The National Forest Management Act (NFMA) of 1976 requires an analysis of National Forest lands to examine their suitability for sustained yield timber production (Office of the Federal Register, 1994). The Act also specifically defines these terms. These definitions are as follows:

Suitability - The appropriateness of applying certain resource management practices to a particular area of land, as determined by an analysis of economic and environmental consequences and the alternative uses foregone. A unit of land may be suitable for a variety of individual or combined management practices.

Sustained yield - The achievement and maintenance in perpetuity of a high-level annual or regular periodic output of the various renewable resources of the National Forest System without impairment of the productivity of land.