

Appendix G – Alternative E

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This alternative was developed in response to concerns and suggestions for prescriptive monitoring and assessment questions and requirements to establish signals for each question to identify the need for plan amendment or revision. Additionally, this alternative responds to the desires of some people to see specific requirements for collaboration in the planning rule in order to ensure consistency and accountability across NFS units. This alternative consists of the proposed rule (Alternative A) with additional and replacement direction focused on prescriptive requirements for public notification at § 219. 4, assessment requirements at § 219.6, monitoring requirements at § 219.12, and public notification requirements at § 219.16.

Instead of repeating all of the rule text common to both this alternative and the proposed rule, the text of the additional and replacement direction is displayed in a side-by-side format to demonstrate how and where it differs from the proposed rule.

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§ 219.4 REQUIREMENTS FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.	
<p>(a) <i>Providing opportunities for participation.</i> The responsible official shall engage the public—including Tribes and Alaska Native Corporations, other Federal agencies, State and local governments, individuals, and public and private organizations or entities—early and throughout the planning process as required by this part, using collaborative processes where feasible and appropriate. When developing opportunities for public participation, the responsible official shall take into account the discrete and diverse roles, jurisdictions, responsibilities, and skills of interested and affected parties; the accessibility of the process, opportunities, and information; and the cost, time, and available staffing. The responsible official should be proactive and use contemporary</p>	<p><i>[This provision at § 219.4(a) is identical to Alternative A]</i></p>

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<p>tools, such as the internet, to engage the public, and should share information in an open way with interested parties.</p> <p>(1) <i>Scope, methods, and timing.</i> The responsible official shall provide opportunities for participating in the assessment process; developing a plan proposal, including the monitoring program; commenting on the proposal and the disclosure of its environmental impacts in accompanying NEPA documents; and reviewing the results of monitoring information. Subject to the notification requirements in § 219.16, the responsible official has the discretion to determine the scope, methods, forum, and timing of those opportunities.</p>	<p>(1) <i>Scope, methods, and timing for public participation in plan development and revisions.</i> Subject to § 219.16, the responsible official shall design and implement a public participation effort for plan development and revisions using, at a minimum, the following process –</p> <p>(i) Assess what collaborative resources are available for the planning process, considering resources both within and external to the Agency;</p> <p>(ii) Consider obtaining specialized assistance for the public participation process, using the resources identified in the assessment at § 219.4(a)(1)(i), as appropriate;</p> <p>(iii) Identify key stakeholders to involve in the public participation. Interview forest resource specialists and managers to help identify relevant stakeholder groups;</p> <p>(iv) Use personal knowledge and connections as well as traditional outreach methods to bring all needed stakeholders to the table;</p> <p>(v) Consult with the stakeholders to determine the best methods to use in the public participation process and to identify additional stakeholders that need to be involved;</p> <p>(vi) Working with the stakeholders identified at § 219.4(a)(1)(iii), identify the key areas of planning to be addressed through collaboration, establish clear objectives, roles and responsibilities for all participants in the land management planning process;</p>

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	<p>(vii) Hold at least one public meeting during each of the following plan revision phases: the development of the assessment that precedes the plan revision, the development of the proposed plan, the NEPA process to develop alternatives to the proposed plan, the comment period on the proposed plan and DEIS. Consider holding a “kickoff” public meeting to orient the stakeholders and forest service planning personnel;</p> <p>(viii) Initiate a collaborative group to meet regularly on the plan revision. If a collaborative group already exists on the forest, then the responsible official can use the existing collaborative group. The group may or may not be a formally chartered FACA group; and</p> <p>(ix) Develop a schedule of public participation activities to be held throughout the plan revision process and publicize the schedule widely on the unit website, with unit partners and through other relevant outreach methods.</p> <p>(2) <i>Scope, methods, and timing of public participation for plan amendments.</i> Subject to § 219.16, the responsible official has the discretion to determine the scope, methods, and timing of public participation opportunities for the development of plan amendments, taking into consideration the following—</p> <p>(i) diversity and spectrum of interests among potential participants;</p> <p>(ii) accessibility to process, discussion, and information;</p> <p>(iii) level of controversy and understanding of issues; and</p> <p>(iv) roles and responsibilities of the Forest</p>

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<p>(2) <i>Participation opportunities for individual members of the public and entities.</i> The responsible official shall encourage participation by interested individuals and entities, including those interested at the local, regional, and national levels.</p> <p>(3) <i>Participation opportunities for youth, low-income populations, and minority populations.</i> The responsible official shall encourage participation by youth, low-income populations, and minority populations.</p> <p>(4) <i>Participation opportunities for private landowners.</i> The responsible official shall encourage participation by private landowners whose lands are in, adjacent to, or otherwise affected by, or whose actions may impact, future management actions in the plan area.</p> <p>(5) <i>Consultation with federally recognized Indian Tribes and Alaska Native Corporations.</i> The Department recognizes the Federal Government’s trust responsibility for federally recognized Indian Tribes. The responsible official shall honor the government-to-government relationship between federally recognized Indian Tribes and the Federal government. The responsible official shall provide to federally recognized Indian Tribes and Alaska Native Corporations the opportunity to undertake consultation in accordance with Executive Order 13175 of November 6, 2000 and 25 U.S.C. 450 note.</p> <p>(6) <i>Participation opportunities for federally recognized Indian Tribes and Alaska Native Corporations.</i> The responsible official shall encourage participation in the planning process by</p>	<p>Service and non-agency participants.</p> <p><i>[The provisions at § 219.4(a)(2) through (8) are re-designated as (3) through (9) respectively but are otherwise identical to Alternative A]</i></p>

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<p>interested or affected federally recognized Indian Tribes or Alaska Native Corporations. The responsible official may participate in planning efforts of federally recognized Indian Tribes and Alaska Native Corporations, where practicable and appropriate.</p> <p><i>(7) Native knowledge, indigenous ecological knowledge, and land ethics.</i> As part of tribal participation and consultation as set forth in paragraphs (a)(5) and (6) of this section, the responsible official shall request information about native knowledge, land ethics, cultural issues, and sacred and culturally significant sites.</p> <p><i>(8) Participation opportunities for other Federal agencies, federally recognized Tribes, States, counties, and local governments.</i> The responsible official shall provide opportunities for other government agencies to participate in planning for NFS lands. Where appropriate, the responsible official shall encourage federally recognized Tribes, States, counties, and other local governments to seek cooperating agency status in the NEPA process for a plan development, amendment, or revision. The responsible official may participate in planning efforts of States, counties, local governments, and other Federal agencies, where practicable and appropriate.</p> <p><i>(b) Coordination with other public planning efforts.</i> (1) The responsible official shall coordinate land management planning with the equivalent and related planning efforts of federally recognized Indian Tribes, Alaska Native Corporations, other Federal agencies, and State and local governments, to the extent practicable and appropriate.</p> <p>(2) For plan development or revision, the</p>	<p><i>[Provisions at § 219.4(b) are identical to Alternative A]</i></p>

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<p>responsible official shall review the planning and land use policies of federally recognized Indian Tribes, Alaska Native Corporations, other Federal agencies, and State and local governments, where relevant to the plan area. The results of this review shall be displayed in the environmental impact statement for the plan (40 CFR 1502.16(c), 1506.2). The review shall include consideration of:</p> <p>(i) The objectives of federally recognized Indian Tribes, Alaska Native Corporations, other Federal agencies, and State and local governments, as expressed in their plans and policies;</p> <p>(ii) The compatibility and interrelated impacts of these plans and policies;</p> <p>(iii) Opportunities for the plan to address the impacts identified or contribute to joint objectives; and</p> <p>(iv) Opportunities to resolve or reduce conflicts, within the context of achieving the Forest Service desired conditions or objectives.</p> <p>(3) Nothing in this section should be read to indicate that the responsible official will seek to direct or control management of lands outside of the planning area, nor will the responsible official conform management to meet non-Forest Service objectives or policies.</p>	
<p>§ 219.6 ASSESSMENTS.</p>	
<p>Assessments may range from narrow in scope to comprehensive, depending on the issue or set of issues to be evaluated, and should consider relevant ecological, economic, and social conditions, trends, and sustainability within the context of the broader landscape. The responsible official</p>	<p><i>[Provisions at § 219.6 through (a)(5) are identical to Alternative A]</i></p>

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<p>has the discretion to determine the scope, scale, and timing of an assessment, subject to the requirements of this section.</p> <p><i>(a) Process for plan development or revision assessments.</i> One or more assessments must be conducted for the development of a new plan or for a plan revision. The responsible official shall:</p> <p>(1) Notify and encourage the public and appropriate Federal agencies, States, local governments, other entities, and scientists to participate in the assessment process (§§ 219.4 and 219.16).</p> <p>(2) Notify and encourage potentially interested or affected federally recognized Indian Tribes and Alaska Native Corporations to participate in the assessment process (§§ 219.4 and 219.16).</p> <p>(3) Coordinate with the regional forester, Agency staff from State and Private Forestry and Research and Development, and other governmental and non-governmental partners to consolidate existing information and leverage resources for additional information needs.</p> <p>(4) Document the assessment in a report or set of reports available to the public. Document in the report(s) how the relevant best available scientific information was taken into account (§ 219.3), and include the report(s) in the planning record (§ 219.14).</p> <p>(5) Identify in the report how a new plan should be proposed, or identify a potential need to change an existing plan, based on the assessment.</p> <p><i>(b) Content of assessments for plan development or revision.</i> In the assessment(s) for plan development or</p>	<p><i>(b) Content of assessments for plan development or revision.</i></p> <p>In the assessment(s) for plan development</p>

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<p>revision, the responsible official shall:</p> <p>(1) Identify and evaluate information needed to understand and assess existing and potential future conditions and stressors in order to inform and develop required plan components and other content in the plan (§ 219.7), including plan components for sustainability (§ 219.8), diversity of plant and animal communities (§ 219.9), multiple uses (§ 219.10), and timber requirements based on NFMA (§ 219.11).</p>	<p>or revision, the responsible official shall:</p> <p>(1) Identify existing conditions, past and projected trends, and possible scenarios at a scale appropriate to the roles and contributions of the planning unit to the larger geographic area, to develop plan components, as required by:</p> <p>(i) § 219.7, plan development or plan revision;</p> <p>(ii) § 219.8, sustainability including watershed elements; ecological variables such as structure, composition, processes, and connectivity that are needed to sustain healthy and resilient terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems; provision of ecosystem services including multiple uses such as recreation; contribution to local, regional and National social and economic systems; renewal and recovery of systems from disturbances; risks, stressors, and affects of invasive species; public safety; risks and uncertainties associated with climate change;</p> <p>(iii) § 219.9, diversity of plant and animal communities including status of plant and animal species, their communities; their capacity for resiliency; and ability to move across landscapes. For example, to comply with § 219.9, the assessment for a plan revision should consider the existing status, trends, and future possibilities of key ecological conditions affecting ecosystem diversity and species of conservation concern within the plan area focusing on threats and stressors that may affect ecological sustainability, such as development pressure, invasive species, or climate change; and</p> <p>(iv) § 219.11 Timber requirements based on NFMA, including cumulative effects over the plan area and indicators of soil</p>

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<p>discretion to determine the scope, scale, process, and content for the assessment depending on the issue or issues to be addressed.</p> <p>(2) When a plan amendment is made together with, and only applies to, a project or activity decision, the analysis prepared for the project or activity may serve as the documented need to change the plan.</p>	
<p>§ 219.10 MULTIPLE USES.</p>	
<p>In meeting the requirements of §§ 219.8 and 219.9, and within Forest Service authority, the capability of the plan area and the fiscal capability of the unit, the plan must provide for multiple uses, including ecosystem services, outdoor recreation, range, timber, watershed, wildlife and fish, as follows:</p> <p><i>(a) Integrated resource management.</i> When developing plan components for integrated resource management, to the extent relevant to the plan area and the public participation process and the requirements of §§ 219.7, 219.8, 219.9, and 219.11, the responsible official shall consider:</p> <p>(1) Aesthetic values, air quality, cultural and heritage resources, ecosystem services, fish and wildlife species, forage, geologic features, grazing and rangelands, habitat and habitat connectivity, recreational values and settings, riparian areas, scenery, soil, surface and subsurface water quality, timber, trails, vegetation, viewsheds, wilderness, and other relevant resources;</p> <p>(2) Renewable and nonrenewable energy and mineral resources;</p> <p>(3) Sustainable management of infrastructure, such as recreational</p>	<p><i>[Provisions at § 219.10 through (b)(1)(vi) are identical to Alternative A]</i></p>

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<p>facilities and transportation and utility corridors;</p> <p>(4) Opportunities to coordinate with neighboring landowners to link open spaces and take into account joint management objectives where feasible and appropriate;</p> <p>(5) Habitat conditions, subject to the requirements of § 219.9, for wildlife, fish, and plants commonly enjoyed and used by the public, such as species that are hunted, fished, trapped, gathered, observed, or needed for subsistence;</p> <p>(6) The landscape-scale context for management as identified in the assessment;</p> <p>(7) Land ownership and access patterns relative to the plan area;</p> <p>(8) Reasonably foreseeable risks to ecological, social, and economic sustainability; and</p> <p>(9) Potential impacts of climate and other system drivers, stressors and disturbance regimes, such as wildland fire, invasive species, and human-induced stressors, on the unit's resources (§ 219.8).</p> <p><i>(b) Requirements for plan components for a new plan or plan revision. (1) The plan components for a new plan or plan revision must provide for:</i></p> <p>(i) Sustainable recreation, considering opportunities and access for a range of uses. The plan should identify recreational settings and desired conditions for scenic landscape character.</p> <p>(ii) Protection of cultural and historic resources;</p>	

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<p>(iii) Management of areas of tribal importance;</p> <p>(iv) Protection of wilderness areas as well as the protection of recommended wilderness areas to protect the ecologic and social values and character for which they might be added to the National Wilderness System;</p> <p>(v) Protection of wild and scenic rivers as well as the protection of those rivers eligible for inclusion in the national wild and scenic river system to protect the values for which they might be included in the system until their suitability is determined; and</p> <p>(vi) Protection and appropriate management of other designated or recommended areas that exist in the plan area, including research natural areas.</p> <p>(2) Other plan components for integrated resource management to provide for multiple uses that should be included as necessary.</p>	<p>(2) Plan components for conservation education, volunteer, and partnership programs.</p> <p><i>[The provision at § 219.10(b)(2) would be redesignated § 219.10(b)(3)]</i></p>
<p>§ 219.12 MONITORING.</p>	
<p>(a) <i>Unit monitoring program.</i> (1) The responsible official shall develop a unit monitoring program for the plan area, and include it in the plan. The development of the monitoring program must be coordinated with the regional forester and Agency staff from State and Private Forestry, and Research and Development. Responsible officials for two or more administrative units may jointly develop their unit monitoring programs.</p>	<p><i>[Provisions at § 219.12(a)(1) through (4)(iii) are identical to Alternative A]</i></p>

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<p>(2) The unit monitoring program sets out the unit monitoring questions and associated indicators. Monitoring questions and associated indicators must be designed to inform the management of resources on the unit, including by testing relevant assumptions, tracking relevant changes, and measuring management effectiveness and progress toward achieving or maintaining desired conditions or objectives. Questions and indicators should be based on one or more desired conditions, objectives, or other plan component in the plan, but not every plan component needs to have a corresponding monitoring question.</p> <p>(3) The unit monitoring program should be coordinated and integrated with relevant broader-scale monitoring strategies (paragraph (b) of this section) to ensure that monitoring is complementary and efficient, and that information is gathered at scales appropriate to the monitoring questions.</p> <p>(4) Subject to the requirements of paragraph (a)(5) of this section, the responsible official has the discretion to set the scope and scale of the unit monitoring program, after considering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Information needs identified through the planning process as most critical for informed management of resources on the unit; (ii) Existing best available scientific information; and (iii) Financial and technical capabilities of the Agency. <p>(5) Each unit monitoring program must contain one or more monitoring questions or indicators addressing each of the</p>	

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<p>following:</p> <p>(i) The status of select watershed conditions.</p> <p>(ii) The status of select ecological conditions.</p> <p>(iii) The status of focal species;</p> <p>(iv) The status of visitor use and progress towards meeting recreational objectives.</p> <p>(v) Measurable changes on the unit related to climate change and other stressors on the unit;</p> <p>(vi) The carbon stored in above ground vegetation;</p>	<p>(i) The status of watershed conditions and watershed elements of § 219.8. How effective are management actions in moving the National Forest/Grassland toward improving watershed health?</p> <p>(ii) status of key ecological conditions affecting species of conservation concern and ecosystem diversity within each plan area focusing on threats and stressors that may affect ecological sustainability such as management activities, invasive species, or climate change;</p> <p>(A) The status of key ecological variables such as structure, composition, processes, and connectivity that are needed to sustain healthy and resilient terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems.</p> <p>(B) The status of recovery of threatened and endangered species dependent on the plan unit for movement across landscapes.</p> <p>(C) The status of recovery of threatened and endangered species on the plan unit.</p> <p>(iii) The status and trends of a small set of focal species selected by the responsible official based on plant and animal communities stated in § 219.9.</p> <p>(iv) Recreation user satisfaction and status and trend of recreation settings and opportunities provided by the NFS unit compared to Desired Conditions stated in the plan.</p> <p><i>[Provisions at § 219.12(a)(5)(v) through (4)(viii) are identical to Alternative A]</i></p>

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<p>(vii) The progress towards fulfilling the unit’s distinctive roles and contributions to ecologic, social, and economic conditions of the local area, region, and Nation.</p> <p>(viii) The effects of management systems to determine that they do not substantially and permanently impair the productivity of the land (16 U.S.C. 1604(g)(3)(C)).</p>	<p>(ix) The status and trends of vegetation diversity, including vegetation composition, structure, abundance, distribution, and successional processes contribute to the diversity of native plant and animal species in the plan area. How are management actions maintaining or making progress toward desired conditions for the key characteristics of vegetation in the plan area?</p> <p>(x) The status and trends of areas infested by aquatic and terrestrial invasive species on the unit’s plan area relative to the desired condition. How effective were our management activities including partnerships in preventing or controlling targeted invasive species?</p> <p>(xi) status and trends of outbreaks of native insects and pathogens on the National Forest/Grassland;</p> <p>(xii) goods and services provided by or derived from the NFS unit that contribute to sustaining economic systems. What are the status and trends of goods and services provided from the unit with regards to progress towards desired conditions?</p> <p>(xiii) public safety and environmental impacts of road and trail system on the NFS unit, including appropriate access, needs of adjacent landowners, public demand, and geological risks; and</p> <p>(A) How many miles of the designated</p>

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<p>(6) A range of monitoring techniques may be used to carry out the monitoring requirements in paragraph (a)(5) of this section.</p> <p>(7) This section does not apply to projects or activities; project and activity monitoring may be used to gather information, but monitoring is not a prerequisite for carrying out a project or activity.</p> <p>(b) <i>Broader-scale monitoring strategies.</i> (1) The regional forester shall develop a broader-scale monitoring strategy for unit monitoring questions that can best be answered at a geographic scale broader</p>	<p>roads and trails are maintained to standard?</p> <p>(B) Where is unauthorized use occurring on or off the road and trail system?</p> <p>(xiv) emerging risks and current uncertainties associated with climatic changes in the vicinity of the unit and neighboring units where species may need to migrate or shift to locations with conditions hospitable to continued viability.</p> <p>(8) The monitoring program must include questions and a description of periodic evaluations which enable the agency to evaluate adjustments of the monitoring program or plan content as appropriate to account for unanticipated changes in conditions, new information, or new policy.</p> <p>(9) Each monitoring question and its associated indicator will also be accompanied by a description of one or more signal points which are to be used by the responsible official to determine the need to take action(s) appropriate to the situation. Such as changing plan component(s), collecting additional information, or requesting new research.</p> <p><i>[The provisions at § 219.12(b) are identical to Alternative A]</i></p>

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<p>than one unit.</p> <p>(2) When developing a monitoring strategy, the regional forester shall coordinate with the relevant responsible officials, and Agency staff from State and Private Forestry and Research and Development, partners, and the public. Two or more regional foresters may jointly develop broader-scale monitoring strategies.</p> <p>(3) Each regional forester shall ensure that the broader-scale monitoring strategy is within the financial and technical capabilities of the region and complements other ongoing monitoring efforts.</p> <p>(4) Projects and activities may be carried out under plans developed, amended, or revised under this part before the regional forester has developed a broad scale monitoring strategy.</p> <p><i>(c) Timing and process for developing the unit monitoring program and broader-scale strategies.</i> (1) In the assessment phase, the responsible official shall work with the public to identify potential monitoring needs relevant to inform effective management (§ 219.6).</p> <p>(2) The responsible official shall develop the unit monitoring program as part of the planning process for a new plan development or plan revision. Where a unit’s monitoring program has been developed under the provisions of a prior planning regulation and the unit has not initiated plan revision, the responsible official shall change the unit monitoring program within 4 years of the effective date of this part, or as soon as practicable, to meet the requirements of this section.</p> <p>(3) The regional forester shall develop a</p>	<p><i>[The provisions at § 219.12(c) are identical to Alternative A]</i></p>

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<p>broader-scale monitoring strategy as soon as is practicable.</p> <p>(4) The responsible official and regional forester shall ensure that scientists are involved in the design and evaluation of unit and broad scale monitoring.</p> <p>(5) To the extent practicable, appropriate, and relevant to the monitoring questions in the program, unit monitoring programs and broader-scale strategies must be designed to take into account:</p> <p>(i) Existing national and regional inventory, monitoring, and research programs of the Agency, including from the NFS, State and Private Forestry, and Research and Development, and of other governmental and non-governmental parties;</p> <p>(ii) Opportunities to design and carry out multi-party monitoring with other Forest Service units, Federal, State or local government agencies, scientists, partners, and members of the public; and</p> <p>(iii) Opportunities to design and carry out monitoring with federally recognized Indian Tribes and Alaska Native Corporations.</p> <p><i>(d) Biennial evaluation of the monitoring information.</i> (1) The responsible official shall conduct a biennial evaluation of new information gathered through the unit monitoring program and relevant information from the broader-scale strategy, and shall issue a written report of the evaluation and make it available to the public. The evaluation must indicate whether a change to the plan, management activities, or monitoring program may be warranted based on the new information; whether a new assessment should be</p>	<p><i>[The provisions at § 219.12(d) are identical to Alternative A]</i></p>

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<p>conducted; or that no amendment, revision, or administrative change is needed.</p> <p>(i) The first monitoring evaluation for a plan or plan revision developed in accordance with this subpart must be completed no later than 2 years from the effective date of plan approval.</p> <p>(ii) Where the monitoring program developed under the provisions of a prior planning regulation has been changed to meet the requirements of paragraph (c)(2) of this section, the first monitoring evaluation must be completed no later than 2 years from the date the change takes effect.</p> <p>(iii) The monitoring evaluation report must describe how best available scientific information was taken into account (§ 219.3).</p> <p>(2) The monitoring evaluation report may be incorporated into other planning documents if the responsible official has initiated a plan revision or relevant amendment.</p> <p>(3) The monitoring evaluation report may be postponed for one year in case of exigencies, but notice of the postponement must be provided to the public prior to the date the report is due for that year (§ 219.16(c)(5)).</p> <p>(4) The monitoring evaluation report is not a decision document representing final agency action, and is not subject to the objection provisions of subpart B.</p>	<p>(e) <i>Periodic evaluation of monitoring programs and strategies.</i> The Chief shall establish standards to periodically evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of unit plan monitoring programs, broader-scale strategies, and associated monitoring</p>

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	<p>programs under control of the agency.</p> <p>These evaluations may be scheduled at the discretion of the responsible official and may be targeted to specific topics of concern or comprehensive evaluations. At least one evaluation of monitoring effectiveness must occur every 10 years. The responsible official should consider the following set of evaluation topics:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Ability of unit monitoring programs to meaningfully inform unit plan decisions. (2) Effectiveness of unit monitoring programs and broader-scale monitoring strategies to contribute information useful to assess cumulative effects analyses conducted in project NEPA. (3) Effectiveness of unit monitoring programs and broader-scale monitoring strategies to identify emerging risks to the ecological and social sustainability. (4) Effectiveness of monitoring programs and broader-scale monitoring strategies engage interested parties to meaningfully share resources, expertise, and encourage learning and continual improvement of people’s understanding of complex environmental and social systems.