

**Jefferson National Forest
Land and Resource Management Plan
(Forest Plan)**

**Amendment # 19
October 2002**

This amendment provides clarification of direction for the preparation of site-specific Biological Evaluations (BEs) including inventory requirements for Proposed, Endangered, Threatened, and Sensitive (PETS) species for the Jefferson National Forest to make the process of conducting BEs more efficient and consistent throughout the Southern Region of the Forest Service. This amendment changes portions of the Jefferson National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan that were implemented by Plan Amendment #4, (Exhibit F, - Record of Decision - Vegetation Management in the Appalachian Mountains) July 1989, as follows:

Change in wording – Final EIS, Vegetation Management in the Appalachian Mountains: The wording in Exhibit 1 below is found in both the Record of Decision (page A-1) and in a portion of one General Mitigation Measure (Vol. I, Chap. II.E.1.a(2) of the Vegetation Management Environmental Impact Statement in the Appalachian Mountains (VMEIS.) The wording in Exhibit 2, as stated in the Record of Decision and the Supplement to the Final Environmental Impact Statement for Vegetation Management in the Appalachian Mountains provides direction concerning requirements for conducting project level inventories for those activities covered under the VMEIS. The differences between the exhibits are shown in bold. Determination of when project-level inventory information should be gathered will be made based on the direction now contained in the Regional supplement to FSM 2672 (February 13, 2002.)

Exhibit 1. Previous Wording

“A biological evaluation of how a project may affect any species Federally listed as threatened, endangered, or proposed, or identified by the Forest Service as sensitive, is done as part of the site-specific environmental analysis. This evaluation considers all available inventories of threatened, endangered, proposed and sensitive species populations and their habitat for the proposed treatment area. **When adequate population inventory information is unavailable, it must be collected when the site has high potential for occupancy by a threatened, endangered, proposed, or sensitive species.**”

Exhibit 2. New Wording

“A biological evaluation of how a project may affect any species Federally listed as threatened, endangered, or proposed, or identified by the Forest Service as sensitive **shall** be done as part of the site-specific environmental analysis. This evaluation considers available **information on** threatened, endangered, proposed, and sensitive species populations and their habitat for the proposed treatment area.”

NFMA Significance:

This amendment is not a significant change in the Jefferson National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan. The determination that this is a non-significant amendment is made in accordance with the regulations in 16 USC 1604(f)(4), 36 CFR 219.10(f), and the Forest Service Manual 1922.5, Land and Resource Management Planning, Amendments. This plan amendment meets the criteria for a non-significant amendment because these changes will not “significantly alter the long-term relationship between levels of multiple-use goals and objectives originally projected... [or] have an important effect on the entire forest plan or affect resources throughout a large portion of the planning area during the planning period. (FSM 1922.52.)

**George Washington National Forest
Revised Land and Resource Management Plan
(Forest Plan)**

**Amendment # 9
October 2002**

This amendment provides clarification of direction for the preparation of site-specific Biological Evaluations (BEs) including inventory requirements for Proposed, Endangered, Threatened, and Sensitive (PETS) species for the George Washington National Forest to make the process of conducting BEs more efficient and consistent throughout the Southern Region of the Forest Service. This amendment replaces Plan Common Standard #240 (Plan, page 3-149) of the George Washington National Forest Revised Land and Resource Management Plan that were implemented by the Plan Revision, January, 1983, as follows:

Change in wording – Final EIS, Vegetation Management in the Appalachian Mountains: The wording in Exhibit 1 below is found in both the Record of Decision (page A-1) and in a portion of one General Mitigation Measure (Vol. I, Chap. II.E.1.a(2) of the Vegetation Management Environmental Impact Statement in the Appalachian Mountains (VMEIS.) The wording in Exhibit 2, as stated in the Record of Decision and the Supplement to the Final Environmental Impact Statement for Vegetation Management in the Appalachian Mountains provides direction concerning requirements for conducting project level inventories for those activities covered under the VMEIS. The differences between the exhibits are shown in bold. Determination of when project-level inventory information should be gathered will be made based on the direction now contained in the Regional supplement to FSM 2672 (February 13, 2002.)

Exhibit 1. Previous Wording

“A biological evaluation of how a project may affect any species Federally listed as threatened, endangered, or proposed, or identified by the Forest Service as sensitive, is done as part of the site-specific environmental analysis. This evaluation considers all available inventories of threatened, endangered, proposed and sensitive species populations and their habitat for the proposed treatment area. **When adequate population inventory information is unavailable, it must be collected when the site has high potential for occupancy by a threatened, endangered, proposed, or sensitive species.**”

Exhibit 2. New Wording

“A biological evaluation of how a project may affect any species Federally listed as threatened, endangered, or proposed, or identified by the Forest Service as sensitive **shall** be done as part of the site-specific environmental analysis. This evaluation considers available **information on** threatened, endangered, proposed, and sensitive species populations and their habitat for the proposed treatment area.”

The above clarification of the Vegetation Management EIS is also carried through into specific areas of the respective Forest Plans. In the case of the George Washington Plan, the following changes are hereby made through this amendment:

Change in wording – George Washington National Forest Revised Land and Resource Management Plan, page 1-2, last paragraph:

(Add bold print.)

“Final Environmental Impact Statement - Vegetation Management in the Appalachian Mountains (USDA Forest Service, Southern Region, July 1989) as supplemented (October, 2002.)”

Change in wording – George Washington National Forest Revised Land and Resource Management Plan, page 3-149, a portion of Common Standard 240.

(Delete the following)

...”When adequate inventory information is unavailable, it is to be obtained by on-site field surveys when the site has high potential for occupancy by a threatened, endangered, or sensitive species.”

Change in wording – George Washington National Forest Revised Land and Resource Management Plan, page 4-3, 4th paragraph:

(Add bold print)

“Final EIS on Vegetation Management in the Appalachian Mountains (1989) as supplemented (2002.)”

NFMA Significance:

This amendment is not a significant change in the George Washington National Forest Revised Land and Resource Management Plan. The determination that this is a non-significant amendment is made in accordance with the regulations in 16 USC 1604(f)(4), 36 CFR 219.10(f), and the Forest Service Manual 1922.5, Land and Resource Management Planning, Amendments. This plan amendment meets the criteria for a non-significant amendment because these changes will not “significantly alter the long-term relationship between levels of multiple-use goals and objectives originally projected... [or] have an important effect on the entire forest plan or affect resources throughout a large portion of the planning area during the planning period. (FSM 1922.52.)

**SPECIAL USES AND
ACCESS EASEMENTS**

235. Existing needed authorizations can continue. Authorizations that expire are reviewed for compliance with management area objectives prior to either extending or issuing a new authorization.

236. Each new request is evaluated on a case-by-case basis for consistency with management area objectives and public need.

237. Authorizations are not granted when suitable alternative facilities can be secured.

238. Expanded use of existing facilities is preferred over development of new facilities.

239. Recreation residences are not allowed.

**THREATENED,
ENDANGERED AND
SENSITIVE SPECIES**

240. A biological evaluation of how a project may affect any species Federally listed as threatened, endangered, or proposed, or identified by the Forest Service as sensitive shall be done as part of the site-specific environmental analysis. This evaluation considers available information on threatened, endangered, proposed, and sensitive species populations and their habitat for the proposed treatment area.

241. Requirements and measures for activities affecting threatened or endangered species are detailed in species recovery plans and FSH 2609.23R. Recovery plans have been prepared for the eastern cougar, Virginia northern flying squirrel, bald eagle, American peregrine falcon, shale barren rockcress, swamp pink, James spiny mussel, Indiana bat, and Virginia big-eared bat. A recovery plan is pending final approval for northeastern bulrush. A chapter in FSH 2609.23R has been prepared for the bald eagle.

242. If, either with or without informal consultation with the Fish and Wildlife Service, it is determined that a proposed project would not affect federal designated threatened or endangered species, the concurrence of the FWS is not required. If it is determined that a proposed project would have beneficial, insignificant or discountable effects to federal designated threatened or endangered species (the "not likely to adversely affect" determination under the Endangered Species Act), the concurrence of the FWS is required prior to making a project decision. If it is determined that a proposed project would have adverse effects to federal designated threatened or endangered species (the "may effect" determination under the ESA), formal consultation should be initiated and completed with the FWS prior to any decision to implement the project.

243. If it is determined that a project may have adverse effects to individual of a sensitive species, evaluate whether the overall species' survival or population viability on the planning unit, are at risk. Contact appropriate State agencies, Natural Heritage Programs, and other appropriate cooperators or species authorities to identify conservation measures that might be implemented. On the Forest it is recognized that individuals of a sensitive species may be affected but the goal is to prevent negative population trends that would result in Federal listing.

244. Stands that contain a red spruce component are managed to increase the red spruce component. In such an instance, the activities must comply with the recovery plan for the Virginia Northern flying squirrel.

245. The current list of Regional and Forest Sensitive Species is found in Appendix L of the Revised Plan. This list will be updated with additions and/or deletions annually.

246. Eagle nests are protected from disturbance with a minimum of a ½-mile buffer restricting management activity. Refer to the recovery plan for eagle for the specifics on the management in the ½-mile buffer.

**TIMBER
Suitability**

247. Any projects involving regeneration harvesting are evaluated to determine if the proposed harvest units are located on lands suitable for timber production as identified in the Revised Plan. This evaluation is documented in the project-level environmental analysis document with a finding of suitability incorporated into the decision document.

248. Any projects involving regeneration harvesting on lands identified as unsuitable for timber production in the Revised Plan are evaluated to determine that (1) such harvesting is necessary to protect or enhance multiple use values other than timber production and (2) such harvesting is consistent with the management direction for the appropriate management area. The decision document contains this finding.