



TONTO NATIONAL FOREST PLAN REVISION

Additional public meetings to be held in early 2008.



See the text of the new proposed rule and the draft environmental impact statement at: http://www.fs.fed.us/emc/nfma/2007_planning_r

For more information on all these topics, see:

Plan Revision on the Web:
<http://www.fs.fed.us/r3/tonto/plan-revision/index.shtml>

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FOREST PLAN REVISION CONTINUES

The Tonto National Forest was gaining speed with its management plan revision when on March 30, 2007, the 9th US District Court enjoined the Forest Service from using the 2005 planning rule. Shortly thereafter, the U.S. Forest Service instructed national forests in the process of revising their management plans to continue working on those elements that were not specific to the planning rule. For the Tonto this meant that we could continue with much of its ongoing efforts to prepare a comprehensive assessment: gathering and validating needed information and working with resource specialists.

On August 16, 2007, the Forest Service released a new proposed rule that is essentially the same as the original 2005 rule and has met the court’s requirement to remedy procedural deficiencies. The Tonto National Forest expects to hold additional public meetings in early 2008 to continue to identify what needs to change.

Outcomes of Public Meetings

The first two rounds of public meetings held in each of the six districts helped the Tonto planners start to identify what the forest’s stakeholders see as needed changes on the Tonto. These meetings are the beginning of a dialog we will continue over the next few years.

At the first round of public meetings, attendees were asked what they thought needed to change in the management of the Tonto National Forest. The responses

were varied and often complex. The planning team identified 25 main topics of concern. The four most frequently mentioned topics were: Forest Service processes, law enforcement, access – especially motorized travel access, and forest health and ecosystem function. Many, if not most, of the topics that people identified as needing change were things that would not be addressed in a forest plan, and many are beyond control of the Tonto National Forest or the Forest Service in general.

What’s Next?

The Tonto National Forest planning team is putting together a list of all the suggested changes identified by the public, other agencies, organizations, and specialists. The team will then determine which can be addressed through changes to the forest’s management plan. Once that list is completed, the team will again work with the public and other organizations to get more specific on what current conditions are related to that topic, how much and in what way changes can be made, and the means to get there – especially what activities the forest might permit or undertake to lead toward the desired changes. At future meetings, members of the public may be asked if they are willing and able to work on specific areas of review and analysis to answer those questions.