



File Code: 1900
Date: August 25, 2016

Dear Interested Party:

The Bridger-Teton National Forest intends to modify the monitoring program contained in its 1990 Land and Resource Management Plan ("Forest Plan") to comply with the Forest Service's 2012 Planning Rule. 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. We would like to hear your comments and concerns about the proposed modifications to the monitoring program. The proposed modification is attached.

The proposal focuses on addressing the purpose of the forest plan monitoring program as described in 36 CFR 219.12(a)(1), which includes the need for monitoring information that enables the responsible official to determine if a change in plan components may be needed.

In addition, each forest plan monitoring program must contain one or more monitoring questions and associated indicators addressing each of the following eight requirements, which are noted at 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. (At this time, species of conservation concern have not been identified for the Bridger-Teton National Forest, therefore the forest plan monitoring programs will not address species of conservation concern.)
5. The status of visitor use, visitor satisfaction, and progress toward meeting recreation objectives.
6. Measurable changes on the forest 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)).

We propose to replace entirely the monitoring elements found in the current Forest Plan monitoring program. The monitoring plan that will be replaced, along with the currently proposed replacement, can be found at:

<http://www.fs.usda.gov/main/btnf/landmanagement/planning>

Following the 2012 Planning Rule, the proposed Forest Plan monitoring program consists of monitoring questions and associated indicators in order to evaluate if plan components are



effective and appropriate and if management is effective in maintaining or achieving progress toward desired conditions and objectives. Specific methodologies for monitoring the indicators will be contained in a monitoring guide that is not a formal part of the Forest Plan.

The Forest Plan monitoring program focuses on monitoring questions for the individual forest plan. The regional forester shall develop a broader-scale monitoring strategy for forest plan monitoring questions that can be best answered at a geographic scale broader than one plan area.

Approval Framework

The modifications to the Forest Plan monitoring programs are being conducted under the administrative change procedures of 36 CFR 219.13(c). The public is provided an opportunity to provide comments on the proposed modifications.

As the responsible official for this proposal, I will review public comments and work with the interdisciplinary team to determine if any changes will be made to the proposed monitoring program. I will then notify the public of my final approval of the administrative change to modify the Forest Plan monitoring programs.

How You Can Comment

This letter begins the period for public participation in this process and it is important that anyone who is interested in this process participate by providing comment for my consideration. It is the responsibility of persons providing comments to submit them by the end of the 30-day comment period, Sept. 24, 2016. You may mail or hand-deliver your comments between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, excluding federal holidays, or mail them to:

Patricia O' Connor
Forest Supervisor
340 North Cache
P.O. Box 1888
Jackson, WY 83001

Electronic comments must be submitted in a format such as an email message, rich text format (.rtt) or Word (.doc) to comments-intermntn-bridger-teton@fs.fed.us. Please refer to the "Plan Monitoring Modifications" in the subject line of your email.

For more information about this project, please contact John Kuzloski (jkuzloski@fs.fed.us or (307) 739-5568). Thank you for your interest in the management of the Bridger-Teton National Forest.

Sincerely,



PATRICIA M O'CONNOR
Forest Supervisor