

WILDLIFE VIABILITY, MONITORING AND MIS:

Primary Objectors

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Summary: Our previous briefing paper distinguished three distinct elements of this broad issue of MIS requirements. This included the 1982 requirement to provide habitat for viable populations within the planning area; the monitoring requirements for MIS and the analysis requirement for MIS. Discussion during the May 20th meeting included objectors clarifying that beyond the requirements of the 1982 Planning Rule, the viability of California Spotted owl and Pacific marten is an issue. Objectors re-iterated that they believe that plan components were not going to be able to deliver owl conservation because key concepts suitable habitat, highly suitable habitat were not properly defined.

Parties discussed the potential remedy of transitioning from monitoring MIS species the monitoring of focal species per the 2012 planning rule. There was an elaboration of the current peer review of MIS that the Forest Service and some of the objector parties are working on that may provide some helpful direction to this transition to focal species.

While much of the discussion focused on California Spotted owl and the plan components, and asserted analysis deficiencies, objectors were also interested in elaborating on the viability issues of pacific marten. With limitations on time, objectors requested that this be brought forward in more detail at the subsequent meeting.

Previous Forest Service Instruction:

Instruct the Regional Forester to require the Lake Tahoe Basin to clarify in the EIS how the quality of habitat and trends of MIS varies by alternative.

PROPOSED DISCUSSIONS

MIS Monitoring Issues

1. The LTBMU will transition to the focal species monitoring requirements of the 2012 Planning Rule (36 CFR 219.12(c)(1)), which states that all forest plan monitoring programs developed under a previous planning rule shall be modified meet the requirements of the new rule by May 9, 2016.

The LTBMU will work with the early adopters to collaboratively identify focal species and develop a monitoring strategy for the identified species. Timeline: March 2015 (when DEISs for the early adopters are due out)

The development of the focal species list and associated monitoring will be informed by the finalized recommendations of the panel of independent and Forest Service scientists being developed under the settlement agreement for the Sierra Nevada Forests MIS Amendment.

Viability Issue:

Owl

Modifications to plan direction as it concerns California Spotted Owl:

1. Improve definition of 'Restoration ' activities so it includes wildlife objectives not just fuels and forest health objectives.
2. Provide clarification on Spectrum modeling and its limitations. Respond to the specific questions from objectors on the modeling.
3. Include recommendations from General Technician Reports 220 and GTR 237 from PSW. Review desired conditions in the revised LMP to ensure integration with GTRs. The basic premise is to achieve heterogeneity on the landscape.

Marten

1. Add desired Conditions for Marten (missing in FEIS/Plan , use existing direction from Framework.)
2. Discuss habitat corridors