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## Implementation, Monitoring, and Evaluation

### How and When the Revised Forest Plan will be Implemented

Implementation of this ROD may occur 30 calendar days after the Notice of Availability of the Record of Decision and Final EIS is published in the *Federal Register* (36 CFR 219.10 (c)(1)). Implementation of the Revised Plan will be accomplished and tracked through the objectives detailed in Chapter 3 of the Revised Plan. These objectives will be used to help design the Forests' annual program of work. They will also be used to formulate out year budget requests.

### Transition to the Forest Plan

Revised Plan direction will apply to all projects that have decisions made on or after the implementation date of this ROD.

There are many management actions that have decisions made before the implementation date of this ROD. The projected effects of these actions are part of the baseline analysis documented in the FEIS and Biological Assessment for the Revised Plan.

Recognizing that execution of all phases of ATV decision will not occur immediately, an ATV Use Transition Plan will be developed to provide guidance for processes and designation of ATV routes and trails open for public use. When the ROD is implemented, closure orders will be issued for the immediate closure of off trail/off road ATV use as well as the Open 26 play area on the Washburn Ranger District.

The National Forest Management Act (NFMA) requires that "permits, contracts and other instruments for use and occupancy" of National Forest System lands be "consistent" with the Forest Plan (16 U.S.C. 1640(i)). In the context of a Revised Plan, NFMA specifically conditions this requirement in three ways:

1. These documents must be revised only "when necessary;"
2. These documents must be revised as "soon as practicable;"
3. Any revisions are "subject to valid existing rights."

I have decided not to modify any existing timber sale contracts solely due to the Revised Plan. These contracts will be executed according to their terms and these effects were disclosed in the FEIS. Existing timber contracts will, in most cases, be completed within three years. The decision is left to the Forest Supervisor to determine whether to modify decisions authorizing timber sales not currently under contract.

Other use and occupancy agreements are substantially longer than timber contracts. These use and occupancy agreements will be reviewed to determine whether or when the Forest Supervisor should exercise discretion to bring them into compliance with the revised Forest Plan. Recent project decisions that have not yet been implemented will be reviewed and adjusted by the decision maker, if necessary, to meet the direction found in the revised Plan.

The decision maker has the discretion on a case-by-case basis, to modify pre-existing authorizations to bring them into compliance with the revised Forest Plan standards and guidelines. I find that the statutory criteria of "as soon as practicable" and excepting "valid existing rights" useful in exercising that discretion.

## **Future Changes to the Plan**

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

Monitoring is designed to answer questions regarding implementation of the Revised Plan. Monitoring and evaluation will tightly focus on decisions made in the Record of Decision (ROD). Elements in monitoring will include requirements from NFMA regulation as well as other pertinent law and regulation.

Evaluation reports will display how Forest Plan decisions have been implemented, how effective the implementation has proved to be in accomplishing desired outcomes as well as what we learned along the way. This will allow a check and review of the validity of the assumptions upon which decisions were based.

### **Amending the Forest Plan**

The aim of monitoring is adaptive management—the ability to respond to current conditions or make appropriate changes based on new information or technology. Forest Plans are normally revised on a 10-year cycle with anticipated completion of the revision occurring 10-15 years after plan approval. However, depending on the answers to monitoring questions, the Forest Plan may be amended or revised to adapt to new information and changed conditions.

The need to amend the plan may result from:

- Recommendations of an interdisciplinary team based on monitoring and evaluation results.
- Determinations by the Forest Supervisor that existing or proposed projects, permits, contracts, cooperating agreement or other instruments authorizing occupancy and use are appropriate, but not consistent with elements of the Plans management direction.
- Administrative appeal decisions
- Planning errors found during forest plan implementation
- Changes in physical, biological, social or economic condition.

The Forest Supervisor will determine whether the proposed changes in the Forest Plan are significant or non-significant. Significance here is defined by the NFMA regulations and is different than significance as used under NEPA.