

National Advisory Committee for Implementation of the National Forest System Land Management Planning Rule

Meeting #2 – February 20-22, 2013

Meeting Summary

Introduction

The National Advisory Committee for Implementation of the National Forest System Land Management Planning Rule (the committee) held its second meeting from February 19-22, 2013, in Albuquerque, New Mexico. The committee pursued the following objectives as set forth in the meeting agenda:

- Hear from early adopter forests about their experience implementing the new planning rule
- Share information from working groups
- Review planning rule directives
- Begin deliberation – potential recommendations/advice to the Forest Service
- Develop plan for work between February and May meetings and objectives for May deliberation

Final meeting materials, including agenda, presentations, and written public comments can be found at the committee's website here <http://www.fs.usda.gov/main/planningrule/committee>.

Committee members present: Mike Anderson, William Barquin, Susan Jane Brown, Robert Cope, William Covington, Adam Cramer, Daniel Dessecker, Russ Ehnes, Stephen Kandell, Joan May, Pamela Motley, Peter Nelson, Candice Price, Vickie Roberts, Greg Schaefer, Rodney Stokes, Christopher Topik, Thomas Troxel, Lorenzo Valdez, Ray Vaughan *Committee members absent:* James Magagna

Staff: Tony Tooke-Designated Federal Official (DFO), Chris French, Cherie Hamilton, Annie Eberhart Goode

Facilitators: Kathleen Rutherford and Michael Hughes

U.S. Institute: Caelan McGee

Agreements and Actions

1. Adopted communication protocols (for final see: <http://www.fs.usda.gov/goto/planningrule/faca>)
2. Agreed to work with USFS to finalize FAQ
3. Agree to review directives and submit response forms no later than 22 March
4. Agree to meet by phone the following week to create a working group structure and timeline for completing recommendations on the directives - scheduling tentatively for 28 March

I. Welcome from Leadership

Lorenzo Valdez offered a traditional meeting opening, and was followed by welcoming remarks from Gilbert Zepeda, Acting Regional Forester. Calvin Joyner- USFS and Meryl Harrell- OSEC also welcomed the committee and the public to the meeting. Each speaker thanked the committee for their hard work, and acknowledged the importance of the committee in providing advice on the directives specifically, and on implementation of the new rule more broadly. DFO Tony Tooke, extended a welcome to the committee as well as the public, and acknowledged the significant work ahead on the directives. He reminded the committee that the timeframe for public comment was 60 days from release of the directives, and that the release also sets a 120-day clock for tribal consultations. There is a unique role for this committee to play, not only in creating collective recommendations but to utilize the public input to inform committee deliberations. Co Chairs Pam Motley and Ray Vaughan added their appreciation of the committee's work between meetings, and noted the importance of consensus advice.

II. Introductions and Updates from Committee Members

Committee members provided updates about what they have been hearing about the rule from colleagues, constituencies, and others since the September meeting. Highlights include:

- Susan Jane Brown has discussed or presented on the planning rule with a local watershed group eastern Oregon, Rural Voices for Conservation Committee, environmental law conference in Eugene and her law school class (materials not compiled).
- Greg Schaefer addressed Club 20 in Colorado
- Joan May addressed Colorado Counties Inc.
- Chris Topik and TNC colleagues have been speaking at fire management and forestry meetings, talking about getting the available science from wide number of sources. Adaptive management and collaboration will be addressed soon.
- Vickie Roberts has addressed the planning rule in land owner outreach in Mississippi.
- Wally Covington addressed a group of senior scientists who have long been committed to using the best science to make decisions and to test those ideas – evidence is what matters whether through long experience or through the scientific method.
- Lorenzo Valdez has had numerous conversations with members of his community.
- Rodney Stokes and the state forester for Michigan will hold a series of open houses on state management and he is helping to raise aware of the directives.
- Adam Cramer has been getting the word out to the human-powered constituency about the rule and getting feedback on experiences with early adopters – Chugach and Nez Perce. He is hearing a mixed review of the mapping application in the Chugach and the

ability to get local knowledge into the mix. Adam will be presenting to backcountry skiers' national conference.

- Candice Price is pursuing a number of educational filming projects in Missoula, and will be headed to Puerto Rico in March; additionally she is posting to Facebook and YouTube to tell the story of forests.
- Mike Anderson in October presented an overview of the planning rule at a conference at Lake Tahoe, California, sponsored by the Sierra Nevada Alliance; he is working with environmental coalitions as they participate in the work of early adopters, specifically the Nez Perce-Clearwater and the California forests.
- Robert Cope is keeping local officials informed through the National Association of Counties. Although there is not much information as yet, he is hearing about a lack of inter-governmental coordination – EPA officials, for example, are not aware of the planning rule implementation.
- Russ Ehnes updated the national motorized organizations after the first meeting. He noted there is still plenty of fear and skepticism about implementation of the new rule; that the recreational aviation foundation has been included in the Nez Perce stakeholder work, and that the USFS is learning how to collaborate. He will request to present at the October national conference.
- Steve Kandell noted that colleagues working with early adopters are saying it is still early to know how the rule is working. He noted that “ecosystem services” is a complex concept that requires explanation and discussion.
- Pam Motley noted that in Colorado there are five forests and multiple collaboratives. People are wondering about whether there will be unintended consequences of the rule. Will it take away from getting the work done, and will the rule limit CFLR work underway?

III. Presentation and Discussion on the Early Adopter Forests

USFS staff and stakeholders working on the Cibola, El Junque, Pacific Southwest Region and Nez Perce Clearwater presented updates, key challenges and innovations from each of the early adopter forests. Presentations can be found on the committee website (<http://www.fs.usda.gov/main/planningrule/committee>). Presentations were followed by discussion with the committee.

Cibola National Forest –Presenters: Travis Moseley, the Acting Cibola Forest Supervisor, Champe Green, Cibola National Forest; Laura McCarthy, The Nature Conservancy; Vera Smith, The Wilderness Society's National Forest Action Center; Frank Chavez, Governor Montoya's representative, Sandia Pueblo – Highlights of the presentation and discussion follow

Update/background: The Cibola has an in-place planning team, and facilitation and public engagement contract with Lucy Moore and Kathleen Bond. They enjoy close coordination with and support from the regional office. To date they have conducted three public workshops for the assessment report including discussion of the 15 topics in chapter 10 of the directives; two

more are scheduled. They have a draft collaboration plan and expect the draft assessment report by late spring or early summer 2013.

Challenges and Questions: Initiating plan revision absent the directives is clearly challenging; incomplete information (e.g. invertebrates) and how best to move forward acknowledging data gaps; public participation-competition for public attention and the complexity of effective collaboration; ADA compliance with communication technology.

Innovations: The development of a species diversity database; collaboration between the forest and regional office; use of the web and outreach- we are going to interested participants rather than asking the public and stakeholders to come to us.

Laura McCarthy spoke to the high capacity for effective collaboration on forest management in New Mexico, based on a solid history through, among other efforts, the New Mexico CFLRP from 2004 to present. TNC and other collaborators have developed a tool that maps the 2012 rule to an open standards approach. Frank Chavez spoke to the historical and contemporary importance of livelihoods that are predicated on aboriginal access to and use of FS lands. He emphasized the importance of working collaboratively on livelihoods and civil rights issues. Vera Smith, of the Wilderness Society, offered some thoughts on what works and complications of the 2012 rule. What works? The participatory approach to assessment, flexibility at the forest level to design appropriate collaboration processes, and giving the public opportunities to comment and iterate on the assessment is essential. Complications include the fact that collaboration is time consuming and complex-underscoring the need for up-front clarity of purpose. Ms. Smith also noted the opportunity to better integrate NEPA and Collaboration – so the two aren't at odds – working to get a shared range of alternatives – synthesizing and articulating different points of view.

Discussion: Highlights from the committee discussion include the following: how the Cibola is addressing all lands and climate change (through the assessment); data gaps and whether sources relied on for identification of species would be tracked (yes), whether tribes would be asked to fill in any of the data gaps (yes) and that revealing the gaps and filling them in with stakeholders is the planned approach. Discussion also addressed how collaboration has changed the planning process (use of outside facilitators to design collaboration plan) and how land grant communities have been involved (4 or 5 of the government agencies with community land grant authority have been engaged; they have made a special outreach effort to the New Mexico land grant council meeting –those near the forest were asked to join, as well as a particular effort in public meeting locations); if the plan is dynamic with respect to new information (yes, this is what the assessment process is for). Strategies for youth engagement are a work in progress – they are working with boy scouts, girl scouts, science groups, etc. Presenters noted the rule's strength is in this area – if we are meaningfully engaging younger people, we have to do new things – working in schools for example takes significant resources. They noted that the committee could surface the issue of resources needed to do this work.

El Yunque National Forest - Presenters: Pedro Rios, El Yunque National Forest; Maria Falcon, GeoAmbiente; Edgardo Gonzalez, Centro para la Conservacion del Paisaje (CCP) (Center for Landscape Conservation)

Background: The El Yunque National Forest – USFS management started in 1905. The role of science and experiments is very important in daily management. The major theme of the unit in the '97 (current) plan was the concept of timber demonstration- allowing only 1500 acres of silviculture practices to identify uses in the tropics. The focus is sustainable environmental research for the benefit of society.

Innovations: They have found that addressing social, ecological and economic demands is working. The concept of sustainability is accepted and the landscape scale is welcomed. They conducted a very successful essay contest to engage youth through which a number of key issues were identified.

Challenges: Most notable, the presenters named the risk of losing collaborative gains because of the speed of analysis: it is a 3 year process that brings lots of demands on partners and stakeholders, less NEPA like, and they need to learn more about this. Ultimately the goal is to keep analysis and collaboration moving together.

Lessons learned: Technology fits well in the assessment phase. Using key indicators is important in an ecosystem with 200 animal and 400 plant species. The last 15 years have resulted in better understanding of disturbance and variation.

Integration Discussion #1

The committee noticed how climate, scale, and youth engagement are playing out differently across the two forests. Similarities across the two include: the new rule's usefulness, the effort to collaborate is becoming more serious and profound in both places.

Emergent themes from interactions with these two forests include the need to embrace the past (what we know now and what we have known); the need to look ahead- to continue to address uncertainty while moving toward the future and the desire for a mechanism to keep information updated without perpetual planning.

Pacific Southwest Region -Presenters: Deb Whitall, Forest Service Pacific Southwest Region; Steve Brink, California Forestry Association; Craig Thomas, California Sierra Club; Sue Britting, Sierra Forest Legacy

Background/Update: The Pacific Southwest Region recognized the need for ecological, social and economic integration in the planning process from the start. With assistance from the Center for Collaborative Policy (CCP) they designed a transparent and collaborative approach to the planning process that uses the all lands approach, best available scientific information, landscape scale restoration and inclusion of youth and underserved communities. CCP conducted stakeholder analyses at regional and forest levels to determine how folks wanted to participate in planning. They then produced five communication and collaboration plans – one for each of three forests, one tribal and one regional. In total there are three separate forest plan revision processes underway, with one bioregional assessment.

Innovations: Key innovations for the Pacific Southwest region are tied to the regional approach, wherein three early adopter forests are pursuing forest plan revisions under the 2012 rule. These innovations include the bioregional assessment, linking the Sierra Cascade Dialogue to the science synthesis, and the uptake of collaborative technologies- specifically the living assessment - in a wiki format.

The Sierra Cascade Dialogue was used to understand issues of concern across the region. The science synthesis was designed to have researchers address questions raised in Sierra Cascade Dialogue, and to condense those into a single overarching question. The science synthesis would also be used to inform the assessment.

Designed as a living document in a wiki format which enables collaborative design and editing of the document, the living assessment represents a radical departure from business as usual. Another website- Our Forest Place- houses documents and resources for the engaged and interested publics. The anticipated timeline for completing the process is as follows: bioregional assessment complete by end of July 2013; early adopter assessments are expected to be completed by end of December 2013; draft forest plan revision at the end of 2014 and final plan revisions by the end of 2015.

Challenges: Defining clear roles and responsibilities, managing expectations, coordination among the three early adopters, managing stakeholder fatigue and the link with the 2004 Sierra Nevada Framework (focused on timber, species protections, fire standards and guidelines). The science synthesis recognizes that the Sierra Nevada ecosystem is dynamic and fire adapted, and will require adaptive management for restoration to a more resilient ecosystem. Time was a constraint- the synthesis was to inform the assessment process. As a result of constraints on time, money and other resources (e.g. researcher availability) they chose to focus their effort on the Sierra Cascade Region. This leaves a hole on the east side of the area that will need to be addressed.

Discussion: Questions from the committee ranged from stakeholder identification and engagement methods, to the relationship between the Sierra Cascade Dialogue and Science synthesis, mechanisms for inter-governmental coordination, to how the collaborative process affected the interpretation of new terms and frameworks in the planning process, and several scheduling/sequencing questions.

The stakeholder analysis utilized a snow ball methodology (asking each interviewee who else should we speak with); each analysis was about 20-25 people; and they reached out across interest, place and culture. Because of resource constraints, outreach was designed to leverage horizontal networks rather than hierarchies. By organizing topical assessment teams comprised of diagonal slice of the USFS, Region 5 and their contractor team integrated review processes up front. They also worked with stakeholders outside of USFS, e.g. Cal Fire, DWR and Cal Fish and Wildlife right up front. By including these stakeholders in the creation, rather than just the review of key documents, presenters believe they will have a richer product.

Presenters were unclear as to the exact mechanisms for intergovernmental coordination (i.e. with counties, state agencies, etc.), but agreed that this is an important aspect of effective

collaboration. Presenters also explained that there are conversations about linkages with the Sierra Nevada Framework and NW forest plan, noting that while some issues are indeed similar, there are also differences because the forests are so far apart.

Outreach to urban communities was another area of interest. Presenters explained the use of Our Forest Place (<http://ourforestplace.ning.com>), and various media techniques. Presenters noted that urban communities pay attention to water in California.

In response to a question about the effect of the collaborative process on interpreting challenging concepts and definitions in the framework for dynamic adaptive planning, presenters replied that these are early days, and they rely on interest-based problem solving approaches. Multiple vehicles exist to serve this purpose: face-to-face meetings, the website, calls, etc. Another committee member asked for clarification around the process of determining what is/isn't included in the synthesis, requesting a clear communication around such decisions.

Presenters closed by urging the committee to look at directives in detail and consider costing it out. Monitoring requirements were suggested as a good place to start.

Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forests --Presenters: Joyce Thompson, Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forests; Jonathan Oppenheimer, Idaho Conservation League; Bill Higgins, Idaho Forest Products Group; Steve Didier, Backcountry Horsemen – North Central Idaho Group

Background/Update: The Nez Perce-Clearwater collaborative approach to plan revision includes a revision collaborative, and an Interdisciplinary Team (IDT). The IDT generates primers on matters such as laws, regulations, and constraints; and uses the assessment and their knowledge of the forest to generate the first iteration of the plan components. The collaborative- ranging from 40-60 members that ebbs and flow – represents a full set of diverse interests – recreation motorized and non-motorized, timber, grazing, mining, conservation. While confident that they are sufficiently representative at the collaborative level, presenters acknowledge that working groups lack sufficient diversity.

The collaborative reviews draft documents and provides feedback to the USFS. The USFS then indicates whether and how input is used. Input from stakeholders not proximate to the forest can be given through the e-collaboration tool. There is also a collaborative mapping tool. Presenters noted that plan components are open to change in this iterative process. Community check-in meetings are hosted by county commissioners and collaborative members participate.

Challenges include staffing, internal collaboration, the time consuming and complex nature of collaboration, involving state, regional and national interests. Along the lines of effective stakeholder outreach and engagement, engaging young people, minorities, and ensuring diversity in the working groups has also proven a challenge. Understanding what the term “plan component” means and the iterative process were also identified as challenges. The USFS staff feel like they have been successful thus far, and become more so with learning and application.

Concerns from stakeholders include sequencing and pace. It is not clear that taking input from national interests – and the NEPA process to follow – is having an impact. The flexibility-accountability balance is another concern– with a limited assessment and without standards, the plan components aren't clearly rooted in the work that should come before. Another stakeholder affirms the pace is correct, and believes the broad and fine scale approach is working. The third stakeholder agrees that pacing is problematic because of the need to build trust -- some are being left behind. It is important to take the time for tough issues. The time between meetings and the USFS getting stakeholder information was also identified as a concern.

Discussion: Questions from the committee ranged from understanding the rationale behind releasing the assessment and plan components simultaneously to how national input was weighted against local input; and finally to structure, composition and functioning of the collaborative and working groups.

USFS noted very mixed participation at the county level, and clarified that in order to balance local and national interests they incorporate input on an equal footing.

Meetings to date have not been well attended by tribal representatives, and the USFS acknowledged the need to better engage with the Tribes to integrate their interests and concerns. In the meantime, the USFS asks working group members to consider the interests of those not present, knowing that the plan has to be responsive to their needs. Each working group addresses the same plan components. Specialists from the Regional Office and forest staff the working groups. Each working group has a chair and a facilitator – they have developed relationships that support their work and are advantageous to the whole group. The USFS adds new people to existing groups in an effort to improve the balance within each group. Input from the collaborative must be understood in the broader context of input and decision making. Two key elements here are that the decision maker cannot relinquish their authority, and there is input outside of the collaborative process that must be considered prior to a final decision.

Several lines of questioning went to the concurrent release of the draft assessment and plan components. Committee members wanted to understand why and how was that decision made. USFS responded that they used prior work including a draft forest plan from 2007 and that they presented the wildlife assessment early with too many unknowns. They acknowledged that they learned from that experience.

Integration Discussion: The integration discussion following the fourth Early Adopter presentation consisted of three distinct portions:

- Reactions to and questions related to the presentation itself
- Differences and similarities between the last two presentations and emergent themes
- Better defining the objective, purpose and protocols to guide interaction between the committee and other early adopters

Questions/reactions to presentation: The early adopters who presented to the committee revealed differences in approach and timeline. Discussion surfaced the need to strike a balance between innovation and risk-taking on the one hand and quality control on the other.

Answers to some of the key clarifying questions were also offered and include the following highlights: NEPA kicks in when the Notice of Intent (NOI) is published. This occurs after the assessment, as plan amendment or revision begins, and it is when cooperating agency status would be established. The committee was reminded that the rule includes no requirements for collaboration, but does include 5 or 6 around public engagement. With respect to costing out the directives, those decisions will be left to the RO. The directives try to protect that discretion, flexibility and adaptability. Noting the different approaches to addressing data gathering and data deficits for invertebrate species, questions about the most effective approach and whether the early adopters are sharing what they are learning were answered affirmatively- there are monthly early adopter dialogues, a support group to foster learning, and internal learning labs all designed to maximize lessons learned and exchange information on emergent best practices, etc.

Two additional areas for future committee consideration were also identified. With respect to gathering data, the USFS was encouraged to contact tribal officials to get information, especially in the initial phases of assessment. The science synthesis process was also flagged as one the committee might want to consider.

Emergent themes: A continuing theme or tension is about the desire for perfect information, and how that plays with respect to uncertainty in plan writing. Similarly, questions continue as to where within the planning process NEPA kicks in. Another is what was framed as a tension between “science” and public will- how will these interact in the decision making process that results in final plan revisions? Another area of concern continues to unfold around the promises of effective collaboration, and the time and resources it requires. The subtext of this conversation goes to the tradeoffs between efficacy and efficiency, etc.

Early Adopter Interaction: A number of important issues and questions were surfaced about the nature and purpose of committee interactions with early adopters including the balance between individuals pursuing their interests and their role as committee members. A suggestion to the committee was to view the early adopters as experimenters, rather than models. Experimentation should lead to prototypes that need to be tested. Taking up this framework, rigorous questioning of those prototypes is consistent with the committee charter. The committee was also reminded that they too are participants in an adaptive management process – and providing feedback that helps others avoid mistakes makes sense. Ultimately, the committee can only give good advice to the Forest Service by understanding what the early adopters are doing. Advice and opinions from individual committee members does not constitute advice from the committee; advice from the committee requires deliberation and consensus building. Individual reactions during the discussion with early adopters can easily be misconstrued as committee advice, so committee members have to be careful when expressing individual opinions. Individual committee members were selected because they have particular expertise and represent particular points of view and should not expect to have to step away from these while the committee meets with early adopters. However, while sitting

as a committee, a committee member's opinions and concerns related to any particular forest should be shared first with the committee and the DFO. Committee members are free to pursue their interests/concerns outside of the committee as individuals.

At the conclusion of the discussion, the committee agreed to affirm the statement in the draft communication protocol including the idea that committee's recommendations - made by consensus and after deliberation (even advice about early adopter actions) – is advice to the agency about the rule's implementation and not direct advice to any individual forest. The committee agreed that individuals can participate with early adopter forests, and are requested to bring any concerns they see to the DFO, and to share their observations with the committee. Finally, early adopters may request direct advice from the DFO who will bring the request to the committee.

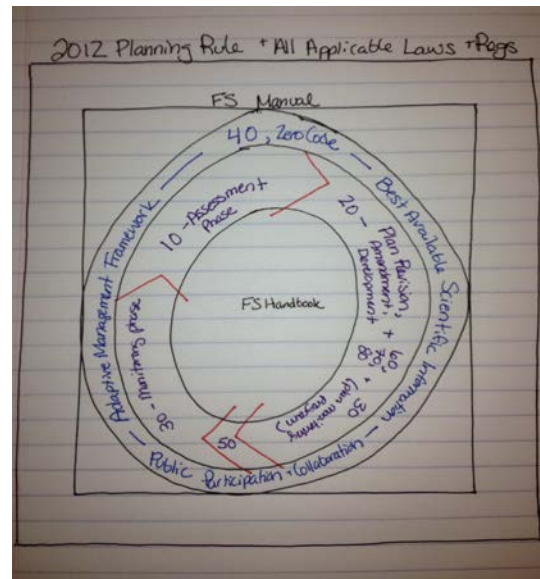
IV. Directives Overview – Big Picture – FS Regional and Washington Perspectives

Tony Tooke opened the conversation acknowledging the moment of getting the draft directives published as a key milestone. We are setting the stage for the way ahead, and this approach is unprecedented.

The overview is designed to give a high level view of each chapter, and to point out places in which the USFS team struggled to strike the right balance. Keys to this included that it was not the agency's goal in the directives to narrow where the rule gives discretion; implementability is key; establish some consistency – process and outcome – while retaining flexibility and technical agency guidance to agency personnel.

Chris French, Bob Davis, and Meryl Harrell then walked the committee through the overview. Highlights follow.

The directives are internal guidance to the agency about how the rule is implemented – written for the agency staff in their language. They seek consistency in process and outcome and integrate compliance with other laws by reference. The Manual (thin book) elaborates broad responsibilities and policies. It is applicable to 82 rule users. The manual connects the rule and handbook, and includes language to address the transition from proposed to final directives.



The handbook (thick one) sets out procedures. Zero Code contains definitions. Chapters 10-30 describe the adaptive framework. Chapter 40 includes a description of the four key elements to the process; adaptive framework; BASI; public participation and the role of collaboration, and tribal consultation.

Some of the challenges to writing chapter 40 relate to how to reflect the full spectrum of possibilities and how much to prescribe. The rule requires public participation. The foundation of the rule is these three things: transparency, meaningful and inclusive engagement, and the role of science. To address these dimensions, the directives reflect a set of principles and direction to help find the right balance points. Flexibility is found throughout, and importantly, the directives address inclusivity and diversity of participation. It is important to engage those who experience some barrier to participation and those who don't readily attend meetings.

To address the role of science, the directives reflect on the characteristics of quality information and attributes of best available scientific information. Attention is paid to data quality, and documenting what was used and how the information was applied. With respect to uncertainty, the goal is to describe areas of uncertainty and use the adaptive management framework to gain greater certainty as the plan is implemented.

Key challenges to drafting Chapter 10 – the Assessment Process- relate to how to create a rapid process, use existing information (including how to transparently address uncertainty and gaps), and use it to launch the rest of the process. There is no requirement to begin new studies – rather, the direction is to get the information that is available at the start to create a solid base of shared understanding. The section starts with the rule's language, identifies the 'why' and the general guidance before specifics. The chapter includes a tie-back to public participation and tribal consultation. Struggles with social science issues included the contribution of ecosystem services – in areas like this, determining the best available science is more difficult. This was noted as an area for potential committee engagement. USFS is eager to learn about committee's knowledge of innovations in this area, and suggest that scenario planning type exercises may be helpful.

Chapter 20 is the heart of the matter – defining how to build plan components. This covers plan content requirements and optional requirements; revising and amending plans. Accordingly, chapters 30-60-70-80 come in here, as does integration. Struggles in developing this chapter go to the paradox of the linear nature of this description and the non-linear reality of the work – this needs graphics for those aspects. The chapter includes lots of direction around integration – how best to describe and how to represent it visually. It also addresses fiscal capability. Funding to get the work done often only covers the core team – there is regional variation in budget that is reflected in the level of effort; this has to be balanced with other needs. Guidance for the committee as they begin to drill down into more detail in this chapter:

- Page 43 – rule requirements and what we mean by 'ecosystem integrity' and 'diversity', maintain and restore' – and recognizing when restoration is not possible (e.g. invasive species)
- Tie-back to coarse filter-fine filter – go back and look at species that are at risk – do the plan components take care of these or do you have to move to fine filter?
- Social and economic sustainability – are you considering what the plan influences or is influenced by?
- Page 53 – 219.8 (a) – Interdependence, broader landscape impacts on and impacts from
- Ecosystem services sections – solid direction for what all of the plan components should do – what is the intent – how are you building on the assessment
- Rule itself in the sustainability section and multiple use section jumped back and forth – think about these – e.g.

Chapters 30-60-70-80 happen in the process of implementing Chapter 20. Chapter 60 covers requirements under NFMA, suitable and not suitable for timber harvest, etc. and restoration results. Chapter 70 – Wilderness – seeks to modernize the process in favor of transparency and efficiency. The team considered whether eastern and western processes were needed and we went with one. It does not overrule the Idaho and Colorado roadless rules. Chapter 80 – Wild and Scenic was recently updated, and therefore does not reflect many changes.

Chapter 30 – Monitoring – is an important chapter. Monitoring should be designed to: measure and test effectiveness; identify change in conditions; and test assumptions or uncertainty identified throughout the process. Feedback loops are critical, as is work with partners. Monitoring should integrate across units and across the system. It must be transparent, while honoring protection of information related to sacred sites.

The chapter lists questions for the responsible officials, partners and those in collaboration. It addresses the purpose of focal species –to tell about management of the ecological conditions, not about other species. It utilizes a broader scale – to ensure that we are at the right scale for effective monitoring. Maintaining flexibility in approach is key to success. Reporting- which will occur every two years- serves as an effective tool for adaptive management, allowing planners to identify new information, ask whether that indicates a need for a change to a plan component or a process.

Chapter 50 – Objections- emphasizes the importance of fairness.

How does it all fit together?

- Chapter 40 talks about the intent in each phase – this is a useful place to look for context for chapter 20
- Chapter 30 also has context-setting statements
- Please don't skip over the text of the rule – it's in bold **36CFR291** –and it is repeated verbatim
- Definitions – hold on to those, because the definitions hold important content
- Plan development and plan revision are specified – remember that amendments are intentionally shorter and more flexible to allow for successful amendments

At the end of the assessment you have a report that supports plan development or revision. The assessment indicates gaps, uncertainties, areas where the rule requires new analysis – to address requirements and modernize the plan.

Developing plan components is expected to be iterative. This is one of the rule's strengths. Management areas and geographic areas describe how and where the plan components apply – some may be applied to a specific place or a series of places and designated areas – whether designated in the plan or by Congress or some other authority.

As discussed early on, monitoring for social and economic dimensions is an area ripe for committee consideration. There is a significant gap in the directives. A starting place for that conversation is at 219.13, #8: – eight things that the rule requires (e.g. multiple use). Additional monitoring is indicated in that same section in the paragraph that follows. As to the right level of direction- given the range of ways any particular unit could address and support social and economic benefits, traditional benefits, native benefits, drinking water and drought control, etc. it is clear that a “cookie cutter” approach will not work.

NRV – The directives indicate leeway to manage away from NRV when the natural range isn't the ideal form, in Chapter 20 (e.g. page 50 – see that NRV should be used “if appropriate” and there are exceptions – including socially unacceptable and not economically viable).

NEPA –it is clearly stated that compliance with NEPA and other laws is required – the rule requires it as well.

V. Working Groups

The working groups presented their work to date. The communications working group presented a set of protocols that were adopted by the group. The protocols that outline how outside presenters can speak to the committee (other than the public comment periods during the committee meetings) should be posted. For protocols, please see (xxx). Both the communications and the adaptive framework working group offered principles that the committee discussed and edited but did not finalize.

The collaboration working group presented an FAQ for the committee's consideration. Conversation confirmed that this is a useful tool, and once answers to the questions are developed, USFS should publish for public use. For draft FAQ, please see (xxx). The Social and Economic Analysis and Assessment (SEAA) working group presented a draft framework for a gap analysis. The committee agreed that both a gap analysis tool and draft SEAA framework, including standards and methodological considerations would be valuable tools. The committee encouraged the USFS to explore finding resources to commit to developing the gap analysis

V. Path Forward

The group agreed to a framework for finalizing recommendations on the directives, but requested sufficient time to review those before agreeing to the details of scheduling. Participants agreed to complete their individual review by 22 March, and attend a full committee call the following week to decide the detailed path forward. Tentative meeting dates are being explored for late June, and late August/early September to finalize recommendations on the directives. The committee agreed to make every effort to complete their directives review and recommendations in three meetings – May, June and August.

VI. Public Comment

Bob Maynard represents the Sealaska Corporation, which submitted a comment letter in July, 2012 to the committee. Sealaska Corporation is the largest non-federal landowner – adjacent to the Tongass National Forest, and they wish to emphasize the concern stated in their letter that there is no Alaska native or Alaska resident on the committee – please pay attention to Alaskan resident interests.

Bob Kay representing Recreation Aviation Foundation- There is too little mention of aviation in the draft directives and too little consideration of aviation questions in the planning processes – collaboration with Nez Perce is improving that. We have to be here – old planning rule not working for important infrastructure of airstrips in NFS. What I heard this afternoon from the two forests- easier to do their jobs if they had the directives in front of them. Draft directives still don't do what we need them to do.

Dave Sanchez- rancher in Chama and Pagosa Springs; welcomes us to R3. He discussed the importance of what the committee is doing- your decisions will impact New Mexicans – families that have been here for centuries using natural resources; decisions will impact economy of NM; we are dependent on land base. He expressed a grave concern that the rule and directives address the law- NEPA, MUSYA, changes to the Forest Service handbook and manual- grazing and forage in particular-new language doesn't address NEPA provisions. Be conscientious that hierarchy of requirements is reflected all the way down to the forest handbook. This is where we are having problems with the agency- it is not clear how agency needs to address the law.

Bryan Bird-Wild Earth Guardians – He has had the opportunity to work with lots of collaborative projects- CFRP, CFRLP. Comments on those: good and bad experiences. Good experiences because of forest service staff- very open to real honest collaboration and give and take that comes with it. Also there are some where the agency thinks collaboration ends at beginning of NEPA. This is a dangerous path to follow- when USFS pulls back because of FACA- not legitimate. One way to do this is for range of alternatives to be robust in collaborative nature, looking at wide range of alternatives. Concerns that planning rule might not result in strong standards at the forest level-is it enforceable; are there strong sideboards? Need standard and guidelines.

Rob Morrow- director of Recreational Aviation Foundation – Recreational users of forests, primary concern is access. Sees airstrips on forests like any other trailheads. To achieve goal of more distributed recreational opportunities, we encourage airstrips. Lifelong backpacker- learned to fly to get up high and solitude. Enjoyed working on original planning rule and looks forward to continuing collaboration.

Mark Spencer, Recreational Aviation Foundation, from Arizona....due to airstrips he can now be in national forests every weekend. It was because of airstrips and recreational aviationists that an historic ranch on public lands in Arizona was restored. The directives lack clear national direction and standards for airstrips – please address. Consider the fact that RAF provides a new pool of volunteers to the USFS.