

THE COMPONENTS OF A NFMA ANALYSIS

EXISTING CONDITION

The "existing condition" describes the area in its present state for the resource being considered. The "existing condition" serves as the basis for identifying environmental conditions and environmental effects.

DESIRED CONDITION

The "desired condition" is a concise description of the land and resource conditions we expect to see if the goals, objectives, and directives of the plan are achieved in the future. During a NFMA analysis, the "desired condition" is compared to the "existing condition" in specific areas.

OPPORTUNITIES

A comparison of the "desired condition" to the "existing condition" is made to identify differences. If an existing condition is different than a desired condition, then an opportunity or need is presented to work towards achieving the "desired condition". Opportunities in NFMA usually become the stated "Purpose and Need" for a future proposed action.

POSSIBLE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES (PMP's)

This step identifies the ways that opportunities could be implemented. Because this is the result of brainstorming, other ideas -- even off-the-wall- ones -- should be recorded. No decision is made at this point on which PMP's will be carried forward.

FOREST PLAN CONSISTENCY

This is a check to determine if each possible management practice (PMP) is consistent with the Forest Plan goals, objectives, standard and guidelines. It is not crucial that all management practices be consistent at this stage. The Forest Plan can be amended to allow an inconsistent practice if it is considered important to move toward the desired condition.

SUMMARY

The NFMA analysis develops many possible actions and serves as a general review of resource conditions. The role of this analysis is brainstorming and focused on opportunities and possible management practices. The status of a NFMA analysis is informal, that is to say it is not required by law. The NFMA analysis is not a decision-making activity and no decisions are made from the process. Based on preliminary NFMA analysis, the appropriate level of NEPA analysis is determined.