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**File Code:** 1900**Date:** February 26, 2016**Route To:****Subject:** Monitoring Transition Letter**To:** Interested Citizens

The Gifford Pinchot National Forest has reviewed the existing Gifford Pinchot Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan) monitoring program to determine what modifications were needed in order to conform to the new monitoring requirements outlined in the 2012 Planning Rule (36 CFR 219.12(c)(1)). The new planning rule will guide Forest Plan revisions across the country. While some forests in the Pacific Northwest Region have begun revision, a revision date has not yet been scheduled for the Gifford Pinchot National Forest. In the meantime the 2012 planning regulations require that all National Forests revise their Forest Plan monitoring program by May 9, 2016 to be consistent with the new Planning Rule's monitoring requirements.

In Fiscal Year 2016 we will complete a Forest Plan monitoring report using the new monitoring questions and indicators. We invite you to comment on these proposed administrative changes and the specific monitoring questions and indicators contained in the monitoring program found at [http://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE\\_DOCUMENTS/fseprd492565.pdf](http://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/fseprd492565.pdf).

The purpose of the Forest Plan is to protect ecosystem resources and provide the sustained production of goods and services for the benefit of the American people; monitoring is done to ensure the Forest Plan is effective in providing for these objectives. Monitoring is continuous and provides feedback for the planning cycle by testing relevant assumptions, tracking relevant conditions over time, and measuring management effectiveness (36 CFR 219.12). Regular monitoring reports summarize the Forest's monitoring activities and ensure that the Forest Plan is implemented as intended, determines whether the plan is achieving its intended objectives, and provides information needed to improve the plan.

The Forest's new Forest Plan monitoring program must contain one or more monitoring questions and associated indicators addressing each of the monitoring requirements. The monitoring questions are tied to specific Forest Plan components, which include desired future conditions, plan objectives, and standards and guidelines. They must focus on providing the information necessary to evaluate whether Forest Plan components are effective and appropriate, and whether management is being effective in maintaining or achieving progress toward the desired conditions and objectives for the Forest. The monitoring questions in the Forest Plan were used as a starting point for developing the new Forest Plan monitoring program. Indicators are quantitative or qualitative variables that can be measured or described and, when observed periodically, show trends in conditions that are relevant to the associated monitoring questions.



We appreciate your input on the modified monitoring program. Although this is not a conventional scoping period, we would like your comments by March 25, 2016. Comments can be submitted electronically to [comments-pacificnorthwest-giffordpinchot@fs.fed.us](mailto:comments-pacificnorthwest-giffordpinchot@fs.fed.us) or you may send written comments to Brittany Zapata, Monitoring Coordinator, 10600 NE 51<sup>st</sup> Circle, Vancouver, WA. 98682.

Thank you for your interest in the Gifford Pinchot National Forest.

*/s/Angela Elam (for)*  
GINA OWENS  
Forest Supervisor

cc: Dave Olson, Brittany Zapata, Mailroom R6 Gifford Pinchot