

Forest Plan Revision

Intermountain Region Newsletter

October 2016



Introduction

Every forest in the National Forest System (NFS) operates under a land management plan. Known as forest plans, most were developed in the early to mid-1980s after the creation of the National Forest Management Act of 1976 (NFMA). Requirements for forest land management planning are provided for in federal regulation, referred to as the "Planning Rule". Currently, the USFS initiates plan revisions under the direction of the 2012 Planning Rule (36 CFR 219).

The Intermountain Region has established a goal for each national forest in the region to complete their respective plan revisions within four years of initiation.



The Regional Office and individual forests have been undergoing activities to implement the Intermountain Region Forest Planning Strategy and initiate the first phase of plan revision referred to as the Assessment Phase. Efforts with the Ashley and Manti-La Sal National Forests began in fiscal year 2016. The Salmon-Challis National Forest begins in fiscal year 2017. Information on Forest-specific activities for these "first adopters" are provided ahead.

4-Year Revision Process Major Milestones

YEAR 1: Assessment

- Communication Strategy
- Collaboration Strategy
- Cooperating Agency MOUs
- Species of Conservation Concern List
- Notice of Initiation for Assessment
- Potential Wilderness Inventory & Evaluation
- Assessment of Resource Conditions and Trends

YEAR 2 & 3: Plan Development & Environmental Impact Statement

- Preliminary Need for Change
- Notice of Intent to Prepare EIS
- Draft Forest Plan & Alternatives
- Draft EIS
- Final EIS, Draft Record of Decision

YEAR 4: Decision

- Objection Filing Period
- Objection Resolution Process
- Final Record of Decision
- Final Forest Plan

Ashley National Forest

Ongoing Tasks and Accomplishments

- Reviewing first and drafts of specialist reports for assessment; second draft due 9/30/16
- Working with sociologist and economist via contracts/task orders prepared by Regional Office
- Collecting and reviewing public input on draft wilderness inventory
- Preparing additional online resources for public involvement: wilderness story map using talking points/collaborative mapping tool; story map for process overview; Facebook page
- Discussing potential additions to Species Conservation Concern (SCC) list with Regional Office staff and discussing a strategy for fire
- Second Cooperating Agency meeting 9/7/16: briefing on recent public meetings, discuss data sharing and status of assessment, and develop next steps
- Provided employee updates through SharePoint and meetings and visited all Districts in August
- Building & refining mailing list of stakeholders
- Developing Forest-level communication strategy & collaboration strategy
- Scheduled a meeting with Ute Tribe
- New Writer/Editor Team Leader Outreach



Public Engagement:

5 meetings - July 2016: provide revision process overview, develop contacts, collect info on Forest use & trends, gather relevant data for assessment

5 meetings - August 2016: provide information on the wilderness evaluation process, invite input on draft inventory; also invite public input on draft species of conservation concern list

Each round included meetings in Green River, WY; Manila, Vernal, Duchesne and Salt Lake City, UT

What's Next:

- Prepare Draft Assessment from specialist reports *October 2016*
- Internal review of assessment (including cooperating agencies) *November 2016*
- Public review of draft assessment *January 2017*
- Finalize wilderness inventory, prepare draft evaluation *Public Review December 2016-January 2016*
- Transition to new Forest Supervisor & Revision Team Leader *December 2016-January 2016*
- Host workshops for public on "hot topics"
- Begin to identify topics for Need for Change

Manti-La Sal National Forest

Ongoing Tasks and Accomplishments

Local, County, State Engagement

May-Sept: Met with all 10 counties near the Forest, Utah State Legislature, State land management and resource agencies, and US Congressional representatives

Aug-Sept: Invited 27 local, state, federal, and tribal entities to be Cooperating Agencies; 11 MOUs signed, as of late September.

Tribal Engagement

May-June: Met with Navajo and Ute Indian tribes

Sept: Hosted plan revision table at Navajo fair; presented plan revision briefing at Utah State Native American Conference

Public Engagement

July-Aug: Held 6 public meetings to kick off plan revision; published comprehensive report detailing public comments and questions received at these meetings

Sept: Held 8 public meetings, focusing on the Wilderness Evaluation process, Species of Conservation Concern (SCC), and collecting public input for the Assessment

June-July: Published Forest Plan Revision Collaboration Strategy and Communication Plan

June-Aug: Rolled out two external webpages (StoryMap and Manti-La Sal National Forest Plan Revision webpage)

July: Published Notice Of Intent in Federal Register on July 29

Internal Activities

July: Regional Office visit to close out pre-Assessment Phase

Aug: Began holding Interdisciplinary Team meetings

Aug: Produced SCC process and criteria flowcharts

Sept: NEPA Service Interdisciplinary Team training

Public Engagement Opportunities and Goals

Wilderness Planning Process

Species of conservation concern (SCC)

Wild and Scenic River Process

Riparian/groundwater dependent ecosystems

Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) Planning process flowchart

Lessons learned from early/mid Forests adopters

Enterprise teams-social/economics, air quality, writer/editor and soil/hydrology in Fall

Terrestrial condition assessment (TCA) team

WO looking for ways to streamline documentation



What's Next:

Internal Activities

Ongoing: Review and respond to Regional Office input on Species of conservation concern lists

Oct: Interdisciplinary Team to complete draft documents outlining conditions of stressors/drivers

Oct: Initiate Wilderness Evaluation

Fall: Initiate Wild and Scenic River eligibility

Oct: Climate Change Interdisciplinary Team workshop

Oct-Dec: Review other agency land management plans; complete remaining Assessment documents

Dec-Jan: Compile Assessment Report for Regional Office review

Local, County State Engagement

Oct-Nov: Continue to set up Cooperating Agency memorandums of understanding

Tribal engagement

Oct-Dec: Meetings with Tribes

Public Meetings

Oct: Cooperating Agency meetings with Interdisciplinary Team

Nov: Public Workshop addressing Wilderness, Species of conservation concern, and Assessment

Public Engagement

Oct-Dec: Outreach to youth and underserved groups

Oct: Publish post-September open house report documenting public input

Salmon-Challis National Forest



Ongoing Tasks and Recent Accomplishments

- Ongoing communications with Salmon Valley Stewardship, they are facilitating Public Lands Planning Meetings
- Regional Office Staff calls
- May Incident Action Plan workshops participation
- Developing a plan for the Assessments needed (September-October)
- Agreement for Success ready to finalize.
- Wilderness inventory and collaboration strategy draft
- Forest-level communication strategy collaboration strategy and tools
 - Collaboration Specialist Arrival
 - SharePoint creation
 - External page template using
 - Waiting for R4 Communication Strategy to tier to Forest Plan Revision

- Resource Specialists are working closely with Regional Office contacts providing input to assessment and summary document templates

- Working with National Forest Foundation a Collaborative Assessment of the Salmon and Challis Communities. Final Report was presented to Forest Supervisor and Deputy Forest Supervisor on September 18.

What's Next:

- Team Lead & Collaborative Specialist arrive *October 3*
- Establish and finalize detailed timeline *October 1*
- Continue discussions with Lemhi and Custer Counties
- Forest Plan Revision Kick-Off Session *October 31-November 1*
- Attend Leaders as Conveners *November 29-December 1*
- Notice of Initiation for Assessment *December 2016*
- Public meetings explaining revision process and invite input on assessment *December 2016*
- Public meetings on wilderness process, invite comments on draft inventory *December 2016*

Public Involvement Opportunities and Goals:

- Overview of revision and how to participate
- Content and data sources for assessment
- Draft wilderness inventory
- Draft resource condition & trend assessment
- Draft wilderness evaluation
- Preliminary need for change, issues for EIS
- Development of draft plan and alternatives
- Draft EIS comment period
- Draft decision & objection period

Forest Contact Information

SCHEDULE

2016: **ASHLEY & MANTI-LA SAL**

2017: **SALMON-CHALLIS**

2018: **BRIDGER-TETON & DIXIE**

2020: **FISHLAKE** 2021: **HUMBOLDT-TOIYABE**

Forests currently going through the Forest Plan Revision Process:

Manti-La Sal National Forest

CORE TEAM:

Plan Revision Team Leader: Tami Conner Partnership
 Coordinator: Blake Bassett
 Resource Information Specialist (GIS): Theresa Nallick
 Wildlife Biologist: Tiffany Cummins
Forest Supervisor - Mark Pentecost 435-636-3536
www.fs.usda.gov/mantilasal

Ashley National Forest

CORE TEAM:

Planning Team Lead: Kathy Paulin 435-781-5160 Collaboration
 Specialist: Cathleen Neelan 435-781-5120 GIS Support: Carl
 Owens 435-790-7026
 Writer/Editor: vacant; using TEAMS in interim
Forest Supervisor - Jeff Schramm 435-781-5101
www.fs.usda.gov/ashley

Salmon-Challis National Forest

CORE TEAM:

Planning Team Lead: Josh Milligan 208-756-5560
 Forest NEPA Specialist: Jeff Huntzman 208-756-5246
 Collaboration Specialist: Gina Knudson 208-756-5551
Forest Supervisor - Chuck Mark 208-756-5111
www.fs.usda.gov/scnf

Future Forests Scheduled for Plan Revision:

BRIDGER-TETON NATIONAL FOREST

Forest Supervisor - Tricia O'Connor
 307-739-5511
www.fs.usda.gov/btnf

FISHLAKE NATIONAL FOREST

Forest Supervisor - Mel Bolling
 435-896-1001
www.fs.usda.gov/fishlake

DIXIE NATIONAL FOREST

Forest Supervisor - Angelita Bullets
 435-865-3701
www.fs.usda.gov/dixie

HUMBOLDT-TOIYABE NATIONAL FOREST

Forest Supervisor - Bill Dunkelberger
 775-355-5310
www.fs.usda.gov/htnf

*USDA is an equal opportunity
 provider and employer*
www.fs.fed.us

