

2012 Planning Rule and Monitoring Requirements

The 2012 Planning Rule requires that each forest plan monitoring program must contain, or be revised to contain, by May 9, 2016, one or more monitoring questions and associated indicators addressing each of the following requirements from 36 CFR 219.12(a)(5):

1. The status of select watershed conditions.
2. The status of select ecological conditions including key characteristics of terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems.
3. The status of focal species to assess the ecological conditions required under 36 CFR 219.9.
4. The status of a select set of the ecological conditions required under 36 CFR 219.9 to contribute to the recovery of federally listed threatened and endangered species, conserve proposed and candidate species, and maintain a viable population of each species of conservation concern.
5. The status of visitor use, visitor satisfaction, and progress toward meeting recreation objectives.
6. Measurable changes on the plan area related to climate change and other stressors that may be affecting the plan area.
7. Progress toward meeting the desired conditions and objectives in the plan, including for providing multiple use opportunities.
8. The effects of each management system to determine that they do not substantially and permanently impair the productivity of the land (16 U.S.C. 1604(g)(3)(C)).

A proposed Administrative Change will update the Monitoring Plan to satisfy the requirements of the 2012 Planning Rule. Worksheets have been prepared that document the review of each of the required monitoring elements and are available on the Forest website at <http://www.fs.usda.gov/main/ouachita/landmanagement/planning> . Only minor changes will be necessary to meet the requirements of the 2012 Planning Rule.

The Regional Office is responsible for broad-scale monitoring that will include information on Social and Economic monitoring and Climate Change. Additional information from the R8 broad-scale monitoring strategy, when available, may be found at this website: <http://www.fs.usda.gov/main/r8/landmanagement/planning>. No changes are anticipated to the Forest's Monitoring Plan as a result of Regional Office broad-scale monitoring, although any conclusive results may be referenced in subsequent monitoring reports.

This Administrative Change will become effective after consideration of comments received during public review and upon the signature of the Forest Supervisor. Administrative changes are not subject to the objection process (36 CFR 219.50).

Should you have any comments or questions concerning this proposed change, please contact Alett Little, Forest Planner, at alittle@fs.fed.us or 501-321-5372. Comments will be accepted and considered for 30 days following the letter of notification.