and the potential impacts of the spread, there is a need to change the direction for managing invasives on the Forest.

Revision question: How should the spread of invasive plants be managed?

Minerals²

Designate gravel/mineral materials sites (i)

The revised forest plan will determine suitable areas for locatable minerals and mineral materials, including gravel and other mineral extraction.

The revised forest plan should identify areas that are generally suitable for oil and gas, and identify those areas, e.g., crucial big game winter ranges, that are not suitable for oil and gas exploration and development (e)

Long-term planning for oil and gas development (e)

The Shoshone's Oil and Gas Leasing Final Environmental Impact Statement (1992) and Record of Decision (1995) addressed oil and gas development and areas available for oil and gas leasing. During forest plan revision, we will reconsider the suitability portion of that decision in conjunction with the other need for change topics being addressed. (By suitability, we mean the determination of where oil and gas development is compatible with the desired future conditions on the Forest. This includes the component on where oil and gas development could occur with or without surface occupancy.)

Under the new planning rule, determinations made in the forest plan will not change the existing availability decision (where leases can be sold). After the revised plan, follow-up environmental analysis would be completed to change the existing availability decision to conform to the suitability determination in the revised plan, if such a change is needed.

Relative to lease stipulations (what is allowed where oil and gas development is permitted, for example, no surface occupancy is allowed near bald eagle nests from February to July), direction in the existing Forest Plan will be carried over into the revised plan; it does not need to be changed.

Revision question: What areas of the Forest are suitable for the extraction of leasable, locatable, and salable minerals?

Recreation uses and opportunities

Need to identify what types of recreation to emphasize (i)

Increasing recreation demands and different uses of the national forest have led to changed conditions since direction in the current Forest Plan was established. Changes to plan direction need to be considered to respond to these changing conditions.

Plan direction needs to identify what uses will occur or be allowed on forest lands and generally what areas are suitable for those uses.

Reduce conflicts between all different uses, with balance and cooperation (e)

An additional item that needs to be addressed in the revised plan is how dissimilar uses can be accommodated on the same land base. As more and more people use the Shoshone for recreation, conflicts between users are likely to increase. Options range from segregating uses to different areas of the Forest to allowing uses to coexist in the same area.

Identify those areas that are generally suitable for motorized use (i)

Motorized recreation opportunities will be addressed during forest plan revision. Specifically, plan direction will identify what portions of the Forest are suitable for motorized use and how that use will be managed.

Prohibit off-highway vehicle cross country travel in the revised plan (e)

Current regulations allow motorized travel on designated roads and trails only. That regulation is not being reconsidered in the revision process. Specific road closures are decided at the ranger district level and will not be addressed through forest plan revision.

²Locatable minerals are hard rock minerals, such as gold, silver, copper, lead, zinc, etc. Leasable minerals include coal, oil and gas, phosphates, and geothermal resources. Salable minerals are common variety rocks, such as sand, stone, gravel, pumice, etc.

Revision questions: What types of recreation opportunities should the Forest provide? In what areas are the opportunities suitable?

Reevaluate grazing suitability

Work toward the eventual removal of all livestock grazing on forest lands (e)

Changing acres designated suitable for grazing on the Shoshone would require an evaluation of the potential economic, ecological, and social benefits and costs and a subsequent change in management direction.

There were other comments relative to grazing management that the planning team determined were already addressed in the current Forest Plan. Those comments are addressed below under the Rangeland Management heading in the next section.

Revision question: Should the acres designated suitable for domestic livestock grazing be reevaluated?

Roaded access

Enhance motorized access and maintain existing access, reversing road closure trend (e)

Management of roaded access to the Forest is integrated with many of the other need for change items such as recreation, roadless areas, timber management, and wildlife management. For that reason, direction for travel management will need to be changed to remain integrated with changes elsewhere in the revised plan.

Continue the no net increase in roads strategy to guide road system management (e)

Current Forest Plan direction for no net gain of road miles is also interrelated and will need to be considered as part of the discussion.

Revision question: What areas of the Forest should have roaded access to fulfill the needs of Forest users and managers?

Special areas and designations

Conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the Forest's rivers to identify those that have the potential to be included in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System (e)

Wild and Scenic River eligibility will be addressed during forest plan revision, with completion of a comprehensive evaluation of the Forest's rivers; all the rivers that were suggested for evaluation will be included in the eligibility study.

Forest management direction for any eligible rivers will be included in the revised forest plan. River segments and their corridors that are eligible as Wild and Scenic Rivers will be managed to retain their free-flowing status and outstandingly remarkable values.

Potential research areas and Special Interest Areas should be given special designation (e)

Research Natural Areas (RNAs) and Special Interest Areas (SIAs) will be considered in the revised forest plan. Potential RNAs and SIAs will be considered for designation. Formal designation would occur after the appropriate level of environmental analysis.

If a special area is not recommended in the revised plan, the area will be covered by other general forest management direction.

Identify, on the ground, what is roadless (e)

A new roadless area inventory and evaluation will be conducted during forest plan revision. The revised forest plan will describe how roadless areas should be managed.

Recommend the Dunoir Special Management Unit and High Lakes Wilderness Study Area for wilderness designation while maintaining protection under the current designations (e)

The Dunoir Special Management Area and the High Lakes Wilderness Study Area will be evaluated during the roadless evaluation process, with a determination of how they should be managed in the future. Any determination is restricted by the requirements of the legislation that established the areas.

Identify new wilderness areas (e)

No more expansion of wilderness areas (e)

One management option for roadless areas that will be considered during revision is wilderness recommendation. Areas that are not recommended for wilderness will be managed under some other special designation or as a general forest area.

Any areas recommended for wilderness must be submitted to Congress and undergo further analysis before Congressional designation as part of the wilderness system.

These areas—roadless areas, special management areas, and recommended wilderness areas—could be managed as they are in the existing Forest Plan.

Revision questions: What management direction is appropriate for roadless areas and other special areas? What rivers, streams, or segments of rivers or streams are eligible for Wild and Scenic Rivers designation? What roadless areas should be recommended for wilderness designation?

Special uses

More specific management direction for special uses, for example, what to allow (i)

The revised plan will provide management direction for special uses and will specify the areas of the Forest that are suitable for all activities. Further, the plan will describe how those activities should be managed, in conjunction with existing uses and other resources.

Management of new outfitter/guide opportunities, for example, ice climbing (e)

The revised plan will identify what uses are suitable for the Forest. Authorizations for new special uses will occur through project level decisions and associated environmental analyses. Studies on capacity and allocation for specific uses will not be completed as part of the revision. See other plans for outfitter and guide capacity on page 15 for more information.

Revision question: What special uses are suitable for the Forest, and how should they be managed?

Timber management

The considerations for timber management and vegetation management are directly related; during the revision process, management direction for both will be adjusted as changes are made to one or the other. Additionally, there is a need to consider timber products as they relate to local and regional economies. Direction in the revised plan needs to consider both of these elements in light of current conditions.

Increase suitable timber area (e)

Key elements of plan direction will include identification of areas suitable for timber harvest and the related objectives and purposes for timber harvest and vegetative management.

More seed tree prescriptions, less clear cutting (e)

The revised forest plan will describe the tools that are appropriate for vegetation management on the Forest. Logging systems such as cable logging and harvest prescriptions such as seed tree prescriptions are two such tools that could be used. If determined to be appropriate, separate analyses and project plans would be completed before timber activities occur.

Increase use of our timber resource to reduce fuels—use multiple products (e)

The kinds of timber products to offer will be identified in the revised plan. Direction in the revised plan will reflect the levels and types of timber products, in relationship with timber management objectives.

Revision questions: What areas of the Forest are suitable for timber harvest? What timber harvest methods should be available? What types of timber products should be available?

Vegetation management

Expand aspen and willow regeneration (e)

Maintain old growth (e)

Vegetation management is integrated with many of the other need for change items such as wildlife, fuels, scenery management, etc. For that reason, direction for vegetation management will need changed to remain integrated with changes elsewhere in the revised plan.

Some of the vegetation management direction in the existing Forest Plan may still be good direction, but needs updating for the format of the revised plan.

Consider fuelwood as a tool for vegetation management (i)

Consider aerial spraying as a tool for management of beetles (i)

The revised plan will identify the types of activities and tools that are appropriate to meet the management direction established. Firewood sales are one such tool that could be used. If determined to be appropriate, separate project plans and associated environmental analyses would be completed before specific projects and activities occur.

How insect epidemics will be handled, given the limited management options available (i)

The current Forest Plan did not consider the scale of the insect infestations that are now occurring on the Forest. Direction in the revised plan needs to be changed to address the changed conditions and latest scientific information on dealing with those conditions.

Revision questions: What vegetation conditions and types of habitats should the Forest provide? What management direction, if any, should be included in the revised plan for large scale insect infestations?

Water quantity management

Emphasis on water quantity management in addition to water quality (e)

Current Forest Plan direction calls for water yield to be increased while maintaining water quality (Forest Plan III-9). Though increased water quantity is desirable, the vegetative management effects, such as clearcutting a large percentage of a watershed, required to achieve the increased water yield may be undesirable. Current direction needs to be reexamined in the revision to determine if it is compatible with the desired conditions for the Forest.

Revision question: Should the direction in the current Forest Plan for increasing water yield be retained?

Wildlife habitat management

More active management to achieve optimal wildlife habitat objectives (e)

Although big game winter range is still very important, spring, summer, and fall habitats also need to be incorporated into the picture. There are numerous directives that relate specifically to big game winter range and not much to the other seasonal ranges. (e)

Address habitat effectiveness and secure habitat relative to roads (i)

Consider corridors for wildlife in future plan direction (e)

Emphasis on bighorn sheep habitat needs (e)

Much of the wildlife management direction in the existing Forest Plan needs to be reconsidered due to changed conditions, new scientific information, and changed public interests. Some direction will be carried over and updated to conform to the new plan format.

In addition to general habitat management, some specific areas that will be considered during revision are threatened and endangered species, winter range, secure habitat, and wildlife travel corridors.

Desired conditions and objectives should incorporate direction from the grizzly bear and lynx conservation strategies (i)

In 2006, the Final Environmental Impact Statement and Record of Decision for Forest Plan Amendments for Grizzly Bear Habitat Conservation for the Greater Yellowstone Area National Forests will be published. Direction in the Record of Decision and subsequent forest plan amendment, if an action alternative is chosen, will be incorporated into the revised forest plan. If an action alternative is not chosen or if direction in the Record of Decision is not implemented, the Interagency Grizzly Bear Guidelines will remain in effect and be incorporated into the revised forest plan.

The Lynx Conservation Assessment and Strategy (LCAS) provides direction requiring the Forest Service to consider critical habitat elements of the Canada lynx prior to any project. Applicable direction from the LCAS will be incorporated into the revised plan.

Maintain instream flow for protection of fish and aquatic life (e)

Direction for fisheries management needs to be reconsidered due to changed conditions and new scientific information. Some direction for fisheries management in the existing Forest Plan may still be good direction, but will need to be updated for the revised plan.

Revision question: What management direction should the plan contain for contributing to sustainable populations of native fish and wildlife species on the Forest?

Update

Update items represent aspects of direction in the current Forest Plan. Rather than being *changed* in the revised forest plan, they will be carried over and *updated*.

Air quality

Air quality management, especially relative to oil/gas exploration and development and smoke management (e)

The Forest Service must adhere to existing laws, regulations, and policies including the Clean Air Act and Wyoming Air Quality Standards and regulations. Management direction to address these laws will be incorporated in the revised forest plan either directly or by reference.

Clarks Fork Wild River

Address the management of the Clarks Fork Wild and Scenic River (e)

In 1990, a segment of the Clarks Fork of the Shoshone River was designated by Congress as a Wild River (Public Law 101-628). Management direction from the existing Forest Plan for that segment of the Clarks Fork River will be incorporated into the revised forest plan.

General watershed management

Protection of our forest as a resource of water to the surrounding communities should be considered a top priority (e)

Management direction in the revised forest plan will include direction for water uses and watershed management activities. Direction will be carried over from the existing Forest Plan and updated to conform to the format of the revised plan.

The plan needs to include a thorough discussion of how the Forest intends to meet its legal obligations under the federal Clean Water Act, State of Wyoming Water Quality Standards and National Forest Management Act requirements in managing water quality limited segments [Water Quality Limited Stream Segments] (e)

The Forest Service must adhere to existing laws, regulations, and policies including the Clean Water Act, Wyoming Surface Water Quality Standards, and the National Forest Management Act. Management direction to address these laws will be incorporated into the revised forest plan either directly or by reference.

Need management direction addressing the use of non-native species (i)

This direction is included in the Watershed Conservation Practices handbook. That direction will be referenced in the revised forest plan.

Heritage

General direction, in absence of a management plan, for specific sites, such as Kirwin, Anderson Lodge, Simpson Lake Cabins, etc. (i)

Recognize the historic value of the old recreation residences (e)

Direction for management of heritage resources in wilderness (i)

The comments focus on management of historic heritage sites once they are identified. The existing Forest Plan provides general direction for how heritage resources should be managed. This direction will be incorporated into the revised plan. Additionally, existing laws and regulations will govern management of heritage resources under the revised plan. Direction that is specific to a site is beyond the scope of a strategic plan and is developed as needed to address each unique site, cabin, residence, etc.

Implementation/mitigation of timber activities

Timbering practices should be especially sensitive to wildlife habitat, water quality, endangered species, and scenic values (e)

The revised forest plan will include direction for the implementation and mitigation of timber activities and practices, with some direction from the current Forest Plan reformatted for the new plan. Other direction, such as Best Management Practices, will be incorporated by reference.

Within the revised plan, this type of information will be addressed only generally. When and where activities will occur will be determined during project level planning.

Land exchange, acquisition, and disposal

Continue to acquire inholdings within the Forest boundary by purchase or trade (e)

No net gain of public lands (e)

Direction for the lands program, including land exchanges, acquisition, and disposal, will be included in the revised forest plan. Direction in the existing Forest Plan will be carried forward and updated. The Forest does pursue land ownership adjustments through purchase and exchange. Acquiring some lands, such as inholdings, is desired for meeting resource management objectives, e.g., wildlife migration corridors or public access to the Forest.

Laws and regulations

Refer to existing laws, regulation, etc. (i)

Forest plans, projects, and activities must comply with all applicable laws, regulations, and policies. Specific requirements of, for example, the 1872 Mining Law, do not have to be repeated in the plan to be in effect and applicable to the Forest's projects and activities. The revised plan will list the laws, regulations, etc. that apply. Direction in new laws (since the current Forest Plan was published) will be used to update the direction in the revised forest plan.

Public access to national forest lands

Continue to acquire and maintain access to forest lands across private inholdings (e)

Direction for public access, including rights-of-way to national forest lands, will be included in the revised plan. Existing Forest Plan direction will be updated to conform to the new plan format.

Rangeland management

Reduce livestock limit on critical wildlife habitat (e)

Analyze the impacts of domestic livestock grazing on forest resources, and where those resources are diminished by grazing in contradiction of the Multiple Use Sustained Yield Act, domestic livestock grazing should be prohibited (e)

Many of the comments are covered in existing Forest Plan management direction. These comments will be addressed by updating applicable direction into the revised plan format.

A rangeland suitability evaluation will be conducted to initially assess where domestic grazing can occur. Before the appropriate uses for an area are determined, all uses and concerns for that area will be considered. Desired conditions and guidelines will be included for areas determined suitable for grazing.

Eliminate livestock grazing in riparian areas by requiring herding or temporary fencing in sensitive areas (e)

The revised plan will describe the types of activities and tools that are appropriate to meet the management direction established for grazing. As an example, alternate water sources and structural improvements are tools that could be used. If determined to be appropriate, separate project plans and associated environmental analyses would be completed before any specific tools were used.

Expand use of grass banks and other approaches in important wildlife areas (e)

Other management options such as grass banks, multi-forest relocation, etc. are allowed under current Forest Plan direction and have been used. In 2003, the Shoshone and Bighorn National Forests worked together to facilitate the relocation of a sheep allotment from the Shoshone to the Bighorn. The Shoshone National Forest routinely uses grass banks help with rangeland management. For example, a permittee's livestock may be temporarily relocated to a grass bank to allow an allotment to rest following a prescribed fire.

Reclamation

Maintain high standards for removal and reclamation of roads, drill pads, shot holes, etc. resulting from exploration and development (e)

Direction for reclamation of areas explored or developed for oil and gas activities exists in the current Forest Plan. Additionally, Best Management Practices guidelines provide direction that applies to many aspects of reclamation. This direction will be incorporated into the revised plan.

Recreation residences

Reflect the recreational residence tracts that exist on National Forest System lands and how those places impact management options (i)

Existing Forest Plan direction on management of recreation residences will be incorporated into the revised forest plan. The existence of the recreation residences will be reflected in the development of other direction in the revised forest plan.

Riparian management

Emphasize disconnecting the road system from streams (e)

Increased emphasis on active management of riparian areas (e)

Direction for riparian area management and activities within riparian areas will be included in the revised forest plan. Many of the comments about riparian management relate to direction in the existing Forest Plan, which will be updated to conform to the format of the new plan.

Scenery management

Update the visual management system (e)

Maintain current standards (e)

Direction in the current Forest Plan needs to be updated to conform to the new process that the Forest Service is using, the Scenery Management System. The intent of the current Forest Plan is to maintain or enhance the characteristic scenery of the Forest.

Transportation

Provide guidance on general travel management, including consideration of increasing off-highway vehicle use, road decommissioning, road reconstruction and construction, no net gain in roads, and maintaining and improving public and administrative access (i)

Existing Forest Plan direction covers the comments made about transportation. This direction will be updated for the revised forest plan.

Wilderness management

Wilderness needs better management and it needs to be used better (e)

Management direction from the current Forest Plan and the Wilderness Act of 1964 will be incorporated into the revised forest plan.

Revision planning and process

A number of comments did not specifically relate to forest plan level direction represented by one of the five plan components (desired conditions, objectives, guidelines, suitable uses, or special area designations). Though not tied to plan direction, they do relate to concerns that need to be considered during the development of plan direction and the final decision on that direction. These considerations are summarized below.

Some of the longer responses were summarized for this section. Additional comments and responses are included in the appendix.

Consider impacts to the economies and culture of local communities

For every change in the revised forest plan there needs to be in depth discussion on the impact it will leave on the local economy (e)

Sustain or increase economic contributions to communities (e)

Sustain western culture, for example, mountain men, cowboys, and tribal interests (e)

In preparing the revised forest plan, sustainability evaluations, including ecological, economic, and social evaluations, will be conducted. Economic considerations include employment, income, livestock grazing, wood products, oil and gas extraction, recreation and tourism, and payments to counties and states. Information from the evaluations will be considered as components of the revised forest plan are developed. Social sustainability, including lifestyles, attitudes, beliefs, and values will be considered.

Improve monitoring

The revised plan needs to describe how adequate monitoring will be accomplished, especially in outyears with declining federal budgets (e)

More monitoring by local groups, permittees, outfitters, ranchers, etc. (e)

Maintain or improve air quality monitoring specific to oil and gas (e)

Increased checkpoints to ensure proper implementation of the plan (e)

Accountability in dealing with invasives (e)

The new planning regulations stress the importance of adaptive management. There is a need to update monitoring in the new plan to address the changes that are made to other management direction, to adjust for what has been learned through current monitoring efforts, to incorporate current science, and to better align monitoring objectives with funding expectations.

Other considerations

Address development of private land impacts on national forest resources (e)

Impacts of prescribed fire on soil erosion (e)

Although the Forest Service can address some of the potential impacts of activities on private lands, the Forest Service has jurisdiction only on National Forest System lands. The impacts of adjacent land development will be considered during the development of forest plan management direction.

The impacts of fire on soil erosion will be considered during the development of management direction in the revised forest plan.

Analysis tools and best science

Incorporate new information on species management (i)

Desired conditions and objectives for vegetation diversity should consider the historic range of variation for vegetation (i)

Fire Regimes and Condition Classes maps should be used to help design vegetation management desired conditions (i)

Incorporate the Roads Analysis Process (i)

Identify watersheds of concern using a watershed cumulative effects analysis screening process (i)

Science will be an important part of the process of developing the Shoshone's revised plan. Current science and the most recent techniques will be utilized for all resources. Direction in the revised forest plan will be integrated with other management direction, either directly or by reference.

About the components of the revised forest plan

Specific desired conditions, by landscape (i)

Guidelines relate to desired conditions (i)

Measurable performance measures, to measure success, quantifiable (i)

There were some internal suggestions on ways to make the components of the revised plan easy to use during project implementation. During the development of the revised plan, Forest Service employees will review the information to ensure that it can be interpreted and applied to on-the-ground implementation of forest plan direction.

Cooperation with state and local governments and other national forests

Dovetail planning process and outcomes with locally county use plans (e)

Forest supervisor needs to be accountable to state gov. (e)

More cooperation/work with the Bridger-Teton National Forest (e)

We are working with local governments, state governments and agencies, and federal agencies in developing the revised forest plan. Input from those entities will be used in the preparation of the revised plan.

Forest planners on the Bridger-Teton and Shoshone National Forests have been meeting regularly to confer about forest plan revision processes, assessments, and analysis. With an eye toward efficiency, staffs on the two forests will share information and analyses where appropriate.

Decision considerations

Process gives too much weight to local government officials (e)

Priority to local input (e)

Maintain multiple use concept on Forest Service land (e)

No more below cost timber sales (e)

Public involvement on the Shoshone, for forest plan revision and site-specific project proposals, includes all levels of government (other federal entities, state agencies, and local and tribal governments), interest groups, and private individuals, with no more or no less weight given to any of the comments. As the Shoshone's Forest Plan is revised, all uses will be considered and there will be many opportunities for everyone to provide input as the desired conditions, guidelines, and objectives, i.e., the uses, for the Shoshone are developed. The decision maker will review and consider all input before making a decision.

The issue of below cost timber sales is complicated by the fact that many timber sales are designed to achieve resource objectives rather than just producing wood products. The revised plan will include a socioeconomic

analysis that addresses the costs and benefits of possible plan activities. The revised plan will address economics in the context of the complete integrated program of work and not on a resource-by-resource basis.

Items not addressed during forest plan revision

Some of the comments were related to forest plan level direction only indirectly. Many of these comments deal with implementation of forest plan direction; some deal with items that influence the implementation, but are issues that the Forest Service has no direct control over. These comments are summarized below.

Some of the longer responses were summarized for this section. Additional comments and responses are included in the appendix.

Items that are dependent on funding levels

Link between budget and ability to provide services (e)

Fund the Healthy Forests Act before the bugs and beetles eat all of our wilderness and national forests (e)

Better road maintenance (e)

Increase and implement strict law enforcement for off- road vehicle violations (e)

Need increased law enforcement presence (e)

More enforcement of all regulations (e)

Maintain trails (e)

Improve and maintain existing trailhead roads to accommodate large trailers and campers (e)

Facilities at trailheads, for example, toilets and garbage receptacles (e)

Forest plan direction will be developed in consideration of the most likely projected levels of funding. The forest plan has no direct control over the levels of funding that the Forest receives. Funding for programs is determined by Congress. These funding levels determine how much money the Forest receives to conduct activities such as trail maintenance and hiring of personnel for duties such as law enforcement.

Additionally, Congress appropriates funds by program area; funds for trail maintenance must come from recreation-related fund codes, while funds for administrative timber sales come from timber-related fund codes. This limits the ability of Forest managers to move money between programs—an emphasis on one area of the recreation program means that another area of the recreation program must be deemphasized. These types of tradeoffs are dealt with in daily program management and are not addressed in forest plan revision.

Partnerships and coordination

When planning projects

Increase ability of the Forest Service to partner with other agencies/organizations to maintain and improve infrastructure (e)

Utilize partnerships, for example cabin owners, outfitters, etc., to help meet other resource objectives (e)

More cooperation with Wyoming Game and Fish on projects (e)

Increase participation of other agencies in the interdisciplinary approach, project level (e)

Encourage interagency, NGO (non-government organization), etc. participation on interdisciplinary teams, project planning (e)

Work with private landowners when national forest projects may affect them, coordinate treatments on adjacent ownerships (e)

Look for opportunities to collaborate on the process and projects (e)

Shoshone National Forest leadership and managers are committed to building external relationships and comprehensive public involvement in how the Forest's resources are managed. The Forest solicits input

throughout the planning process: when projects are proposed, during project design, when environmental analysis documents are published, and when decisions are made. Using several avenues—public meetings, email, the Internet, or one-on-one visits with Forest personnel—the forest plan revision process was designed to be very open to anyone with something to say about forest plan revision. Some areas where partnerships are already occurring include invasive weed treatments and wildlife habitat improvement projects. All of these activities can be accomplished under direction in the current Forest Plan. Direction in the revised plan will continue to allow the implementation of the plan in cooperation with interested parties.

Volunteers

Make it easier to volunteer (e)

Making it easier to volunteer is not something that will be assessed or analyzed during forest plan revision, but is something that, administratively, the Forest can address. Forest Service volunteers provide valuable services to the Shoshone, from campground hosting to receptionist work. Our volunteers perform duties and deliver services that otherwise may not be available with declining federal budgets. This suggestion will be referred to the Forest's volunteer coordinators and other staff that work with the volunteer program.

Information and education

More on-the-ground information and education (e)

Shoshone employees recognize the importance of providing information and education to Forest users. If asked, every employee would agree that the more information and education that's available, the fewer misunderstandings and possibly conflicts about the Forest's uses, projects, and activities there would be. This suggestion is related to the day-to-day operations of the ranger districts and will be forwarded to them for consideration as they design and implement their recreation and visitor information services.

Sources for certified weed-free hay available at district offices (e)

Information about sources for weed-free hay and feed should be available at ranger district offices. This comment will be forwarded to district rangers to ensure that the information is accessible to recreationists.

Be more aggressive in letting folks know what is happening on the Forest (e)

This level of detail, related to public affairs/information, is part of day-to-day Forest operations and is not something that would be included in broad direction in the revised forest plan. The new planning rule does call for greater collaboration and communication. Those general principles will be incorporated into the revised plan. This comment will be shared with the local district rangers.

How programs and projects are implemented

Direction on heritage survey intensity based on probability of heritage resources present (i)

Direction on how to handle unneeded improvements, for example, old cow camps (e)

Maintain existing infrastructure before adding new infrastructure (e)

Increase stewardship contracting on the Shoshone (e)

We received some suggestions on how the Forest's programs and projects should be implemented. These suggestions are related to planning processes at the project level, rather than at the forest planning level; these suggestions can be considered as projects are proposed, designed, analyzed, and implemented, as they propose how to accomplish specific activities by using specific tools or methods. The revised plan will focus on the desired conditions for an area. Methods used to achieve those conditions will be determined as projects are proposed and designed.

Forest Special Orders and Handbook Direction

Certified weed-free feed

Require and enforce weed-free animal feed on the Forest (e)

The Forest Service must adhere to existing laws, regulations, policies, and Forest Service Manual and Handbook direction that govern the use of weed-free hay. Forest Special Orders (No. 02-97-02 and 04-00-059) currently in

effect prohibit possessing, storing, or transporting any hay, straw, mulch, or forage products that have not been certified as free of noxious weeds and seeds by a certified state or county agriculture officer. Implementation of this direction will continue on the Forest.

Food storage

Continue and expand food storage infrastructure, bear poles, etc. (e)

Reevaluate food storage order, is it really effective? (e)

In 2006, the Final Environmental Impact Statement for Forest Plan Amendments for Grizzly Bear Habitat Conservation for the Greater Yellowstone Area National Forests will be published. The Final Environmental Impact Statement contains direction for food storage. Direction in the Record of Decision and subsequent forest plan amendment, if an action alternative is chosen, will be incorporated into the revised forest plan. This issue is being addressed in this separate planning effort and will not be addressed in the revised forest plan.

Paleontological resources³

Direction for collection of petrified wood (i)

Policy on commercial collection of fossils (i)

This type of management direction deals more with program management and should be developed through a supplement to the Forest Service Handbook. This will not be addressed in the revision.

Recreational dredging⁴

Adequate management direction to address impacts from recreational dredging (i)

The Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality is responsible for permitting recreational gold dredging. The Department of Environmental Quality will not permit dredging in Class 1 waters, which includes wilderness streams and the portion of the Clarks Fork River designated as a Wild River. If there were a need to permit this activity on the Forest, direction needs to be developed through a supplement to the Forest Service Handbook. At that point, direction related to the permitting could be included in the revised plan—it is not timely to include that direction at this point.

Other plans

For the Clarks Fork River

Comprehensive management plan for the Clarks Fork River corridor (i)

The comprehensive management plan specific to the Clarks Fork River corridor will be completed separately from the revision of the current Forest Plan.

For transportation

Transportation plan developed during the planning process (e)

The roads system and general transportation management will be addressed during forest plan revision; however, development of a transportation plan is a separate planning effort involving more site-specific activities and effects.

For outfitter and guide capacity

Determine existing and potential capacity and allocation for outfitters and guides (e)

A capacity study is part of a separate planning effort that will be completed outside of forest plan revision. Capacity information—types of uses and where they are suitable— from the revision process will be used in the subsequent capacity and allocation planning process.

Outside the control of the Forest Service

Have all the monies created within a forest stay within the forest (e)

More fees for violations, use penalties as deterrents (e)

³ Paleontological resources include petrified wood and the fossilized remains of plants and animals.

⁴ Recreational dredging activities include recreational hand panning or recreational dredging equipment in non-commercial searches for gold.

Higher penalties for violations (e)

Raise the charge for an AUM to parallel the cost of grazing on private land (e)

Delist wolf and grizzly bear (e)

Limit the Endangered Species Act (e)

Some comments addressed concerns over which the Forest Service has no direct control. For example, grazing fees are established at a national level. Enforcement of provisions of the Endangered Species Act are under the jurisdiction of another agency. These items will not be addressed during revision of the current Forest Plan. More information on these comments can be found in the appendix.

Appendix

All comments and responses are shown in this appendix. They are sorted to correspond to the categories in the document. The indicator in parentheses at the end of each comment shows whether the comment came from an internal source (i) (Forest Service employee) or external source (e).

Need for change comments

	Response
<p><i>Fire and fuels management</i></p> <p>Link fire and fuel guidelines with vegetation treatments (i)</p> <p>Active fire management, not just suppression, e.g., increase aspen, willow, and decadent lodgepole (e)</p> <p>Integrated fire and fuels management direction, and desired conditions and objectives that enhance firefighter and public safety (i)</p> <p>Direction focused on fire prevention (i)</p> <p>Direction should consider fire relative to other resources [consider other resources when implementing HFRA projects] (i)</p> <p>Prescribed burns should be considered in wilderness areas not only for fuel management objectives, but also for maintaining wildlife habitat (e)</p> <p>Identify the purpose and objective of fire and fuels management under current conditions (i)</p> <p>Develop plan to address fuels build ups before they occur (e)</p> <p>Describe how the Forest will deal with/make priorities for fuels management</p> <p>Emphasis on reduction of hazardous fuels and improvement of Fire Regimes and Condition Classes (i)</p> <p>Changes in agency fire management policy, direction, and terminology (i)</p> <p>Clear existing road rights-of-way for use as fuel breaks (human and wildlife safety) (e)</p>	<p>Forest management direction for fire and fuels will be addressed through forest plan revision. The management direction will include desired conditions, objectives, guidelines, and designations for suitable uses.</p> <p>Since the current Forest Plan was developed, the buildup of fuels and related increased risk of large fires have changed conditions on the Forest. New plan direction is needed to address these changed conditions. Additionally, current scientific knowledge and information on how fire should be managed needs to be reflected in the revised plan.</p> <p>The revised plan will disclose the types of activities and tools that are appropriate to meet the management direction established. Using road rights-of-ways as fuel breaks is one such tool that could be used. If determined to be appropriate, a separate project plan and associated environmental analysis would be completed prior to any specific activity occurring.</p>

	Response
<p><i>Fire use</i></p> <p>Define a natural fire policy, what areas for fire use vs. suppression (e)</p> <p>Continue to maintain fire dependent ecosystems within roadless areas, wilderness areas, and primitive recreation areas using fires ignited naturally (e)</p> <p>Continue fire use in wilderness (e)</p> <p>Expand fire use areas (i)</p> <p>The revised forest plan needs to clearly spell out how, when, and where fire management, not fire suppression, will occur (e)</p> <p>[Context: Comprehensive Evaluation Report page 70] “Maintain fire dependent ecosystems using fires ignited naturally. Reclaim areas disturbed as part of fire control activities to meet the visual quality objective of retention (Forest Plan III-41).” We agree with the need to maintain these ecosystems, but both naturally occurring fires and prescribed fires be allowed a role, to counteract effects of fire suppression. (e)</p> <p>Include a forestwide fire plan that allows natural fires to burn to sustain ecological function when human life and property are not threatened (e)</p>	<p>Plan direction needs to identify how fire use will be used to address fire and fuels management. The Shoshone has a fire use policy for its five wilderness areas. Under this policy, fire starts are evaluated and, where appropriate, are managed as fire use to maintain fire dependent ecosystems. Areas where more fire use would be suitable for the health of fire dependent ecosystems will be considered during forest plan revision.</p>
<p><i>Wildland urban interface</i></p> <p>The revised forest plan should focus fire management on the creation of defensible space around structures and private lands and not timber sales in the roadless areas (e)</p> <p>Recognize that drought and insect/disease outbreaks are a natural occurrence of a natural system. Recognize that the most effective way to address the impact of drought and insect/disease outbreaks to humans is to create defensible space around structures and utilities not through timber harvest and fuel reduction projects located miles from private structures.(e)</p> <p>Emphasize defensible space concept for fuels management (e)</p> <p>Address the effects of beetle kill to water quality and wildland urban interface areas (e)</p>	<p>Wildland urban interface management is a subset of fire and fuels management. This issue was separated because of the interest it received and the connection to public and firefighter health and safety. Plan direction needs to be established to identify how fire and fuels will be managed in the wildland urban interface.</p>

	Response
<p>Highway corridor management Specific direction for highway corridors (i) How to manage viewsheds along major travel routes in the context of the other lands (i)</p>	<p>The current Forest Plan does not contain comprehensive management direction for highway corridors that is different from the management direction through which the highway passes. If this type of direction is desired in the new plan, direction needs to be added. Such direction would include desired conditions, objectives, guidelines, and designations for suitable uses.</p>
<p>Invasive plants Chase invasive species more than we have been (e) Keep an active program to identify and eliminate invasive noxious weeds (e) Focus on prevention of invasive species (i) Address how the spread of invasive species will be controlled (i) Increase priority of invasive species control (e) Control invasive species (e) How the increasing spread of noxious weeds should be managed (i) Plan direction should not be too prescriptive, emphasize the treatment of invasives without a lot of detail (i) Emphasize the integrated treatment of invasives through chemical, biological, and mechanical methods (i) Eliminate horses from wilderness to stop spread of invasive weeds (e) Control invasive species inside wilderness (e) How will the spread of invasives be controlled, particularly in wilderness? (e) Inventory, mapping, and information and education should be part of the direction (re: invasive species) (i) Management of OHVs and enforcement of OHV regulations should be a tool for preventing the spread of invasive plant species. Increasing OHV routes will increase the spread of invasive plants species. (e)</p>	<p>Forest management direction for invasives will be addressed through forest plan revision. The management direction will include desired conditions, objectives, guidelines, and designations for suitable uses.</p> <p>In the current Forest Plan, management direction for invasives is limited. Given the continued spread of invasives and the potential impacts that such spread could have, there is a need to change the current management direction to explain how the spread of invasives will be managed on the Forest.</p>

	Response
<p>Minerals</p> <p><i>Leasable minerals</i></p> <p>More direction on leasable, e.g., what we can and cannot do, authorities/jurisdictions (i)</p> <p>Long-term planning for oil and gas development (e)</p> <p>Address availability decisions (e)</p> <p>The revised forest plan should identify areas that are generally suitable for oil and gas, and also identify those areas, e.g., crucial big game winter ranges, that are not suitable for oil and gas exploration and development (e)</p> <p>How extraction will be explored and developed (e)</p> <p>Oil and gas leasing needs to address impacts of full production (e)</p> <p>Both exploration and production/development scenarios should be identified and discussed in the revised forest plan (e)</p>	<p>Oil and gas development and areas available for oil and gas leasing were addressed in the Oil and Gas Leasing Final Environmental Impact Statement (1992) and ROD (1995).</p> <p>The revised plan will reconsider the suitability portion of that decision in conjunction with the other need for change topics being addressed. By suitability, we mean the determination of where oil and gas development is compatible with the desired future conditions on the Forest. This would include the component on where oil and gas development could occur with or without surface occupancy.</p> <p>Under the new planning rule, the determination made in the forest plan does not change the existing availability decision (where leases can be sold). A follow-up environmental analysis will need to be completed after the revised plan to change the existing availability decision to match the revised plan.</p> <p>Direction in the current Forest Plan, relative to lease stipulations (what is allowed where oil and gas development is permitted) will be carried over into the revised plan. That direction does not need to be changed.</p>
<p><i>Locatable and salable minerals</i></p> <p>Designate gravel/mineral materials sites (i)</p> <p>Direction for hardrock, gravel, etc. (e)</p>	<p>Areas suitable for gravel and other mineral extraction and direction for common variety minerals will be addressed during forest plan revision.</p>
<p>Special uses</p> <p>More specific management direction for special uses, e.g., what to allow (i)</p> <p>Address the increasing demands for special uses and how those new demands should be addressed, given the level of existing special uses (i)</p> <p>Expand to include new uses (e)</p> <p>Opportunities for mountain biking (e)</p> <p>Management of new outfitter/guide opportunities, e.g., ice climbing (e)</p> <p>Identify existing/future electronic sites (e)</p> <p>Address the demand for designated communication sites on the Forest and to what degree that use should be accommodated (i)</p> <p>For special uses, current policies in effect should be continued (e)</p>	<p>Forest management direction for new special uses will be addressed through forest plan revision. The management direction will focus on the identification of suitable uses.</p> <p>Actual authorizations for new special uses will occur through project level decisions and associated environmental analyses. Studies on capacity and allocation for specific uses will not be completed as part of the revision. The revised plan will only identify what uses are suitable for forest lands. See other plans for outfitter and guide capacity on page 55 for more information.</p>

	Response
<p><i>Recreation uses and opportunities</i></p> <p>Need to identify what types of recreation to emphasize (i)</p> <p>Emphasize primitive non-motorized recreation opportunities requiring isolation, solitude, self reliance, and challenge (e)</p> <p>Increase non-motorized access (e)</p> <p>Additional non-motorized trails (e)</p> <p>Have dedicated non-motorized winter sports areas (i)</p> <p>Have non-motorized winter use access (e)</p> <p>Wheelchair accessible recreation, e.g., fishing and loop trail (e)</p> <p>Maintain the present backcountry trail system with no loss to equestrian travel due to trail reclassification (e)</p> <p>Do not reclassify trails, e.g., horses to hiking (e)</p> <p>Cross-country ski trails separate from snowmobile areas (e)</p> <p>More mixed uses of trails (e)</p> <p>Maintain all cross country ski areas as multiple use areas just the same as the snowmobile trails—no separation (e)</p> <p>Maintain a sufficient number of motorized accessible campgrounds to handle the increasing demand (e)</p> <p>Maintain existing full service campgrounds, e.g., water quality (e)</p> <p>Reduce conflicts between all different uses, with balance and cooperation (e)</p> <p>Facilitate resolution of user conflicts (e)</p> <p>Document user conflicts (e)</p>	<p>Forest management direction for recreation uses and opportunities will be addressed through forest plan revision. The management direction will include desired conditions, objectives, guidelines, and designations for suitable uses.</p> <p>Increasing recreation demands and different uses of the national forest have lead to changed conditions since the direction in the current Forest Plan was established. Changes to plan direction need to be considered to respond to these changing conditions.</p> <p>Plan direction needs to identify what uses will occur or be allowed on forest lands and generally what areas are suitable for those uses.</p> <p>An additional item that needs to be addressed in plan direction is how dissimilar uses can be accommodated on the same land base. As more and more people use the Shoshone for recreation, conflicts between users are likely to increase. Options range from segregating uses to different areas of the Forest to allowing uses to coexist in the same area.</p> <p>Documentation of conflicts takes place at the ranger district offices and is not something that would be part of forest plan direction.</p>

	Response
<p><i>Motorized recreation opportunities</i></p> <p>Analyze the impacts of ORV/OHV use and determine if such use is consistent with other uses of the forest. (e)</p> <p>The health of wildlife populations, which is one of the greatest assets on the forest, should not be impacted by OHV use. (e)</p> <p>Identify those areas that are generally suitable for motorized use (i)</p> <p>Develop effective/comprehensive recreation plan as it relates to OHVs, etc. (e)</p> <p>Manage OHV use across the Forest (i)</p> <p>Reflect changes in recreation use, management, and impacts, e.g., increasing OHV use, changing demographics of recreation users, increasing demand for different types of recreation uses, visitor and grizzly bear conflicts, mixing of uses on travel routes (i)</p> <p>Do not increase opportunities for motorized trail use. Instead, the revised plan should emphasize management and enforcement of current OHV use and regulations. Do not increase opportunities for a use that the SNF does not have the ability to manage appropriately. The revised plan should not reward bad behavior by increasing opportunities for motorized use especially when funding to manage increased motorized use will not be available in the future (e)</p> <p>Open more trails—more trails would mean fewer people riding off the roads and trails (e)</p> <p>More motorized roads, trails, access (e)</p> <p>Opportunities for off-trail OHV loops (e)</p> <p>Expand motorized use (e)</p> <p>More OHV recreation (e)</p> <p>Improve motorized trails, e.g., fewer dead ends and more loops (e)</p> <p>Realize that aging population can't always hike, backpack or ride horses, but opportunities for enjoyment of the Forest should still be available (e)</p> <p>Manage current OHV areas—don't create new ones (e)</p> <p>Maintain OHV/snowmobile opportunities, from both economic standpoint and as opportunities in general (e)</p> <p>Maintain snowmobile trails and off-trail areas (e)</p> <p>Maintain all areas outside wilderness as suitable for snowmobiles (e)</p> <p>Current ATV problems on the forest need to be identified, with management actions designed to eliminate the problem, i.e., road closures, gates, etc. (e)</p>	<p>This issue is a subset of the larger recreation management issue. It is separated out because of the large amount of public comment that it received. It will be addressed as part of the recreation uses and opportunities issue.</p> <p>Specifically, plan direction will identify what portions of the Forest are suitable for motorized use and how that use will be managed.</p> <p>Specific road closures are decided at the ranger district level and will not be addressed through forest plan revision.</p>

	Response
<p><i>Off trail travel</i></p> <p>Elimination of off-road vehicle use except along designated roads or trails by strict law enforcement (e)</p> <p>Prohibit OHV cross country travel in the revised plan (e)</p> <p>Create a more extensive ATV trail system, using more old logging roads—possibly deter users from going off the trails (e)</p> <p>Limit ATV use to roads and trails now in existence and close existing roads and trails that show resource damage (e)</p>	<p>Current regulations allow motorized travel on designated roads and trails only. That regulation is not being reconsidered in the revision process.</p>
<p><i>Reevaluate grazing</i></p> <p>Work toward the eventual removal of all livestock grazing on forest lands (e)</p> <p>No grazing in wilderness (e)</p>	<p>Changing acres designated suitable for grazing on the national forest would require an evaluation of the potential economic, ecological, and social benefits and costs and a subsequent change in management direction.</p>
<p><i>Roaded access</i></p> <p>Keep only roads in the system that can be maintained to a safe standard for 2-wheel automobile use (e)</p> <p>Absolutely no more road closures (e)</p> <p>Limit road closures (e)</p> <p>Enhance motorized access and maintain existing access, reverse road closure trend (e)</p> <p>Look at reopening some closed roads (e)</p> <p>Balance road densities to access general areas (e)</p> <p>Better overall motorized road access (e)</p> <p>Expand roads and trails so more people can use them without being confined (e)</p> <p>Direction on seasonal closures (i)</p> <p>No net gain of roads (e)</p> <p>Continue the no net increase in roads strategy to guide road system management (e)</p> <p>No net increase in road numbers, in other words, build one new mile, shut down one old mile (e)</p> <p>Clarify no net gain (i)</p>	<p>Forest management direction for roaded access will be addressed through forest plan revision. The management direction will include desired conditions, objectives, guidelines, and designations for suitable uses.</p> <p>Road management is integrated with many of the other need for change items such as recreation, roadless areas, timber management, and wildlife management. For that reason, management direction for road management will need changed to remain integrated with changes elsewhere in the revised plan.</p> <p>The current Forest Plan direction for no net gain of road miles is also interrelated and will need to be considered as a related part of the discussion.</p>

	Response
<p><i>Special areas and designations</i></p> <p><i>Roadless areas</i></p> <p>Keep/maintain roadless (e)</p> <p>Long-term view of maintaining natural roadless characteristics (e)</p> <p>Identify, on the ground, what is roadless (e)</p> <p>No more roadless areas (e)</p> <p>Provide guidance and desired conditions for each roadless area (e)</p> <p>Modify some roadless area boundaries (i)</p> <p>Continue to manage roadless areas under Forest Service interim direction (i)</p> <p>Identify whether inventoried roadless areas should be recommended for wilderness designation, managed as they are, or managed as other forest lands (i)</p> <p>Address future and existing OHV trails in roadless areas (e)</p> <p>Protect all roadless areas on the forest (e)</p> <p>Maintain existing roadless areas/characteristics (e)</p> <p>Timber harvest and associated road building should not occur in roadless areas (e)</p> <p>Avoid management direction conflicts in roadless (suitable uses) (i)</p> <p>Evaluate options for treatment of roadless areas without use of roads (focus on forest health) (e)</p>	<p>Roadless areas will be considered in the revised forest plan. As part of the roadless evaluation through the plan revision process, a determination will be made as to how they should be managed.</p> <p>The management direction will include desired conditions, objectives, guidelines, and designations for suitable uses. If the roadless area is not recommended for special management in the revised plan, the area will be covered by other general forest management direction.</p> <p>One management option for roadless areas that will be considered in the revision is wilderness recommendation. Areas that are not recommended for wilderness will be managed under some other special designation or as a general forest area.</p>

	Response
<p><i>Currently designated special areas</i></p> <p>The High Lakes WSA and Dunoir Special Management Area should continue to be managed to protect their wilderness characteristics and recommended for wilderness designation. The Dunoir is currently not being managed for protection and wilderness designation is required. (e)</p> <p>Continue to manage the High Lakes WSA and the Dunoir Special Management Area as they are now managed to protect their wilderness characteristics until Congress acts on the disposition of the areas. (e)</p> <p>Continue protection of the special areas (Dunoir and High Lakes) (e)</p> <p>Clear up management direction for the Dunoir (i)</p> <p>Suggest making the Dunoir a wilderness area (e)</p> <p>Eliminate Dunoir special area (e)</p> <p>Recommend the Dunoir Special Management Unit and the High Lakes WSA for wilderness designation while maintaining protection under the current designations (e)</p>	<p>Existing special areas—the Dunoir Special Management Area and the High Lake Wilderness Study Area—will be evaluated during the roadless evaluation process. A determination will also be made on how they should be managed in the future. Any determination is restricted by the requirements of the legislation that established the areas.</p>
<p><i>Wild and Scenic Rivers</i></p> <p>Increase wild and scenic rivers—fish protection (e)</p> <p>Conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the Forest’s rivers to identify those that have the potential to be included in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. (e)</p> <p>Reevaluate Wiggins Fork (e)</p> <p>Don’t reevaluate Wiggins Fork (e)</p> <p>Consider the Middle Fork of the Popo Agie above the Bruce parking lot (e)</p> <p>Consider the East Fork of the Big Wind River above the Forest boundary (e)</p> <p>Consider designation for the Dunoir River within the Special Management Unit (e)</p>	<p>Wild and Scenic Rivers eligibility will be addressed during forest plan revision, with completion of a comprehensive evaluation of the Forest’s rivers. The Wiggins Fork, East Fork of the Wind River, Middle Fork of the Popo Agie River, and the Dunoir River will be analyzed as part of the eligibility study.</p> <p>Forest management direction for any eligible rivers will be included in the forest plan revision. The management direction will include desired conditions, objectives, guidelines, and designations for suitable uses.</p>

	Response
<p><i>Wilderness recommendations</i></p> <p>Identify new wilderness areas (e)</p> <p>Evaluate roadless areas for wilderness characteristics (e)</p> <p>Maintain and incorporate as wilderness, using long-term vision (e)</p> <p>More wilderness, less multiple use (e)</p> <p>Recommend qualified areas for wilderness (e)</p> <p>Review other areas that meet the definition for wilderness, especially areas adjacent to existing wilderness, for wilderness designation (e)</p> <p>No more expansion of wilderness areas (e)</p>	<p>Areas recommended for wilderness designation must be submitted to Congress and undergo further analysis before Congressional Designation as part of the wilderness system.</p> <p>Another option for any of these areas discussed in this section is for them to be managed as they are under the current Forest Plan.</p>
<p><i>Research Natural Areas and Special Interest Areas</i></p> <p>Lake Creek, Beartooth Butte, Pat O’Hara, Grizzly Creek, Sheep Mesa, Arrow Mountain, Roaring Fork, Bald Ridge, and Pickett’s Knob should be designated as RNAs. (e)</p> <p>Potential research areas and SIAs should be given special designation (e)</p> <p>Managed for multiple use, if not appropriate for wilderness, for example, Research Natural Areas (e)</p> <p>Until otherwise designated, manage special areas for multiple uses (e)</p>	<p>Research Natural Areas (RNAs) and Special Interest Areas (SIAs) will be considered in the revised forest plan. Areas that have been identified as potential RNAs will be evaluated through the plan revision process and a determination will be made as to their designation.</p> <p>Forest management direction for special areas will be addressed through forest plan revision. The management direction will include desired conditions, objectives, guidelines, and designations for suitable uses. If the special area is not recommended in the revised plan the area will be covered by other general forest management direction.</p>

	Response
<p><i>Timber management</i></p> <p>Identify when timber will be harvested on lands where timber production is not an objective (i)</p> <p>Increase suitable timber area (e)</p> <p>Better address the purposes of timber management activities on suited versus unsuited lands (i)</p> <p>Make the timber portion of the plan less prescriptive and more descriptive of desired conditions in terms of composition and structure and the role of processes such as fire and insects/disease (i)</p> <p>Desired conditions and objectives need to address whether actions are for recovering wood fiber, reducing fuels loads, and/or preventing/limiting stand susceptibility to future epidemics (i)</p> <p>Incorporate what has been learned about management prescriptions that are most appropriate for treating timber (i)</p> <p>More seed tree prescriptions, less clear cutting (e)</p> <p>Appropriate harvest methods in an appendix (i)</p> <p>Increase thinning in restocked clearcut stands (e)</p> <p>Consider using cable logging systems in suitable areas (i)</p>	<p>Forest management direction for timber will be addressed through forest plan revision. The management direction will include desired conditions, objectives, guidelines, and designations for suitable uses.</p> <p>Timber management is directly related to vegetation management considerations and will need to be adjusted as changes are made to that direction. In addition, there is a need to consider timber products as they relate to local and regional economies. Plan direction needs to consider both of these elements in light of current conditions.</p> <p>Key elements of plan direction will include identification of areas suitable for timber harvest and the related objectives and purposes for timber harvest and vegetative management.</p> <p>The revised forest plan will disclose the types of activities and tools that are appropriate to meet the timber management direction established. Logging systems such as cable logging and harvest prescriptions such as seed tree prescriptions are two such tools that could be used. If determined to be appropriate, a separate project plan and associated environmental analysis would be completed before any specific activity occurs.</p>
<p><i>Timber products</i></p> <p>Increase use of our timber resource to reduce fuels—use multiple products (e)</p> <p>Harvest timber rather than burn it and import more (e)</p> <p>Harvest merchantable timber before prescribed burns (e)</p> <p>Before prescribed burning, improve access to house logs and other products (e)</p> <p>Increase timber utilization (e)</p> <p>Improve access to fuel/firewood (e)</p> <p>Assess demand for firewood (e)</p> <p>Consider temporary roads to access areas for firewood (e)</p> <p>Easier access to and more pole permits (e)</p> <p>Recognize role of the Forest Service in supporting co-generation facilities (e)</p>	<p>The issue of what timber products will be offered and how timber will be utilized is related to the timber management direction in the plan. One possible purpose of that timber management direction is to provide certain types or levels of products. This issue will be considered in relationship to the timber management issue.</p> <p>To the degree that a certain mix of products is desired, forest plan direction will be established.</p>

	Response
<p>Vegetation management</p> <p>Try to improve willow habitat through prescribed burning, scientific adaptive management process (e)</p> <p>Aspen and willow regeneration—expand (e)</p> <p>Maintain old growth (e)</p> <p>Protect whitebark pine (e)</p> <p>Emphasis on retention/recruitment of aspen and willow (e)</p> <p>Guidelines for aspen, willow, etc. enhancement (i)</p> <p>Manage for more aspen regeneration (expand and reestablish) (i)</p> <p>Include aggressive language to maintain and enhance aspen stands wherever they occur (e)</p> <p>Direction for sagebrush management (i)</p> <p>Take measures to ensure that extensive stands of old growth remain across the forest that will provide habitat for self-perpetuating populations of species that rely on this habitat type. (e)</p> <p>Maintain old growth forest habitat (e)</p> <p>Options for future management of whitebark pine (incorporate Grizzly Bear Habitat Amendment direction) (i)</p> <p>Enhance riparian habitat for beaver (e)</p> <p>Enhance and upgrade wildlife habitat, e.g., aspen (e)</p> <p>Always managing for late seral stage seems inconsistent with vegetative diversity and biodiversity. (e)</p> <p>Landscape scale restoration opportunities (e)</p> <p>Consider free use firewood to clean up slash (e)</p> <p>Consider fuelwood as a tool for vegetation management (i)</p>	<p>Forest management direction for vegetation management will be addressed through forest plan revision. The management direction will include desired conditions, objectives, guidelines, and designations for suitable uses.</p> <p>Vegetation management is integrated with many of the other need for change items such as wildlife, fuels, scenery management, etc. For that reason management direction for vegetation management will need changed to remain integrated with changes elsewhere in the revised plan.</p> <p>Some existing direction for vegetation management in the existing Forest Plan may still be desired. Such existing direction will be addressed by updating applicable direction into the revised plan format.</p> <p>The revised forest plan will disclose the types of activities and tools that are appropriate to meet the management direction established. Firewood sales are one such tool that could be used. If determined to be appropriate, a separate project plan and associated environmental analysis would be completed prior to any specific activity occurring.</p>

	Response
<p><i>Large scale insect infestations</i></p> <p>More emphasis on forest health outcomes rather than ASQ (e)</p> <p>Forest health—address how to deal with it (e)</p> <p>Areas of beetle-killed or diseased timber outside of commercially harvestable, i.e., suited timber base, should also have a fire management emphasis, with one goal being aspen/willow regeneration (e)</p> <p>Address how to manage large scale insect infestations (i)</p> <p>Address how to manage large scale insect infestations with better desired conditions, composition, and structure (e)</p> <p>How insect epidemics will be handled, given the limited management options available (i)</p> <p>Consider aerial spraying as a tool for management of beetles (i)</p> <p>Use alternative ways to control, i.e., not pesticides (e)</p> <p>See if there is an opportunity to use aerial spraying of insecticide to control insect and disease infestation (e)</p> <p>Consider aerial spraying and other applications to control bug/beetle outbreak (i)</p>	<p>Forest management direction for addressing large scale insect infestations will be addressed through forest plan revision. The management direction will include desired conditions, objectives, guidelines and designations for suitable uses.</p> <p>The current scale of insect infestations is outside of the range of conditions that the current Forest Plan considered. Direction in the current Forest Plan needs to be changed to address the changed conditions and latest scientific information on dealing with those conditions.</p> <p>The revised forest plan will disclose the types of activities and tools that are appropriate to meet the management direction established. Aerial spraying is one potential tool that could be used. If determined to be appropriate, a separate project plan and associated environmental analysis would be completed prior to any specific activity occurring</p>
<p><i>Water quantity management</i></p> <p>Emphasis on water quantity management in addition to water quality (e)</p>	<p>Current Forest Plan direction calls for water yield to be increased while maintaining water quality (Forest Plan III-9). Though increased water yield is desirable, the vegetative management effects, such as clearcutting a large percentage of a watershed, required to achieve the increase water yield may be undesirable. This direction needs to be reexamined in the revision to determine if it is compatible with the desired conditions for the Forest.</p>

	Response
<p>Wildlife habitat management</p> <p>Establish species habitat capacity; establish cooperators/partnerships for further study (e)</p> <p>Consider various measures of wildlife habitat both quantitatively and qualitatively, including these measures: roading, human disturbance, habitat linkage, and habitat interspersions (i)</p> <p>More active management to achieve optimal wildlife habitat objectives (e)</p> <p>Wildlife desired conditions should reflect importance of wildlife to the Shoshone National Forest (e)</p> <p>Continue to provide habitat for all wildlife species that exist on the Forest. I consider wildlife to be the most important resource in the Forest and an indicator of management practices. (e)</p> <p>Maintain wildlife emphasis using prescribed fire to maintain habitat. (e)</p> <p>Hiding cover and snags per acre should be carefully looked at so we don't have to amend the plan at the project level (i)</p> <p>Direction for habitat quality juxtaposition (i)</p> <p>Desired conditions and objectives for snags, dead and down, and density, etc. should address inherent differences in forest type (i)</p> <p>Maintain cover for wildlife (e)</p> <p>Special consideration should be given to habitat requirements for all species currently listed under the ESA, currently designated as sensitive or MIS, or that are becoming increasingly rare. (e)</p> <p>Manage grizzly bear habitat (e)</p> <p>Reintroduce beaver into low gradient streams (e)</p> <p>Increased consideration of beavers' role in watershed health (e)</p> <p>There is a need for habitat improvement/expansion as one method for bolstering low moose populations. (e)</p> <p>Use predators as indicators of ecosystem health (e)</p>	<p>Forest management direction for wildlife management will be addressed through forest plan revision. The management direction will include desired conditions, objectives, guidelines, and designations for suitable uses.</p> <p>Much of the existing direction for wildlife management needs to be reconsidered due to changed conditions, new scientific information, and changed public interests.</p> <p>Some existing management direction for wildlife management in the existing Forest Plan may still be desired. Such existing direction will be addressed by updating applicable direction into the revised plan format.</p>

	Response
<p><i>Winter range</i></p> <p>There have been serious expansions of winter ranges with restrictions on these areas. These areas are not even being used by wintering herds nor are sufficient habitat because of deep snows. Closures are not warranted (e)</p> <p>Enhancement of big game winter range (e)</p> <p>Although big game winter range is still very important, spring, summer, and fall habitats also need to be incorporated into the picture. There are numerous directives that relate specifically to big game winter range and not much to the other seasonal ranges. (e)</p> <p><i>Wildlife travel corridors</i></p> <p>Consider corridors for wildlife in future plan direction (e)</p> <p>Consider use of fencing and impacts on wildlife corridors/movement (e)</p> <p>Wildlife crossings - movement related to highways and roads - guidelines related to over and under roads (terrestrial and aquatic) (i)</p> <p><i>Secure habitat</i></p> <p>Road densities need to be managed, to maintain security cover for big game animals, particularly elk. (e)</p> <p>Address habitat effectiveness and secure habitat relative to roads (i)</p> <p>Have road density guidelines for secure habitat (i)</p> <p>Maintain secure habitat through roadless areas (e)</p> <p>In regard to mineral development the revised forest plan should maintain secure habitat for grizzly bears and big game such as elk. There should be NSO in occupied grizzly bear habitat. (e)</p> <p>Address big game security cover rather than just hiding cover. Security cover needs to be defined, in terms of stand size and juxtaposition (e)</p> <p>Recognize the importance of secure habitat for wildlife such as grizzly bears and big game. (e)</p> <p><i>Management restrictions</i></p> <p>Limit minerals exploration and development within critical wildlife habitat areas, especially grizzly bear, wolf, lynx, and other endangered species</p> <p>In areas where timber harvest occurs, maintaining water quality, fisheries, riparian habitat, and secure habitat for grizzly bears and big game should be a top priority.</p>	<p>In addition to general habitat management, some specific areas that will be considered in the revision are threatened and endangered species, winter range, secure habitat, and wildlife travel corridors.</p>

	Response
<p><i>Other sources of wildlife direction</i></p> <p>Incorporate direction on oil and gas leasing that may be provided by the Grizzly Bear Habitat Amendments (i)</p> <p>Desired conditions and objectives should incorporate direction from the grizzly bear and lynx conservation strategies (i)</p> <p>Incorporate grizzly bear habitat amendment direction (i)</p> <p>Incorporate direction on oil and gas leasing and minerals management in the LCAS (Lynx Conservation Assessment and Strategy) (i)</p> <p>Comply with the LCAS relative to timber management (i)</p>	<p>Applicable direction for grizzly bear and Canada lynx habitat management will be incorporated into the revised plan.</p> <p>In 2006, the Final Environmental Impact Statement and Record of Decision for Forest Plan Amendments for Grizzly Bear Habitat Conservation for the Greater Yellowstone Area National Forests will be published. Direction in the Record of Decision and subsequent forest plan amendment, if an action alternative is chosen, will be incorporated into the revised forest plan. If an action alternative is not chosen or if direction in the Record of Decision is not implemented, the Interagency Grizzly Bear Guidelines will remain in effect and be incorporated by reference into the revised forest plan.</p> <p>The Lynx Conservation Assessment and Strategy provides direction requiring the Forest Service to consider critical habitat elements of the Canada lynx prior to any project.</p>
<p><i>Bighorn sheep</i></p> <p>Emphasis should be placed on maintaining separation and ensuring no contact between bighorn and domestic sheep (e)</p> <p>More aggressive management of bighorn sheep habitat so they remain a flagship species for the Shoshone (e)</p> <p>Emphasis on bighorn sheep habitat needs (e)</p> <p>Examine potential impacts of domestic goats on bighorn sheep (e)</p> <p>[Context: Comprehensive Evaluation Report, page 70] Whiskey Mountain portion of the Fitzpatrick Wilderness. The summary correctly recognizes the valid use of active management to enhance bighorn sheep habitat in this area. The revised forest plan should contain a more detailed discussion of this provision. It is important to clearly restate some of the original language creating the Glacier addition of the Fitzpatrick Wilderness, so future USFS personnel are readily aware of the legal and administrative clearance to work on bighorn sheep habitat in this area. (e)</p>	<p>These comments are a subset of the more general comments on wildlife habitat management. They were separated because of their specificity.</p> <p>The response under wildlife management applies to these comments as well. To the degree that any species is chosen for special emphasis in the revision, there will be specific management direction for that species. Bighorn sheep will be considered along with other species for just such emphasis.</p> <p>In addition, the existing special management direction for the Whiskey Mountain portion of the Fitzpatrick Wilderness will be incorporated into the revised forest plan.</p>

	Response
<p><i>Fisheries management</i></p> <p>There is a need to take fisheries resource needs, e.g., insect production from various types of riparian vegetation, erosion effects on spawning areas, etc. into consideration more than it has been in the past when evaluating watersheds. (e)</p> <p>Conservation of fisheries, long-term planning for water resources, including quality and quantity (e)</p> <p>Maintain instream flow for protection of fish and aquatic life (e)</p> <p>Ensure protection of streams supporting native trout and other non-game fish species including strong measures that mitigate and correct negative impacts that are due to livestock overgrazing, ORV use, road construction, logging, and mining. Include specific direction for maintaining biodiversity, restoring riparian functions, and measures for specific species known to be rare or affected by past management practices, additional direction for management indicators, and more. (e)</p> <p>Increased emphasis on fish/amphibian crossings at streams (e)</p> <p>Fish passage (upstream access past any diversion and screening of any out take) should be emphasized in any water use decision or structure modifications (e)</p> <p>Fish passages at culverts and stream crossings should be emphasized in any new road construction or maintenance of old roads (e)</p>	<p>Forest management direction for fisheries management will be addressed through forest plan revision. The management direction will include desired conditions, objectives, guidelines, and designations for suitable uses.</p> <p>Much of the existing direction for fisheries management needs to be reconsidered due to changed conditions, new scientific information, and changed public interests.</p> <p>Some existing management direction for fisheries management in the existing Forest Plan may still be desired. Such existing direction will be addressed by updating applicable direction into the revised plan format.</p>

Update comments

	Response
<p>Air quality Air quality management, especially relative to oil/gas exploration/development and smoke management (e) Smoke management (i)</p>	<p>Forest management direction for air quality will be addressed through forest plan revision. The management direction will include desired conditions, objectives, guidelines, and designations for suitable uses.</p> <p>The Forest Service must adhere to existing laws, regulations, and policies including the Clean Air Act and Wyoming Air Quality Standards and regulations. Management direction to address these laws will be incorporated in the revised forest plan either directly or by reference.</p> <p>The comments are covered in the existing Forest Plan management direction. These comments will be addressed by updating applicable direction into the revised plan format.</p>
<p>Clarks Fork Wild River Address the management of the Clarks Fork River as a designated Wild and Scenic River instead of a potential addition to the National System (i) Designate the Clarks Fork a Wild and Scenic River (e) Address the management of the Clarks Fork Wild and Scenic River (e)</p>	<p>In 1990, a segment of the Clarks Fork of the Shoshone River was designated by Congress as a Wild River (Public Law 101-628). Management direction from the existing Forest Plan for that segment of the Clarks Fork River will be incorporated into the revised forest plan.</p>

	Response
<p>General watershed management</p> <p>Protection of our Forest as a source of water to the surrounding communities should be considered a top priority (e)</p> <p>Maintain a high quality of water flowing from the Forest (e)</p> <p>Ensure that the revised plan will lead to measurable, substantial improvements in riparian areas and water quality over the existing situation. Make it clear that high priority will be given to restoring damaged watersheds. (e)</p> <p>How existing and future water uses are protected and managed (i)</p> <p>Provide a comprehensive plan for watershed analysis, restoration, monitoring, and adaptive management, particularly where livestock, existing roads, or motorized trails are impacting water quality (e)</p> <p>The plan needs to include a thorough discussion of how the forest intends to meet its legal obligations under the federal Clean Water Act, State of Wyoming Water Quality Standards, and NFMA requirements in managing water quality limited segments (Water Quality Limited Stream Segments). (e)</p> <p>Incorporate Watershed Conservation Practices handbook (e)</p> <p>Incorporated Watershed Conservation Practices handbook, and supplement that direction if other needs are addressed (i)</p> <p>Address issues from a watershed health perspective (e)</p> <p>Need management direction addressing the use of non-native species (i)</p>	<p>Forest management direction for water uses and watershed management activities will be addressed through forest plan revision. The management direction will include desired conditions, objectives, guidelines, and designations for suitable uses.</p> <p>The Forest Service must adhere to existing laws, regulations, and policies including the Clean Water Act, Wyoming Surface Water Quality Standards, and the National Forest Management Act. Management direction to address these laws will be incorporated in the revised forest plan either directly or by reference.</p> <p>Many of the comments are covered in the existing Forest Plan management direction. These comments will be addressed by updating applicable direction into the revised plan format.</p> <p>Direction on non-native plant species is included in the Watershed Conservation Practices handbook. That direction will be referenced in the revised forest plan.</p>
<p>Heritage</p> <p>Recognize the historic value of the old recreation residences (e)</p> <p>Higher priority to cultural resource protection (e)</p> <p>General direction, in absence of a management plan, for specific sites, e.g., Kirwin, Anderson Lodge, Simpson Lake cabins, etc. (i)</p> <p>General desired future conditions for future management of cultural sites (i)</p> <p>Direction for management of heritage resources in wilderness (i)</p>	<p>The revised plan will adhere to existing laws, regulations, and policies established to protect cultural resources. Current Forest Plan direction will be incorporated into the revised plan.</p> <p>The historic value of recreation residences is determined through cultural resource surveys that are required by the Historic Preservation Act before recreation residence permits can be reissued. The desired conditions in the revised plan will address heritage resources, which will include historic recreation residences.</p> <p>Direction that is specific to particular sites, cabins, etc. is beyond the scope of a strategic plan and is developed as needed for each site.</p>

	Response
<p>Implementation/mitigation of timber activities</p> <p>Timbered areas, roads, skid trails, and all other resource damage to be reclaimed and replanted at timber company expense (e)</p> <p>Timbering practices should be especially sensitive to wildlife habitat, water quality, endangered species, and scenic values. (e)</p>	<p>Implementation and mitigation of timber management activities are addressed in current Forest Plan direction and other direction such as Best Management Practices. This direction will be incorporated into the revised plan by updating applicable direction into the revised plan format.</p> <p>Within the revised plan, this type of information is only generally addressed. When and where activities will occur is determined during the environmental assessments done for project level planning.</p>
<p>Land exchange, acquisition, and disposal</p> <p>Continue to acquire inholdings within the Forest boundary by purchase or trade (e)</p> <p>Continue pursuit of land adjustments for key parcels, e.g., Sheep Point, to eliminate private land inholdings and block up public lands, and pursue public ROW access to large parcels of landlocked national forest, e.g., South Fork Owl Creek/Rock Creek (e)</p> <p>No net gain of public lands (e)</p>	<p>Forest management direction for land acquisition will be addressed through forest plan revision. The management direction will include desired conditions, objectives, guidelines, and designations for suitable uses. The Forest does pursue land ownership adjustments through purchase and exchange. Acquiring some lands, such as inholdings, is desired for meeting resource management objectives, e.g., wildlife migration corridors or public access to the Forest.</p> <p>Many of the comments are covered in the existing Forest Plan management direction. These comments will be addressed by updating applicable direction into the revised plan format.</p>
<p>Laws and regulations</p> <p>Incorporate direction in new laws, e.g., EO 13084, NAGPRA, etc. (i)</p> <p>Refer to existing laws, regulations, etc. (i)</p> <p>Tier direction to the invasive species Executive Order (i)</p> <p>Reflect the limitation on management options for locatable minerals given the provisions contained within the 1872 Mining Law (i)</p>	<p>Forest plans, projects, and activities must comply with all applicable laws, regulations, and policies. Specific requirements of, for example, the 1872 Mining Law, do not have to be repeated in the plan to be in effect and applicable to the Forest's projects and activities. The revised plan will list the laws, regulations, etc. that apply. Direction in new laws (since the current Forest Plan was published) will be used to update direction in the revised forest plan.</p>
<p>Public access to national forest lands</p> <p>Continue to acquire and maintain access to forest lands across private holdings (e)</p> <p>Direction for developing access to the Forest (e)</p> <p>Increase public rights-of-way to access public lands (e)</p>	<p>Forest management direction for public access will be addressed through forest plan revision. The management direction will include desired conditions, objectives, guidelines, and designations for suitable uses.</p> <p>Many of the comments are covered in the existing Forest Plan management direction. These comments will be addressed by updating applicable direction into the revised plan format.</p>

	Response
<p><i>Rangeland management</i></p> <p>Rangeland management should emphasize continuing upward trends in vegetation conditions (e)</p> <p>Analyze the impacts of domestic livestock grazing on forest resources, and where those resources are diminished by grazing in contradiction of the Multiple Use Sustained Yield Act, domestic livestock grazing should be prohibited (e)</p> <p>Satisfactory range condition/ecologic function should be managed for on all grazing allotments, and updated, current population objectives for big game herd units, and the habitat necessary to provide adequate forage quality/quantity for those big game populations should be reviewed, to ensure that outdated numbers are not inadvertently utilized in the revision (e)</p> <p>Non-forested and forested big game winter range emphasis areas should maintain range conditions that reflect the potential natural community and reflect a range of diversity of plant species that is consistent with the state of vegetation before the introduction of livestock (i)</p> <p>Decreases in density of native plant species and diversity of native plant communities as a result of livestock overgrazing have been observed in a wide variety of western ecosystems. Where these conditions exist on the SNF, the forest should propose corrective action. (e)</p> <p>In all cases, livestock grazing be considered as secondary to the welfare of wildlife, including predators (e)</p> <p>Reduce livestock limit on critical wildlife habitat (e)</p> <p>Prevent stream bank trampling and shearing, and improve water quality from livestock sedimentation. On streams that are at risk or non-functional, there should be no livestock grazing at all. (e)</p> <p>Impacts of recreational grazing (e)</p> <p>Direction for retiring allotments, reference the Targhee NF plan (e)</p> <p>Emphasize the reduction in conflicts between livestock and predators (e)</p> <p>Maintain or improve structures (e)</p> <p>Use of fences . . . but, there are concerns about maintenance, barriers to wildlife, and recreation activities. Modification of grazing practices would be considered first. (i)</p>	<p>Forest management direction for rangeland management will be addressed through forest plan revision. The management direction will include desired conditions, objectives, guidelines, and designations for suitable uses.</p> <p>Many of the comments are covered in the existing Forest Plan management direction. These comments will be addressed by updating applicable direction into the revised plan format.</p> <p>A rangeland suitability evaluation will be conducted to initially assess where domestic grazing can occur. Before the appropriate uses for an area are determined, all uses and concerns for that area will be considered. Desired conditions and guidelines will be developed for areas determined suitable for grazing.</p>

	Response
<p><i>Activities and tools</i></p> <p>Eliminate livestock grazing in riparian areas by requiring herding or temporary fencing in sensitive areas (e)</p> <p>Intensive rotational allotments (e)</p> <p>Alternate water sources (e)</p>	<p>The revised plan will disclose the types of activities and tools that are appropriate to meet the management direction established. Grazing systems and structural improvements are tools that could be used. If determined to be appropriate, a separate project plan and associated environmental analysis would be completed prior to any specific activity occurring.</p>
<p><i>Unique approaches</i></p> <p>Pursue novel, creative approaches, e.g., grass banks, partners work to facilitate waivers of allotments back to the government for wildlife, winter range, etc. (e)</p> <p>Continue to pursue creative projects such as improving conditions of livestock allotments that contain wildlife winter range and reducing conflicts between predators and livestock (e)</p> <p>Use a multi-forest approach to options for relocation of willing permittees' closed allotments (e)</p> <p>Given the dynamics of the livestock industry, and innovative management concepts such as grass banks and financial incentives to achieve voluntary allotments waivers, the revised forest plan should address how these arrangements can be conducted and facilitated, and where they are suitable, to solve resource management conflicts while addressing permittee economic viability (e)</p> <p>Expand use of grass banks and other approaches in important wildlife areas (e)</p> <p>Coordinate with the BLM, Game and Fish, permittees, and NGOs to find more suitable areas off the Forest to graze livestock to reduce wildlife/livestock conflicts and protect forest resources (e)</p>	<p>Other management options such as grass banks, multi-forest relocation, etc. are allowed under current Forest Plan direction and have been used. In 2003, the Shoshone and Bighorn National Forests worked together to facilitate the relocation of a sheep allotment to the Bighorn National Forest. The Shoshone National Forest routinely uses grass banks to help with rangeland management. For example, a permittee's livestock may be temporarily relocated to a grass bank to allow an allotment to rest following a prescribed fire.</p>
<p><i>Reclamation</i></p> <p>Maintain high standards for removal and reclamation of roads, drill pads, shot holes, etc. resulting from exploration and development (e)</p>	<p>Direction for reclamation of areas explored or developed for oil and gas activities exists in the current Forest Plan. In addition, Best Management Practices guidelines provide direction that applies to many aspects of reclamation. This direction will be carried over into the revised plan.</p>
<p><i>Recreation residences</i></p> <p>How will recreation residences be managed? (e)</p> <p>Reflect the recreational residence tracts that exist on NFS lands and how those places impact management options (i)</p>	<p>Existing direction on management of recreation residences will be incorporated into the revised forest plan.</p> <p>The existence of recreation residences will be reflected in the development of other plan direction.</p>

	Response
<p>Riparian management</p> <p>Emphasize disconnecting the road system from streams (e)</p> <p>No off-road/off-trail travel should be allowed within any riparian area, or that activity should at least be limited to the Forest standard for picking up hunted animals, camping, or other authorized distances off-road (e)</p> <p>Riparian protection (e)</p> <p>Increased emphasis on active management of riparian areas (e)</p>	<p>Forest management direction for riparian area management and activities within riparian areas will be addressed through forest plan revision. The management direction will include desired conditions, objectives, guidelines, and designations for suitable uses.</p> <p>Many of the comments are covered in existing Forest Plan management direction. These comments will be addressed by updating applicable direction into the revised plan format.</p>
<p>Scenery management</p> <p>Maintain current standards (e)</p> <p>More flexible direction (i)</p> <p>How to manage scenery in situations where natural conditions have reduced scenery integrity or will reduce scenery integrity below forest plan objective levels (i)</p> <p>Address how to manage scenery in areas of the Forest treated with prescribed fire (i)</p> <p>Update visual management system (e)</p> <p>Incorporate SMS (i)</p>	<p>Forest management direction for scenery management will be addressed through forest plan revision. The management direction will include desired conditions, objectives, guidelines, and designations for suitable uses.</p> <p>The Scenery Management System is a new process that is used by the agency to address scenery management. Direction in the current Forest Plan needs to be updated to conform to the Scenery Management System. The intent of the current Forest Plan is to maintain or enhance the characteristic scenery of the Forest.</p>
<p>Transportation</p> <p>Provide guidance on general travel management, including consideration of increasing OHV use, road decommissioning, road reconstruction and construction, no net gain in roads, and maintaining and improving public and administrative access (i)</p> <p>Explore short duration road concept, as in the Bighorn NF plan (e)</p> <p>Consider and possibly include infrastructure as a viable use during development of the forest plan. This includes roads, highways, and other public utilities or facilities. (e)</p> <p>Temporary roads constructed or utilized for vegetation treatment should be closed and ripped upon completion of the activity (e)</p> <p>Direction to address impacts of road closures (scenic, erosion, etc.) (e)</p> <p>Allow the desired conditions to describe the particular combinations of road standards, maintenance levels, and road class needed to meet objectives. Don't try to anticipate the various requirements for road maintenance for different road levels. That needs to be done individually for each road.(i)</p>	<p>Forest management direction for transportation will be addressed through forest plan revision. The management direction will include desired conditions, objectives, guidelines, and designations for suitable uses.</p> <p>Many of the comments are covered in existing Forest Plan management direction. These comments will be addressed by updating applicable direction into the revised plan format.</p>

	Response
<p>Wilderness management</p> <p>Wilderness needs better management and it needs to be used better (e)</p> <p>Maintaining the wilderness character of the forest should be a priority in the revised plan. (e)</p>	<p>Forest management direction for wilderness will be addressed through forest plan revision. The management direction will include desired conditions, objectives, guidelines, and designations for suitable uses.</p> <p>Some existing management direction is included in the existing Forest Plan for particular activities in designated wilderness. Existing direction will be addressed by updating applicable direction into the revised plan format.</p> <p>In addition, the revised plan will tie broad wilderness desired conditions and objectives to the Wilderness Act and the purposes for wilderness designations.</p>

Revision planning and process comments

	Response
<p>Consider impacts to the economies and culture of local communities</p> <p>Sustain western culture, e.g., mountain men, cowboy, tribal interests (e)</p> <p>Sustain or increase economic contributions to communities (e)</p> <p>Consider impacts to the value of ecosystem services . . . sustainability . . . socioeconomic (e)</p> <p>Recognize that the wildlife and backcountry character which result from intact roadless areas and wilderness are an invaluable economic asset to the counties within which the SNF lies. Wildlife and roadless backcountry will play a critical role in the future economic development of communities near the SNF. (e)</p> <p>Recognize the economic value of ecological improvements (e)</p> <p>Increase timbering . . . consider the impacts of less timbering on the economy and fuels buildups (e)</p> <p>Role of wildlife in economics (number of people brought here) (e)</p> <p>For every change in the revised forest plan there needs to be in depth discussion on the impact it will leave on the local economy (e)</p> <p>Consider the economy of Dubois and surrounding communities (e)</p> <p>With the economy of recreation far exceeding the economic value of our other industries dependent on the Forest, it seems the direction for forest planning is clear (e)</p> <p>Quantify economic impacts of recreation, specifically on local communities (e)</p> <p>More emphasis on local socioeconomics in decisions (e)</p> <p>Consider the value of the economics of recreation in decisions (e)</p> <p>Consider the economic importance of various users on the Forest (e)</p> <p>Performance measures used for socioeconomics should be at the community level, not the county level (e)</p> <p>Maintain timber industry for economics and forest health (e)</p>	<p>In preparing the revised forest plan, sustainability evaluations, including ecological, economic, and social evaluations, will be conducted. Economic considerations include employment, income, livestock grazing, wood products, oil and gas extraction, recreation and tourism, and payments to counties and states. Information from the evaluations will be considered as components of the revised forest plan are developed. Social sustainability, including lifestyles, attitudes, beliefs, and values will be considered.</p> <p>In addition, these evaluations will be considered in deciding what management direction is contained in the revised plan.</p>

	Response
<p>Improve monitoring</p> <p>There is definitely a need for more intense monitoring of both livestock and wildlife use as well as range condition trend. The forest plan revision needs to focus on providing healthy range conditions rather than guaranteeing livestock grazing opportunity, e.g., no commitment of no loss of AUMs, etc. (e)</p> <p>Monitoring wildlife movement corridors, cooperate with Wyoming Game and Fish (use information provided by cooperators) (e)</p> <p>Better monitoring of bighorn habitat (mentioned in context of global climate change moving habitat to higher elevation) (e)</p> <p>More monitoring of endangered species, e.g., lynx (e)</p> <p>Increase monitoring, increase monitoring funding forestwide, ecosystem wide vs. project (e)</p> <p>The revised plan needs to describe how adequate monitoring will be accomplished, especially in outyears with declining federal budgets. (e)</p> <p>Reference the Wyoming Rangeland Monitoring Guide (i)</p> <p>More coordination among agencies for monitoring (e)</p> <p>More monitoring by local groups, permittees, outfitters, ranchers, etc. (e)</p> <p>Maintain or improve air quality monitoring specific to oil and gas (e)</p> <p>Address how air quality monitoring will occur, especially in light of large scale oil/gas exploration/development in SW Wyoming (e)</p> <p>Maintain viewshed monitoring program (e)</p> <p>Acid rain deposition monitoring—maintain monitoring (e)</p> <p>Continued air quality testing and evaluation with potential corrective actions outlined in the plan (e)</p> <p>The monitoring of air quality should continue and if it is determined that air quality is being degraded then corrective actions should be taken. (e)</p>	<p>There is a need to update monitoring in the new plan to address the changes that are made to other management direction, to adjust for what has been learned through current monitoring efforts, to incorporate current science, and to better align monitoring objectives with funding expectations.</p> <p>The new Forest Service planning directives require that the Forest’s monitoring plan “. . . be designed to address the most important monitoring questions within current or reasonably anticipated budgets available to support monitoring” (FSH ID 1909.12-2005-2, 13. Additionally, the monitoring plan will include an annual monitoring work plan, which will “identify the work expected for the upcoming fiscal year and the distribution of funds for the implementation of the monitoring strategy” (FSH.1909.12-2005-2, 13.2 Exhibit 01).</p> <p>The public will be involved as these components of the revised plan are developed.</p> <p>The monitoring plan will not include what corrective actions will be taken if monitoring identifies a problem. Such actions would be dependent on what activities are causing the need for correction and what jurisdiction the Forest Service has over those activities. The possible sources are too varied for the plan to speculate on potential corrective actions. If monitoring indicates that a change is needed, action will be taken at that time to address what changes are needed in the forest plan.</p>

	Response
<p><i>Adaptive management</i> Increased checkpoints to ensure proper implementation of the plan (e) How to be adaptive to change, e.g., technology, i.e., invasive species (e) Accountability in dealing with invasives (e)</p>	<p>The new planning regulations stress the importance of adaptive management. For example, forests are required to establish an environmental management system, or EMS. “Each unit’s EMS will identify and prioritize environmental conditions; set objectives in light of Congressional, agency, and public goals; document procedures and practices to achieve those objectives; and monitor and measure environmental conditions to track performance and verify that objectives are being met. Agency management personnel will regularly review performance, and information about environmental conditions will be regularly updated to continually improve land management and environmental performance” (Federal Register Vol. 70, No. 3, page 1030). As for accountability, the Shoshone’s EMS will include checkpoints that will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure the plan is being implemented properly. Further, the Forest’s monitoring plan will provide another avenue for determining if the plan is being implemented or needs to be amended to reflect changes in environmental conditions, uses, or science.</p>
<p><i>Time limits on Wilderness Study Areas</i> Time limit on wilderness study areas (e)</p>	<p>This issue could be addressed through the monitoring plan by placing an item that every five years the Forest reconsider whether the direction for recommended wilderness areas should be changed if the areas have not been acted upon by Congress. The reasons for inaction are too varied to prescribe that a particular change be made at the initial recommendation. The best option is to consider whether there is a need for change in the future.</p>
<p><i>Other considerations</i> <i>Adjacent land development</i> Address development of private land impacts on national forest resources (e) What management direction is necessary to deal with off-Forest development? (i)</p>	<p>Although the Forest Service can address some of the potential impacts of activities on private lands, the Forest Service has jurisdiction only on National Forest System lands. The impacts of adjacent land development will be considered during the development of forest plan management direction.</p>
<p><i>Soil erosion</i> Impacts of prescribed fire on soil erosion (e)</p>	<p>Impacts of fire on soil erosion will be considered during the development of forest plan management direction.</p>

	Response
<p><i>Global warming and carbon sequestration</i></p> <p>Look long term, consider global warming and its effects on glaciers (e)</p> <p>Consider more carbon sequestration (e)</p>	<p>The latest science available on long-term effects such as climate change, invasive species, etc. will be considered during revision. The plan itself will be focused on the near term period of 10 to 20 years and will contain direction only for those activities over which the Forest Service has jurisdiction.</p>
<p><i>Analysis tools and best science</i></p> <p><i>Best science</i></p> <p>Bring science into the process (e)</p> <p>Incorporate the latest models for soil erosion (i)</p> <p>Integrate new science in soils management (e)</p> <p>Incorporate new information on species management (i)</p> <p>Desired conditions and objectives should incorporate the new concepts of species of concern and species of interest. Integrate monitoring for these species. (i)</p> <p>Incorporate new science into desired conditions and objectives, e.g., edge contrast and thermal cover (i)</p> <p>Recognize and integrate national, public trends (e)</p> <p>Update language on diversity and landscape level considerations (i)</p> <p>Clarify road definitions and when they apply (i)</p> <p>Better definition of riparian (i)</p> <p><i>Historic range of variation (HRV)</i></p> <p>Desired conditions and objectives for vegetation diversity should consider the HRV for vegetation (i)</p> <p>Desired conditions and objectives for maintenance or enhancement of riparian should consider the HRV in the short and long term (i)</p> <p><i>Fire Regimes and Condition Classes (FRCC) information</i></p> <p>Tier assessments to FRCC as well as watersheds (i)</p> <p>Fire Regimes and condition class (FRCC) maps should be used to help design vegetation management/desired conditions (i)</p>	<p>The new planning regulations require that the Forest Supervisor “. . . take into account the best available science, and document in the [revised] plan that science was considered, correctly interpreted, appropriately applied, and evaluate and disclose incomplete or unavailable information, scientific uncertainty, and risk” (Federal Register Vol. 70, No. 3, page 1027). Science will be an important part of the process of developing the Shoshone’s revised plan. Current science and the most recent techniques will be utilized for all resources.</p>

	Response
<p><i>Other management direction</i> Link forest plan direction to other sources of management direction (managing to standard) (i) Incorporate results of the Recreation Facilities Master Plan (i) Incorporate the Roads Analysis process (i)</p>	<p>Direction in the revised forest plan will be integrated with other management direction, either directly or by reference. The Forest Service must adhere to existing laws, regulations, and policies, including the National Forest System Road Management Rule (January 2001). Forest plan direction will incorporate the Roads Analysis Process (Forest Service Miscellaneous Report FS-643 1999).</p>
<p><i>Watershed cumulative effects analysis</i> Identify watersheds of concern using a watershed cumulative effects analysis screening process (i)</p>	<p>A watershed analysis model will be employed in the forest plan revision process to address watershed cumulative effects concerns.</p>
<p><i>New roads and trail inventory</i> Need new roads and trails inventory (e)</p>	<p>The roads and trails data that we are using are being continually updated. The latest information available will be used. We believe the information will be sufficient for the decisions being made.</p>
<p><i>Timber output predictions</i> Realistic prediction of timber outputs (e) Address the difference that exists between the mix of sawtimber and products other than logs that was envisioned in the current Forest Plan and the actual mix of these products that was realized during Plan implementation (i)</p>	<p>Projection of timber outputs will occur during forest plan revision. New projections will take into account the differences that have been experienced between existing Forest Plan direction and what has actually occurred in the last 20 years.</p>
<p><i>About the components of the revised forest plan</i> Special management direction for managing the Beartooth as a unique place (i) Specific desired future conditions, by landscape (i) Measurable performance measures . . . to measure success . . . quantifiable (i) Make performance measures more comprehensive (cover effects and outputs) (i) Desired future conditions at a useful scale for implementation (i) Goals should be integrated, not single resource oriented (i) Clarify the intent of guidelines (tie to rationale) (i) Guidelines relate to desired conditions (i) Set guidelines at optimum, not minimum (i) Guidelines should be measurable on the ground (i)</p>	<p>There were some internal suggestions on ways to make the components of the revised plan easy to use during project implementation. During the development of the revised plan, Forest Service employees will review the information to ensure that it can be interpreted and applied to on-the-ground implementation of forest plan direction.</p>

	Response
<p><i>Cooperation with state and local governments and other national forests</i></p> <p>Forest supervisor needs to be accountable to state gov. (e)</p> <p>Species-of-interest list should reflect Game and Fish input (e)</p> <p>Dovetail planning process and outcomes with local county use plans (e)</p> <p>Recognize and integrate the provisions of Fremont County's Plan (e)</p> <p>Evaluate and be consistent with other federal agencies' habitat regulations with respect to threatened and endangered species (e)</p> <p>Utilize current Game and Fish seasonal range overlays and terminology for big game herd units (e)</p>	<p>Agencies of the State of Wyoming and the Shoshone National Forest have a cooperative relationship, described in a Memorandum of Understanding. Several state agencies belong to the Government Cooperators' Work Group, which will meet several times a year during the revision process. Additionally, the Forest Service employs a Wyoming Coordinator stationed in Cheyenne, to serve as a liaison and work closely with Wyoming national forests and state government on issues. We are working with local governments, state governments and agencies, and federal agencies in developing the forest plan. Input from those entities will be used in the preparation of the revised plan.</p>
<p><i>With the Bridger-Teton National Forest</i></p> <p>More cooperation/work with the B-T (e)</p>	<p>The two forests have many things in common, including adjacent lands, habitat types, wildlife species, and issues. Many people use both forests for the same activities. Forest planners on the Bridger-Teton and Shoshone National Forests have been meeting regularly to confer about forest plan revision processes, assessments, and analysis. With an eye toward efficiency, staffs on the two forests will share information and analysis where appropriate.</p>
<p><i>Decision considerations</i></p> <p>Process gives too much weight to local government officials (e)</p> <p>Priority to local input (e)</p> <p>Pursue goals using local government (e)</p> <p>How to implement project decisions independent of politics (e)</p>	<p>Public lands belong to all American people. Land management planning and NEPA regulations require that the Forest Service seek public input before plans are approved and project-specific decisions are made. Public involvement on the Shoshone, for forest plan revision and site-specific project proposals, includes all levels of government (other federal entities, state agencies, and local and tribal governments), interest groups, and private individuals, with no more or no less weight given to any of the comments. The new planning direction emphasizes the need to include local input as part of plan development. The public participation strategy for the Shoshone revision is designed to get that local input.</p> <p>Local governments are given the same opportunities as all others to provide input into the development of the Shoshone's desired conditions (goals).</p>

	Response
<p><i>Multiple uses</i></p> <p>Maintain/increase multiple uses (e)</p> <p>Maintain multiple use concept on Forest Service land (e)</p> <p>Return to multiple use management (e)</p> <p>Use our natural resources, not hide them or burn them—multiple use (e)</p> <p>Emphasize multiple vs. segregated uses (e)</p> <p>The days of forest welfare to our local economies in the form of timbering and grazing should be phased out, or made to start paying their fair share (e)</p>	<p>This issue will be addressed through the combination of changes that are made to the various need for change items. The current Forest Plan provides for multiple uses of forest land.</p> <p>The overall goal of managing the National Forest System is to sustain the multiple uses of its renewable resources in perpetuity while maintaining the long-term productivity of the lands. Resources are to be managed so they are utilized in the combination that best meets the needs of the American people. The Forest Service’s planning regulations neither promote nor discourage the different uses of National Forest System lands. As the Shoshone’s Forest Plan is revised, all uses will be considered and there will be many opportunities for everyone to provide input as the desired conditions, guidelines, and objectives, i.e., the uses, for the Shoshone are developed.</p>
<p><i>Eliminate below cost timber sales</i></p> <p>No below cost timber sales (e)</p> <p>No more below cost timber sales (e)</p> <p>Elimination of below cost timber sales (e)</p>	<p>The issue of below cost timber sales is complicated by the fact that many timber sales are designed to achieve resource objectives rather than just producing wood products. The revised plan will include a socioeconomic analysis that addresses the costs and benefits of possible plan activities. The revised plan will address economics in the context of the complete integrated program of work and not on a resource-by-resource basis. Depending on public collaboration, options that look at reducing timber harvests may be considered.</p>

Items not addressed during forest plan revision comments

	Response
<p><i>Items dependent on funding levels</i></p> <p>Link between budget and ability to provide services (e)</p> <p>No rules or restrictions should be put into the revision that are unenforceable, e.g., closures to antler hunting (e)</p> <p>Balance restrictions with the ability to enforce them (e)</p> <p>Increase funding (e)</p> <p>Fund the Healthy Forests Act before the bugs and beetles eat all of our wilderness and national forests (e)</p>	<p>The revised forest plan will follow direction in FSM 1920 (1921.11 in ID 1920-2005-2) that requires plan components to be realistic and achievable. “They should reflect the Forest’s anticipated budget levels, staffing. . . Guidelines shall be attainable regardless of budget levels. Objectives should be designed within reasonable budget assumptions. Desired conditions . . . should be realistic.” Plan direction and desired conditions will be based upon realistic budgets.</p> <p>Funding for national programs such as the Healthy Forests Restoration Act is determined at a level above the Shoshone National Forest—funding for the National Forest System is determined by Congress. The Shoshone is currently using Healthy Forests Restoration Act funds to plan and implement projects to address the impacts of insects and disease on the Forest’s vegetation.</p>
<p><i>Road maintenance</i></p> <p>Better maintenance of all existing roads especially the major ones (e)</p> <p>Better road maintenance (e)</p> <p><i>Staffing</i></p> <p>More Forest Service people on the ground to enforce current regulations, e.g., law enforcement (e)</p> <p>More enforcement of all regulations (e)</p>	<p>These items are largely dependent on budget. The Forest Plan does not set budget levels. Dollars are appropriated by Congress and distributed from the national level. These items will not be addressed in the plan revision.</p>
<p><i>Enforcement</i></p> <p>More enforcement of off-trail motorized use (e)</p> <p>Control illegal ATV use (e)</p> <p>Proper management of ATVs (e)</p> <p>Management of OHV and enforcement of OHV regulations must be improved (e)</p> <p>Increase and implement strict law enforcement for off-road vehicle violations (e)</p> <p>Adequate enforcement of OHV violations (e)</p> <p>Control motorized encroachments into roadless (e)</p> <p>Need increased law enforcement presence (e)</p>	<p>Current regulations allow motorized travel on designated roads and trails only. Enforcement of OHV violations is not related to revision of forest plan direction. The availability of level 4 law enforcement is determined at the national level and the availability of level 2 law enforcement is determined at the ranger district level. Both are dependent on funding. Desired conditions for OHV management and areas designated for motorized and non-motorized uses across the Forest will be addressed during forest plan revision.</p>

	Response
<p><i>Maintaining trails and infrastructure</i></p> <p>Maintain backpacking trails (e)</p> <p>Maintain trails (e)</p> <p>Improve long range maintenance of backcountry trails (e)</p> <p>Maintain corrals at trailheads, e.g., remove manure (e)</p> <p>Improve trail maintenance (e)</p> <p>Improve and maintain existing trailhead roads to accommodate large trailers and campers (e)</p> <p>Implement a program of improvements to trailheads with the equestrian recreationists in mind (e)</p> <p>Improve horse trailheads (accommodate changing uses, infrastructure improvements) (e)</p> <p>Facilities at trailheads, i.e., toilets and garbage receptacles (e)</p> <p>Increase trail maintenance/funding for non-motorized (e)</p> <p>With the high level of recreational use, trail maintenance should be a high priority of the SNF revised plan. Budgets should be aligned to meet the needs of private and commercial recreationists. (e)</p> <p>Increase money to maintain trailheads (e)</p>	<p>Maintenance and development of recreation infrastructure are largely dependent on annual budget levels set nationally. This issue will not be addressed in revision.</p> <p>The forest plan revision will address the types of uses and opportunities that are desired on the Forest. The discussion will consider the dollars that are likely to be available. Actual maintenance and development of recreation infrastructure will be decided at the project level with appropriate environmental analyses.</p> <p>Because of the way money is allocated by Congress, only recreation funds can be spent on trail maintenance and trailhead improvements. Without an overall increase in recreation funding, fewer dollars would have to be spent on other areas of recreation management to increase maintenance spending. The only way to increase the amount of funding for trail maintenance is to reduce the amount being spent on other recreation items. These types of tradeoffs are dealt with in daily program management and are not addressed in forest plan revision.</p>

	Response
<p>Partnerships and coordination</p> <p><i>When planning projects</i></p> <p>Utilize non-Forest Service entities, emphasis on education related to management issues, forest stewardship (e)</p> <p>Increase ability of the Forest Service to partner with other agencies/organizations to maintain and improve infrastructure (e)</p> <p>Forest partnership program to assist with care of the Forest (e)</p> <p>Using partnerships, increase educational outreach of Forest Service programs (e)</p> <p>Suggestion for more partnerships, e.g., adopt-a-campground, with environmental or sporting organizations (e)</p> <p>Utilize partnerships, e.g., cabin owners, outfitters, etc. to help meet other resource objectives (e)</p> <p>Cooperate with other partners to control invasive species (e)</p> <p>Increase cooperation with NGOs/all interests for private land development, e.g., wildlife habitat (e)</p>	<p>We are interested in developing partnerships to help carry out the Shoshone’s programs, projects, and activities. The Forest Service recently created a National Partnership Office to provide tools and resources for national forests as they seek out partnerships.</p> <p>Suggestions to increase partnership opportunities will be addressed at the administrative level (managers will explore ways to create and sustain successful partnerships). The Forest Leadership Team, comprised of the forest supervisor, district rangers, and staff officers, recognizes that a partnership network would be an invaluable tool to help us manage the Forest’s resources. Further, the revised plan will allow and encourage partnerships to facilitate implementation</p> <p>The Shoshone is currently involved with many cooperators in controlling invasive species.</p>
<p>More cooperation with Wyoming Game and Fish on projects (e)</p> <p>Increase participation of other agencies in the interdisciplinary approach, e.g., project level (e)</p> <p>Coordination of water quality and GIS between agencies (e)</p>	<p>The Forest does cooperate with Wyoming Game and Fish when projects are proposed, analyzed, and implemented. Wyoming Game and Fish is represented on the Government Cooperators’ Work Group, which is participating in the revision process. At the project level, during scoping, analysis, and implementation, other agencies (local governments, tribes, and state and other federal agencies) are given the opportunity to provide input on the Forest’s proposed activities. Coordination between agencies will continue to occur wherever possible. The use of geographical information systems (GIS) is part of day-to-day operations and will not be addressed through forest plan revision.</p>
<p>Work with private landowners when national forest projects may affect them . . . coordinate treatments on adjacent ownerships (e)</p>	<p>The new planning regulations require that “. . . planning teams should focus efforts on identifying and engaging both surface and subsurface private landowners whose lands are within or adjacent to National Forest System lands . . . “ (ID 1920-2005-2, 1921.63c). Private landowners are encouraged to take advantage of public involvement opportunities during the processes to plan projects and activities and to revise the forest plan.</p>

	Response
Outfitters have better partnership with the Forest Service, especially at base camps (e)	The Forest Service strives to maintain positive relationships with our partners that provide recreation opportunities across the forest.
The use of Forest resources should be more user friendly, e.g., Worthen Reservoir (e)	The specific example in this comment, use of the water in Worthen Reservoir, is something that is controlled by existing laws, regulations, and Forest Service Handbook and Manual direction. The Shoshone does not have the authority to change or deviate from the direction that governs the use of the reservoir. Though it wasn't the best of situations, the Shoshone worked with the city of Lander to come to a desirable resolution.
More coordination (small business, interagency, private, permittees) for a formal coordinating body to meet resource objectives (e) Encourage interagency, NGO, etc. participation on interdisciplinary teams, project planning (e) More focused, citizens' group (e) Look for opportunities to collaborate on the process and projects (e)	Shoshone National Forest leadership and managers are committed to building external relationships and comprehensive public involvement in how the Forest's resources are managed. The Forest solicits input throughout the planning process: when projects are proposed, during project design, when environmental analysis documents are published, and when decisions are made. Using several avenues—public meetings, email, the Internet, or one-on-one visits with Forest personnel—the forest plan revision process was designed to be very open to anyone with something to say about forest plan revision.
Make it easier to volunteer (e)	Making it easier to volunteer is not something that will be assessed or analyzed during forest plan revision, but is something that, administratively, the Forest can address. Forest Service volunteers provide valuable services to the Shoshone, from campground hosting to receptionist work. Our volunteers perform duties and deliver services that otherwise may not be available with declining federal budgets. This suggestion will be referred to the Forest's volunteer coordinators and other staff that work with the volunteer program.

	Response
<p>Information and education</p> <p>More focus/education on aquatic invasives (e)</p> <p>More on-the-ground information and education (e)</p>	<p>Shoshone employees recognize the importance of providing information and education to Forest users. If asked, every employee would agree that the more information and education that's available, the fewer misunderstandings and possibly conflicts about the Forest's uses, projects, and activities there would be. This suggestion is related to the day-to-day operations of the ranger districts and will be forwarded to them for consideration as they design and implement their recreation and visitor information services.</p>
<p>Certified weed-free hay sources at district offices (e)</p> <p>Provide information/resources/access to weed-free hay to recreationists (e)</p>	<p>This comment will be forwarded to district rangers to ensure that the information is accessible to recreationists.</p>
<p>Notification before affecting local communities, e.g., effects to Lander's water system (e)</p> <p>Be more aggressive in letting folks know what is happening on the Forest (e)</p>	<p>This level of detail, related to public affairs/information, is part of day-to-day Forest operations and is not something that would be included in broad direction in the revised forest plan. The new planning rule does call for greater collaboration and communication. Those general principles will be incorporated into the revised plan. This comment will be shared with the local district rangers.</p>
<p>How programs and projects are implemented</p> <p>Direction on heritage survey intensity based on probability of heritage resources present (i)</p>	<p>The intensity of heritage surveys is determined by the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and may be negotiated through a programmatic agreement between the Forest Service and SHPO. This issue will not be specifically addressed in the revised plan.</p>
<p>Direction on how to handle unneeded improvements, e.g., old cow camps (i)</p> <p>Direction on outfitter/guide limits in location of camps and non-commercial uses (e)</p>	<p>These are site-specific decision that will be handled at the project level.</p>
<p>Maintain existing infrastructure before adding new infrastructure (e)</p>	<p>Maintenance of infrastructure relates to daily operations at the ranger district level and will not be addressed through forest plan revision. This is part of program implementation and is related to dollars available. The Forest is currently going through an internal recreation facilities planning effort that will deal with these types of issues.</p>

	Response
More emphasis on stewardship (in light of decreasing budgets) (e) Increase stewardship contracting on the Shoshone (e)	The revised plan will focus on the desired conditions for an area. Activities used to achieve those conditions will be determined as projects are proposed and designed. Given the increased emphasis on stewardship contracting, plan direction will be designed to accommodate the use of stewardship contracting when it is the appropriate tool.
Remove rec demo fees and user fees and if retained, must be cost effective (e)	On the Shoshone, user fees apply only to developed campgrounds. Rec fee demo is a national program that has allowed the Shoshone to keep campground fees and use those funds to improve campground infrastructure. Fees are not addressed in plan revision, but are addressed administratively as part of the funding and budgeting processes.
Speed up analysis process specific to projects (e)	The speed with which project proposals are analyzed is a concern for everyone. We try to be as efficient as possible with staff time, data gathering, survey work, mapping, analysis, and writing documents. The analysis process for projects is related to implementation of the forest plan and will not be addressed during plan revision.
Improve signage on the Forest (e)	Signing relates to daily operations at the ranger district level and will not be addressed through forest plan revision. Signing conforms to standards that are established in the Forest Service directives system (EM-7100-15 and FSM 7160) and is related to the dollars available.
Implement and enforce grizzly bear regulations on all forest lands, maintain a program of installation of bear boxes and poles (e)	The Forest Service must adhere to the laws, regulations, policies, and special orders governing the grizzly bear. This direction is established outside of the revision process. Installation of bear boxes and poles relates to implementation of the Forest Plan when projects are proposed and designed at the ranger district level.
List rights-of-way to acquire (i)	Specific lists of rights-of-ways will not be included in the plan revision. Such a list would represent site-specific decisions that are more appropriately made at the project level.

	Response
Protocol for tribal consultation (i)	The protocol for consulting tribes prior to management actions is addressed at the administrative level, e.g., Forest Service Manuals and Handbooks, and is applied through project implementation. The Forest will adhere to existing laws, regulations, and policies governing tribal consultation; direction to address this issue is not established in a forest plan. Direction on tribal consultation will be followed during the revision process.
Forest Special Orders and Handbook Direction Continue weed-free feed requirement (e) Require and enforce weed-free animal feed on the Forest (e)	The Forest Service must adhere to existing laws, regulations, policies, and Forest Service Manual and Handbook direction that govern the use of weed-free hay. Forest Orders (No. 02-97-02 and 04-00-059) currently in effect prohibit possessing, storing, or transporting any hay, straw, mulch, or forage products that have not been certified as free of noxious weeds and seeds by a certified state or county agriculture officer. Implementation of this direction shall continue on the Forest.
Continue and expand food storage infrastructure, bear poles, etc. (e) Reevaluate food storage order—is it effective (e)	In early 2006, the Final Environmental Impact Statement for Forest Plan Amendments for Grizzly Bear Habitat Conservation for the Greater Yellowstone Area National Forests will be published. The Final Environmental Impact Statement contains direction for food storage. Direction in the Record of Decision and subsequent forest plan amendment, if an action alternative is chosen, will be incorporated into the revised forest plan. This issue is being addressed in this separate planning effort and will not be addressed in the revised forest plan.
Public safety considering wolves and grizzly bears (e)	The Forest is addressing this issue through the food storage order and public education in cooperation with other federal and state agencies.
Direction for collection of petrified wood (i) Policy on commercial collection of fossils (i) Special protection for important paleo resources (i)	This type of management direction deals more with program management and should be developed through a supplement to the Forest Service Handbook. This will not be addressed in the revision.

	Response
<p>Contain adequate management direction to address impacts from recreational dredging (i)</p> <p>Impacts [from recreational dredging]addressed should not only include effects on riparian areas but effects on fish habitat, especially YSC, as well as stream dynamics and function (e)</p>	<p>The Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality is responsible for permitting recreational gold dredging. The Department of Environmental Quality will not permit dredging in Class 1 waters, which includes wilderness streams and the portion of the Clarks Fork River designated as a Wild River. If there were a need to permit this activity on the Forest, direction needs to be developed through a supplement to the Forest Service Handbook. At that point, direction related to the permitting could be included in the revised plan—it is not timely to include that direction at this point.</p>
<p>Other plans</p> <p>Comprehensive management plan for the Clarks Fork corridor (i)</p>	<p>The comprehensive management plan for the Clarks Fork Wild River will be completed as a separate planning effort outside of forest plan revision.</p>
<p>Transportation plan developed during the planning process (e)</p>	<p>The roads system and general transportation management will be addressed during forest plan revision. Development of a transportation plan is a separate planning effort involving more site-specific activities and effects. The transportation plan will be updated to incorporate changes that result from the revised plan.</p>
<p>Determine existing and potential capacity and allocation for outfitters and guides (e)</p> <p>Address allocation and capacity for outfitters and guides (i)</p>	<p>A capacity study is part of a separate planning effort that will be completed outside of forest plan revision. Information developed in the revision on the types of uses and where they are suitable would be used in any subsequent study that was undertaken.</p>
<p>Outside the control of the Forest Service</p> <p>Loosen restrictions on use of temporary rights-of-way (e)</p>	<p>The Forest must adhere to existing regulations and policies governing temporary rights-of-way. Right-of-way restrictions have already been relaxed in the last few years to facilitate increased access for treating fuels under the Healthy Forests Restoration Act.</p>
<p>Allow outfitters to build cabins for their outfitting camps (e)</p>	<p>The Forest Service must adhere to existing laws, regulations, and policies governing outfitting. Current regulations do not allow outfitter cabins for this purpose.</p>
<p>Have all the monies created within a forest stay within that forest (e)</p>	<p>This issue falls outside the jurisdiction of the Forest Service. The Forest Service must adhere to the current existing fiscal laws and regulations that provide direction for the dispersal of money generated by the Forest Service.</p>

	Response
Hire a professional forester from outside the Forest Service to have an unbiased opinion and create a map and management plan for a 100-year cycle for logging salable timber (e)	The Forest Service must adhere to existing laws, regulations, and policies including the National Forest Management Act and the 2005 Planning Rule. This direction determines how the Forest Service develops vegetation management plans. The Forest Service cannot delegate the decision on what lands can or cannot be harvested. Lands suitable for timber harvest will be identified during plan revision. We welcome public input on those designations and will consider any such input during the revision.
More fees for violations, use penalties as deterrents (e) Higher penalties for violations (e)	Fees and penalties for violations are established at a national level and are not addressed in the forest plan.
Reevaluate grazing fees (e) Raise the charge for an AUM to parallel the cost of grazing on private land (e)	The Forest Service must adhere to existing laws, regulations, and policies that govern grazing and grazing fees and the Multiple Use Sustained Yield Act. The revised Forest Plan cannot adjust grazing fees.
Delist wolf and grizzly bear (e) Limit ESA (e)	The Forest Service does not have the authority to delist species that are listed under the Endangered Species Act. Listed species are under the jurisdiction of the Department of the Interior, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The Forest Service does not have the authority to limit the provisions of the ESA; only Congress can do that.
In wildland urban interface areas, landowners assume some of the costs of suppression (e)	This issue is outside the jurisdiction of the Forest Service.
Easier to report ATV violators, e.g., full size license plates (e) Bumper sticker to control illegal use, e.g., like the “Stop Poaching” G&F bumper sticker, with a hotline number (e)	This issue is outside the jurisdiction of the Forest Service, which does not manage vehicles or vehicle plates. Bumper stickers could be manufactured and distributed by a user group. Both ideas should be shared with the State of Wyoming (license plates) and user groups (bumper stickers).
Have the district forest supervisor elected, not appointed (e)	The Forest Service does not have the authority to make this change.
Eliminate the Forest Service as a national agency and turn control of these lands back to the states with state control by the people of the state (e)	Elimination of the Forest Service and change of control of public lands would have to be enacted by Congress. Representatives to the federal legislature would be a better recipient for this proposal.