



File Code: 1920
Date: March 21, 2016

Dear Interested Party,

The San Juan National Forest is seeking comments as we transition our Monitoring Plan to be consistent with the requirements of the 2012 National Forest System Land Management Planning Rule (2012 Planning Rule). This monitoring transition affects *Chapter Four: Monitoring Plans* of the 2013 San Juan National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan).

The 2012 Planning Rule requires all National Forests to update their respective monitoring plans by May 9, 2016 and to consider public comment on the proposed changes. Accordingly, a 30-day solicitation for public comments for the San Juan National Forest's proposed Monitoring Plan will begin on Tuesday, March 22, and end on Friday, April 22, 2016. The proposed Monitoring Plan and supporting information can be found at:

San Juan National Forest proposed Monitoring Plan:

<http://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/sanjuan/landmanagement/planning/?cid=stelprdb5432707>

2012 Planning Rule:

<http://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/planningrule/home/?cid=stelprdb5359471>

The modifications to the Monitoring Plan are being conducted under the administrative change procedures at 36 CFR 219.13(c), and are not subject to appeal, objection, or other administrative review.

The 2012 Planning Rule requires that monitoring items appear in the form of a question and that monitoring indicators are developed to address each question posed. Monitoring items should incorporate best available scientific information, but need to remain within the fiscal and technical capabilities of the affected National Forest. The Planning Rule also requires that forest plan monitoring be reported biennially (every two years), starting from the date of the monitoring plan transition.

Questions and indicators contained in the San Juan National Forest's proposed Monitoring Plan were developed to inform the management of resources by 1) testing relevant assumptions; 2) tracking relevant changes; and 3) measuring management effectiveness and progress toward achieving or maintaining the desired conditions or objectives in the Forest Plan. Monitoring questions and indicators were also developed to address the eight monitoring categories outlined in the 2012 Planning Rule at 36 CFR 219.12(a)(5).

As we developed the proposed Monitoring Plan, we reevaluated existing monitoring items contained in the Forest Plan and considered new items that more effectively address the Forest Plan's desired conditions and objectives. Several existing monitoring items are being recommended for removal because they are ineffective or too expensive to consistently implement. Some monitoring items have been retained with modification and others are newly



added with the goal of more accurately and efficiently monitoring changes to National Forest System lands within the San Juan National Forest.

Your comments on the proposed Monitoring Plan are very important and will help guide how future monitoring occurs on the San Juan National Forest. As the responsible official, I will review your comments on the proposed plan and any new information that you may present. After reviewing and considering public comment, I will document my rationale for the final Monitoring Plan in a letter that will be posted on the San Juan National Forest's website at the location listed above.

Comments may be mailed or hand-delivered between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, excluding federal holidays, to:

Forest Supervisor
San Juan National Forest
15 Burnett Court
Durango, CO 82301

Electronic comments must be submitted to mblambert@fs.fed.us. Please include "Proposed Monitoring Transition" in the subject of your email.

For more information regarding the monitoring transition effort, please contact Mark Lambert (mblambert@fs.fed.us; 970-385-1240) or Cara Gildar (cngildar@fs.fed.us; 970-882-6854). Thank you for your interest in the management of the San Juan National Forest.

Sincerely,



KARA L. CHADWICK
Forest Supervisor