



## Summary of Public Comments and Public Involvement

We would like to take this opportunity to provide you with a brief summary of where we've been and where we're heading in regards to how you've been involved, how we're using your comments, and how we will continue to involve you and utilize your comments in developing our revised Forest Plans.

From April 30, 2002 to May 31, 2004, we had extensive involvement from many of you, through comments that were submitted during the scoping process and through the workgroups work on Geographic Area Desired Conditions. The Revision Team carefully reviewed all of the public comments and workgroup input, summarized and considered it in development of components of the draft Forest Plans. The review of all public input has resulted in many products, including:

- What We Heard From Workgroups- comments that focused on Desired Condition (attached to this page)
- Scoping Comment Summary (Scoping Content Analysis and Summary Document – at [www.fs.fed.us/kipz](http://www.fs.fed.us/kipz))
- Complete Summary of Workgroup comments (available upon request)

Your input validated the seven revision topics identified in the Analysis of the Management Situation (AMS), and provided information for desired conditions and other components of the Forest Plan. The attached document is a summary, which reflects workgroup and other public comments that were specific to Desired Conditions on each Forest and/or Geographic Area. As part of the Forest Plan components, a summary of our public involvement activities, as well as how the team and the decision-makers considered these comments will be developed.

On May 12, 2005, our planning process changed when the Regional Forester made a decision for our two Forests to use the new 2005 Planning Rule. What didn't change is that all of your comments and hard work by the workgroups over the past two years is still helpful to us in developing the components of the revised Forest Plans. Workgroup input, as well as public, agency, and tribal comments, will continue to be used by the Forest Supervisors and the KIPZ team to build and refine the following plan new components:

- Desired Conditions
- Strategy, which includes the Objectives
- Design Criteria, which includes the Guidelines
- Special areas and Suitable Uses

We cannot thank you, the public, enough for your extensive participation in making the past efforts a wonderful example of collaboration. In fact, the willingness of all participants (workgroups, public and the KIPZ Team) to be communicative, responsive, and to promote an active exchange of information, desires, and ideas has brought us to these meetings where we can start talking about the Starting Option map. We hope you will continue to work with us!



## DESIRED CONDITIONS SUMMARY

### ST. JOE GEOGRAPHIC AREA WORKGROUP

From August 2003 through May 2004, there were Workgroup meetings in which people discussed their Desired Conditions for a specific Geographic Area or the Forest. The attached Summary:

- **ONLY** reflects the workgroup comments and letters received during the scoping period that were specific to Desired Conditions on each Forest and/or Geographic Area.
- Is **NOT** a draft of the Desired Condition statements for the revised Forest Plans. This Summary is one source of information the team is using to write the Desired Conditions, both at the Forest and Geographic Area levels. We are using other information to help write the Desired Conditions (ie. Starting Option map after the public has submitted changes; specialists on-the-ground knowledge; and laws, regulations and policies we must adhere to)
- Is **one piece** of our Content Analysis of the scoping and workgroup comments. Some of the comments submitted during the Workgroup meetings and public comment process that are not addressed in the attached summary have been addressed in one or more of the following ways:
  - Incorporated into the following management direction areas: goals, objectives, guidelines, management areas/suitability, special areas, and starting option.
  - May be analyzed at the site-specific project level, where appropriate. Some comment address topics that are outside the scope of the Forest Plan revision process but that are still a Forest Service issue. However through the Forest Plan process, Management Area (MA) allocation and/or direction may or may not allow consideration of this opportunity. For example, Forest Plans will classify all National Forest System (NFS) lands as either suitable for motorized or non-motorized uses for both summer and winter seasons. Through subsequent Travel Management planning and public involvement, decisions will be made regarding individual road and trail management.
  - Addressed by laws, regulations or National and Regional Forest Service policies and are not repeated in the Forest Plan. Other comments are outside Forest Service authority and/or outside the scope of Forest Plan Revision.
- Reflects **areas of general agreement**, where possible, regarding Desired Condition statements. This does not mean these statements reflect consensus on any particular issue as this was not the goal of these meetings and it also was not a voting exercise. They simply identify areas of discussion in which general agreement occurred between the participants that attended that particular meeting.
  - IPNFs workgroups used a process called the Nominal Group Technique to help participants determine areas of general agreement within the revision topics.
  - KNF workgroups did not use this process but some workgroups did reach general agreement on some of the revision topics. However, some of the revision topics in some of the workgroups only reflect a range of desires for management.
- Consists of some Desired Condition statements that are “how to” statements instead of reflecting the condition that the group wants to see on the land or resource conditions. For example, the comment focuses on what silviculture treatments the Forest Service should use, what road improvement activities the Forest Service should implement, etc. The “how to” statements will not be included in the Desired Condition statements in the Revised Forest Plans. In general, the Forest Plan will emphasize what the Desired Condition is and leave it to project implementation to determine the appropriate tools to use to move the area toward the Desired Condition.

# WHAT WE HEARD FROM THE St. Joe Geographic Area (GA) Workgroup

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## **REVISION TOPIC – VEGETATION**

Desired condition is to have an accessible, productive, healthy forest with balanced structure and diverse species composition. Tools available to achieve this desired condition include, but are not limited to, timber management; prescribed fire; fire use; noxious weed treatment, and public awareness/education programs. Specific emphasis was placed on reducing fuels, stands affected by insects and disease, and management and treatment of noxious weeds to control and reduce spread (e.g., prioritize Mallard Larkins, Research Natural Areas, lands adjacent to private ownership that are uninfected and the St. Joe River corridor). Management actions might also include vehicle-washing stations, weed-free horse feed, user/use weed education).

Suggestions also included controlling and managing the invasive species/noxious elements in areas prior placement in special designations (e.g., wilderness and RNAs). Priority areas related to areas of concern for infestation/invasion include the 1910 brushfields and/or alpine area, high elevation lodgepole pine stands, areas where harvest is not an option, and overcrowded stands.

## **REVISION TOPIC – FIRE**

Desired condition includes a forest trend toward a more fire-tolerant stand composition while maintaining reasonable access (roads and trails) for fire suppression and evacuation (community and general). Specifically within:

### **Wildland Urban Interface (WUI)**

Management activities should include reducing fuel loads.

### **Wildland Fire Use Areas (WFUA)**

Management activities should include development of a Fire Management Plan stands should be managed in such a manner that they can withstand some fire events. Increase ability of line officers to allow natural and prescribed fire ignitions to burn under prescribed conditions. Wildland fire use and prescribed fire acceptable in IRAs. Utilize timber harvest and prescribed fire adjacent to areas where prescribed fire and wildland fire use are management options.

### **General Forest Areas**

Management activities should include development of a wildland fire use plan and suppression activities in timber-producing areas.

### **Forest Areas with Mixed Ownership**

Management activities should include development of a Fire Management Plan and suppression of all fires.

## **REVISION TOPIC – TIMBER PRODUCTION**

Desired condition is to use timber harvest as a tool to achieve many objectives including healthy forest composition and structure; reduced fire risk; sustained utilization of wood resources and economic stability; improved wildlife habitat; maintenance of existing roads; and to provide funds for watershed improvement activities. Specific priorities for the St. Joe GA included sustainable timber harvest, timely, legal, and profitable salvage harvest, protecting vegetative, aquatic and terrestrial habitat.

High priority areas/conditions for harvest include urban interface areas, for the improvement and maintenance of wildlife habitat, and for the restoration of fire-resistant species.

## **REVISION TOPIC – WATERSHEDS AND AQUATIC SPECIES**

Desired condition addresses two major issues **Watershed Restoration (to include water quality/quantity and soil productivity)** and **Fisheries**.

Specific **Watershed Restoration** priorities include:

- Design roads for proper design, placement and function, emphasizing maintenance. Remove roads from creek bottoms.
- Riparian areas management to improve water quality and stream temperatures)
- Timely post-fire rehabilitation and restoration (with emphasis on improving water quality).
- Decommission unnecessary roads while maintaining access for fire suppression, vegetation management and public recreation.
- Monitoring watershed restoration activities.
- Water quality limited streams – many of which are in mixed ownership.

Specific **Fisheries** priorities include:

- Maintain and/or enhance watershed conditions to ensure fishable populations of westslope cutthroat and bull trout and
- Maintain and/or enhance watershed conditions to provide for viable populations of all native aquatic species.

## **REVISION TOPIC – IRAS AND PROPOSED WILDERNESS AREAS**

Desired condition for management of Iventoried Roadless Areas includes:

### **Management of IRAs Proposed for Wilderness**

None identified by Workgroup.

### **Management of IRAs Not Proposed for Wilderness Designation**

Management activities related to the following IRAs should include:

<u>IRA</u>	<u>Proposed Management Activity</u>
Slate Creek and Big Creek	Emphasize motorized use.
Nelson and Dunn Peak	Emphasize non-motorized use.

### **Management of Proposed Wilderness Areas**

Management activities related to the following proposed wilderness areas should include:

<u>Area</u>	<u>Proposed Management Activity</u>
Mallard Larkins	Further discussion is necessary, however some dialogue included all existing and motorized trails remaining open until Congressional designation occurs; continued classification of area as proposed wilderness. From the Spokane Workgroup meetings a desired condition was to maintain Mallard Larkin as proposed wilderness.
Grandmother Mountain Wilderness Study Areas	Emphasize non-motorized use.
Therriault Lake RNA	Do not encourage uses that would detract from its characteristics as an RNA.
Black Prince Creek RNA Candidate	Investigate and re-evaluate. It is not currently proposed and should be removed from the revision maps as being so.

## **REVISION TOPIC – ACCESS AND RECREATION**

It is important to note that the revised Forest Plan will classify all National Forest System (NFS) lands as either suitable for motorized uses or suitable for non-motorized uses for both summer and winter seasons. The

Forest Plan will not make individual road and trail decisions. Travel Management Plans and project level planning will make individual roads and trails decisions. Travel management plans will be based, in part, on information in the Forest Plans, specifically: (1) the motorized/non-motorized designations found in the Management Areas, and (2) the desired conditions for the Geographic Areas. These two items from the Forest Plan will be the foundation of the Travel Management Plan.

**General Access and Recreation** (includes general summer and winter uses (directly below) and summer/winter motorized uses, and summer/winter non-motorized uses) desired conditions include the following:

- Promote the Hiawatha Trail.
- Emphasize non-motorized uses in the Mallard Larkin Pioneer Area and proposed wilderness area (allowing some motorized uses).
- Maintain motorized uses of Slate Creek and Big Creek drainages.
- Provide regular maintenance of system roads
- Ensure accuracy of Travel Management Plan
- Emphasize access management enforcement.
- Restrict 4-wheeled vehicles on single-track trails.
- Achieve a range of access opportunities for a variety of user groups and experience levels (e.g., intermediate and expert motorcycle use).
- Maintain access while emphasizing specific management areas conducive to specific recreation uses.

#### **Winter Motorized**

Desired condition includes prioritizing management of critical big game winter range in conjunction with winter motorized use.

#### **Motorized, Wheeled Cross-Country Travel**

Desired condition for motorized, wheeled cross-country access includes limiting motorized, wheeled cross-country travel to existing routes, treads and trails. This will go into effect after site-specific NEPA analysis is completed through the Travel Management Plan.

#### **Dispersed Recreation Sites**

Desired condition for dispersed recreation sites includes creation and logical placement of additional sites, providing dispersed camping in and around gates, more sanitation facilities at high-use areas.

#### **Developed Recreation Facilities**

Desired condition for developed recreation facilities includes maintaining open sites during the spring and fall months (e.g., hunting season and Shadow St. Joe boat ramp during duck/goose hunting season). Consider modifying 14-day camping limit.

#### **Special Forest Products**

Desired condition for special forest products is for retaining the Garnet Dig, Emphasis on providing handicap motorized year-round access (e.g., ATV and full-size vehicles, and during hunting season). Permit/provide firewood gathering from slash piles. Evaluate opening seasonally restricted roads for use during the summer for firewood gathering, berry picking, etc.

### **REVISION TOPIC – WILDLIFE**

Desired condition addresses both **wildlife habitat** and **access**.

Specific **wildlife habitat** concerns include maintaining and enhancing habitat areas to ensure viable wildlife populations. Vegetation management tools for these purposes include, but are not limited to thinning, integrated timber management practices, fuels reduction, natural and prescribed burning to mimic historic disturbance patterns (when not in conflict with timber production goals), noxious weed control and use of best available science. Further desires included:

- More public information regarding designation of T&E habitat.
- Consider impacts to other wildlife species when proposing activities to benefit a focal species.

- Seek funding for necessary wildlife surveys.
- Emphasize desirable species to meet the needs of forest recreational uses.
- Prioritize control and treatment of noxious weeds.
- Increase big game forage and range through timber harvest and habitat manipulation.

Specific **access** concerns include providing recreational opportunities while protecting habitat and security. Management tools to accomplish this may include short-term and/or seasonal closures and consistent access policies in habitat management areas.

### **INFORMATION, INTERPRETATION, AND EDUCATION**

Desired condition is to utilize public education, interpretation, law enforcement, and information programs (“Adopt-A-Trail” and “Tread Lightly”) as tools to achieve the following: better understanding of rules, regulations, and responsible use; clear, accurate, and consistent signage throughout the forest (to include utilization of local landmarks instead of FS road numbers); increased awareness of various forest uses and users (appropriate forest uses, user ethics and etiquette, and resource and habitat protection). Suggestions for the St. Joe GA also included an emphasis on coordinating signing efforts with adjacent landowners and cooperators; promoting partnerships between the Forest Service and private landowners in the WUI; coordinating with other agencies to establish consistent terms and definitions for OHV recreation use. The Forest Service should be a lead agency in efforts between landowners in the WUI.

### **ECONOMICS**

Desired condition for economics includes promoting year-round recreational uses to support local communities.