



Forest Service Planning Rule National Roundtables

Background

On February 24, 2010 USDA Forest Service Chief Tom Tidwell announced a series of collaboration events to provide opportunities for public discussion on the development of a new Forest Service Planning Rule. These include a Science Forum, three national roundtables, Tribal coordination, and Roundtables in all nine Forest Service regions.

The National Roundtables will build on information from the Science Forum and will be framed in part around the principles detailed in the rule making Notice of Intent (NOI), published December 18, 2009. The objectives of the roundtables are to provide stakeholders opportunities for collaborative learning and sharing of perspectives; to dialogue about what is working and not working with the current forest planning process; and, to provide input about what they believe should be contained in a new Forest Service planning rule, and how it should address critical substantive issues and the process of forest plan development. The results from the Science Forum and roundtables, along with the individual comments received during the 60-day formal comment period on the NOI, will be used by the Forest Service rule writing team to help develop the proposed rule and a draft environmental impact statement. Notes from the National Roundtables will be posted on the Forest Service planning rule Web site, <http://www.fs.usda.gov/planningrule>, to allow for further feedback.

First National Roundtable - April 1-2, 2010 in Washington DC. This meeting will engage attendees in dialogue with the Forest Service about the planning rule and will solicit focused input on how the planning rule should address restoration, climate change, watershed health and biodiversity. **The First National Roundtable will be held at the [Omni Shoreham Hotel](#), 2500 Calvert St., NW, Washington, DC, 20008.**

Second National Roundtable - April 20-21, 2010 in Washington DC. This meeting will engage attendees in dialogue with the Forest Service about the planning rule and will solicit focused input on how the planning rule should address the social, economic and cultural contribution of National Forest System lands to surrounding communities; provide for effective collaboration; consider the relationship between national forests and surrounding lands; and use the latest in planning science.

The Third National Roundtable to be held May 11-12, 2010 in Washington DC (specific location TBD) will allow stakeholders to discuss and build upon the synthesized results from the Science Forum and the preceding national and regional roundtables.

The roundtable agendas are being developed with input from interested stakeholders. Working drafts of the National Roundtable agendas follow.

First National Roundtable, April 1-2, 2010: Draft Agenda

DAY ONE

- 9:00 a.m. Welcome and Opening Remarks
- Joel Holtrop, Deputy Chief of the National Forest System
 - Tom Tidwell, Chief of the Forest Service
 - Harris Sherman, Under Secretary of Natural Resources and Environment
 - Robert Bonnie, Senior Advisor to the USDA Secretary for Environment and Climate Change
- 9:30 a.m. Review Meeting Objectives, Agenda and Ground Rules – Connie Lewis, Meridian Institute
- 9:35 a.m. Background Information about the Planning Rule Development Process
- Presentation - Tony Tooke, Director of Ecosystem Management Coordination
 - Q&A
- 10:35 a.m. Break
- 10:45 p.m. Interactive Stakeholder Panel Discussion: Getting the Conversation Started
- A few stakeholders with varying perspectives will respond to the following questions. Their comments are intended to provide a starting point for discussions, by illuminating some of the key issues, stimulating creative thinking, and provoking further dialogue.*
- What do you think is the most important issue/decision that needs to be dealt with in the development of a new planning rule?
 - What will make this (new) rule succeed where others have fallen short?
 - What is your best idea for a new planning rule?
 - Q&A

- 12:15 p.m. Lunch
- 1:30 p.m. Science Forum Results
- Overview presentation – Martha Twarkins
 - Comments by Forum attendees
 - Q&A
- 2:15 p.m. Table Top Discussions
- Reaction to what you've heard so far?
 - What would a great new planning rule look like?
 - What do you think is working well, and what's feasible, that you would like to see preserved in the revised planning rule.
 - What do you think is NOT working well; what would you like changed and how?
- 3:00 p.m. Break
- 3:15 p.m. Table Top Discussions continued
- 4:30 p.m. Report Back from Small Groups
- 5:00 p.m. Adjourn
- DAY TWO
- 9:00 a.m. Plenary Opening: Recap of Day One & organize for small group discussions
- 9:15 a.m. First Small Group Discussion Period
- There will be three small group discussion periods for in-depth exploration of six planning rule topics. Each of the topics will be offered twice, and there will be "other" topics based on participant interest.*
- Restoration
 - Climate Change
 - Watershed Health
 - Use and Enjoyment of NFS Lands
 - Other
- 10:45 a.m. Break
- 11:00 a.m. Second Small Group Discussion Period
- Use and Enjoyment of NFS Lands
 - Watershed Health
 - Diversity of Plants and Animals
 - Contribution to Vibrant Local Economics
 - Other
- 12:30 p.m. Lunch
- 1:45 p.m. Third Small Group Discussion Period

- Restoration
 - Climate Change
 - Diversity of Plants and Animals
 - Contribution to Vibrant Local Economics
 - Other
- 3:15 p.m. Break
- 3:30 p.m. Stakeholders Reflections on Key Messages (Samoan Circle)
- 4:00 Adjourn
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Second National Roundtable, April 20-21, 2010: Tentative Agenda

(This agenda will be reviewed and updated based on results of the First National Roundtable)

DAY ONE

- 9:00 a.m. Welcome and Opening Remarks
- 9:30 a.m. Review Meeting Objectives, Agenda and Ground Rules
- 9:35 a.m. Background Information about the Planning Rule Development Process, and Forest Planning 101
- 10:35 a.m. Break
- 10:45 p.m. Panel to Introduce Roundtable Topics
- 12:15 p.m. Lunch
- 1:30 p.m. Overview of Results from Previous National Collaboration Events
- 2:15 p.m. Table Top / Break out Group Discussions
- 4:15 p.m. Report Back from Small Groups
- 5:00 p.m. Adjourn

DAY TWO

- 9:00 a.m. Opening
- Mix of Plenary and Small Group Discussions focusing on the Following Issues:
- Plan Revision Process & Amendment Cycle
 - Dealing with Local and Regional Differences
 - Forest Planning Compliance with NEPA
 - Collaboration and Coordination

- Relationship between National Forests and Surrounding Lands; All Lands Approach
- Social, Economic and Cultural Contribution of National Forest System Lands to Surrounding Communities
- Other

4:00 Adjourn

Third National Roundtable, May 11-12, 2010

This meeting will allow stakeholders to discuss and build upon the synthesized results from the Science Forum and the preceding national and regional roundtables. The specific agenda will be determined by outcomes from the Science Forum, First and Second National Roundtables, and the Regional Roundtables.

Meeting Objectives

- Obtain stakeholder reaction to the previous input
- Explore in more detail how to integrate specific ideas into the planning rule on those issues/themes where there seems to be a significant level of convergence
- Clarify reasoning behind different perspectives and examine pro's and con's to different options on issues/themes where there is divergence
- Allow new participants (attending their first roundtable) to provide input

Background Materials:

- Synthesized Comments on the NOI
- Science Forum summary
- First and second National Roundtable summaries
- Regional Roundtables summary
- Summary of electronic input
- Key themes (referencing cross cutting issues/themes from all the input as well as areas of significant convergence/divergence)