

LEGAL NOTICE
OPPORTUNITY TO COMMENT on the FISHLAKE NATIONAL FOREST'S LRMP MONITORING PROGRAM MODIFICATION

USDA Forest Service
Fishlake National Forest
Richfield, Utah

The Fishlake National Forest intends to modify its forest plan monitoring program to comply with the 2012 planning rule. We are interested in your comments regarding the proposed modification.

The 2012 planning rule, which is found in the Code of Federal Regulations at 36 CFR 219, guides forest plan monitoring across the Forest Service. All forest plan monitoring programs in the Intermountain Region must conform with the requirements of the rule by May 9, 2016. The Fishlake National Forest's strategy for conforming with the current rule focuses on addressing the purpose of the forest plan monitoring program as described at 36 CFR 219(a)(1). This includes the need for collecting monitoring information that enables the responsible official to determine whether a change in plan components in the plan area may be needed.

The forest plan monitoring program sets out the plan monitoring questions and associated indicators. Monitoring questions and associated indicators must be designed to inform the managers of the Fishlake of resources on the plan area, including by testing relevant assumptions, tracking relevant changes, and measuring management effectiveness and progress toward achieving or maintaining the plan's desired conditions or objectives. Questions and indicators should be based on one or more desired conditions or objectives, or other components in the plan, but not every plan component needs to have a corresponding monitoring question.

Under the 2012 planning rule, the forest plan monitoring program will consist only of monitoring questions and associated indicators to evaluate if management is effective in maintaining or achieving progress toward desired conditions and objectives for the plan area. Additional information for implementing the forest plan monitoring programs may be documented in a separate monitoring guide that would, for example, identify methods for data collection, data storage, and responsibilities for managing monitoring information. The monitoring guide will not be part of the forest plan and may be changed as needed.

The forest plan monitoring information will be compiled every two years. The resulting monitoring evaluation report will be used to inform adaptive management of the plan area. The publication date of the first biennial monitoring evaluation report is expected to be no later than two years from the date of approval of the administrative modification of the current forest plan monitoring program.

Current Forest Plan Monitoring Program. The current monitoring and evaluation program for the Fishlake National Forest was developed to provide feedback to the Forest Supervisor regarding plan implementation. The current monitoring program is composed of eight components, including the activity to be monitored, monitoring techniques, measurement frequency, etc. The current Fishlake forest plan monitoring program can be found on our website. See the link, below.

Modifications to the Forest Plan Monitoring Program. An interdisciplinary team from the Fishlake National Forest has developed a modified plan monitoring program for the forest. It is designed to meet the requirements of the 2012 planning rule. It can also be viewed on our website.

New Information and Approval Framework. This modification to the forest plan monitoring program is being conducted under the administrative change procedures at 36 CFR 219.13(c). The public is provided an opportunity to comment on the intended modifications. During this comment process, you may suggest changes to the proposed language or provide additional information to the Fishlake National Forest.

How Comments Will Be Used. The Forest Supervisor, Fishlake National Forest, will review all public comments and determine whether they provide information to help the forest bring its current forest plan monitoring program into compliance with the 2012 planning rule. The Forest Supervisor will work with the interdisciplinary team to determine which elements will be included in the forest plan monitoring program and which elements will be removed. Finally, the Forest Supervisor will provide additional public notice of approval of the administrative changes that modify the forest plan monitoring program.

How You Can Comment. This notice begins the period for public participation in this process and it is important that anyone who is interested in it participate by providing comments for the Forest Supervisor's consideration. It is the responsibility of persons providing comments to submit them by the end of the 30-day comment period. You may hand-deliver your comments between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, excluding federal holidays, or mail them to:

Mel Bolling
Forest Supervisor
Fishlake National Forest
115 East 900 North
Richfield, Utah 84701

Electronic comments must be submitted in a format such as an email message or word document to comments-intermtn-fishlake@fs.fed.us. Please refer to the "proposed forest plan monitoring modification" in the subject of your email.

Information on the Fishlake's LRMP monitoring plan modifications is available at the Fishlake National Forest's website:

<http://www.fs.usda.gov/fishlake/>

If you have any questions please contact Dan Child at dchild@fs.fed.us. Thank you for your interest in the management of the Fishlake National Forest.