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Regional Summary Report

US Forest Service

Intermountain Region 4

US Forest Service Planning Rule
Public Roundtable Discussion

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Table of Contents

Executive Summary	Page 3
Summary Report	Page 5
Introduction	Page 5
Meeting Overview	Page 5
Background	Page 6
General Feedback on the Rule	Page 7
Plan Content and Consistency	Page 8
Forest Planning, Plan Amendments, and Plan Revisions	Page 10
Involving Stakeholders and Partnering with Private Landowners and Government Agencies	Page 12
Restoration	Page 15
Climate Change	Page 17
Water	Page 18
Protection of At-Risk Species	Page 19
Multiple Use: Local Economies and Recreation	Page 22
Conclusion	Page 25
 Appendix A: Forest Reports	 Page 27
Ashley National Forest: Vernal, UT	Page 28
Boise National Forest: Boise, ID	Page 35
Bridger-Teton National Forest: Jackson, WY	Page 46
Caribou-Targhee National Forest: Idaho Falls, ID	Page 69
Dixie National Forest: Cedar City, UT	Page 75
Fishlake National Forest: Richfield, UT	Page 86
Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest: Elko, NV	Page 90
Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest: Las Vegas, NV	Page 94
Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest: Reno, NV	Page 102
Manti-La Sal National Forest: Price, UT	Page 107
Payette National Forest: McCall, ID	Page 113
Salmon-Challis National Forest: Salmon, ID	Page 118
Sawtooth National Forest: Twin Falls, ID	Page 122
Uintah-Wasatch-Cache National Forest: Salt Lake City, UT	Page 126



Executive Summary

On April 8, 2010, 212 people participated in roundtable meetings focused on the revision of the Forest Service planning rule. Participants provided feedback on a wide variety of issues. Many themes recurred throughout the discussions. These themes should not be considered consensus or to even have broad agreement, but instead as themes that crossed topical areas and occurred in many different locations.

- The forest service should set a vision for itself and its forests. This could clearly spell out the goals and priorities of land management, the specific contributions that the forests make to the local and national community and the changing role of forests in the future.
- Forest lands are interconnected. The effects of multiple-use, restoration activities, species management, and actions beyond the jurisdiction of the forests all affect other sectors of the forests. Forest management should recognize the complex and multiple ways that components of the forest and forest use overlap.
- Forest management needs to be flexible and adaptable. Conditions can and are changing rapidly in the forests. The Forest Service needs to be able to confront these changes with new policies quicker than in the past. Forest plans could outline thresholds or triggers for when management decisions need to change.
- Forest plans should be living documents. They should be able to be changed or amended quickly when conditions in the forests change. Thresholds and triggers could also be used to know when forest plans should be changed.
- Forest management should be science based. The Forest Service should set standards for “good science,” and partner with other agencies, academics, institutes and citizen scientists to collect the most data possible. Data analysis should separate forest trends from natural variability.
- Monitoring is critical to ensuring science-based management. The Forest Service should utilize new monitoring technologies as they become available to make the process cheaper and more efficient.
- Standards that are outcome-based should be used. The planning rule could define these standards of outcome in areas such as resiliency, protection of at-risk specie,

water quality and quantity, economic benefits and multiple-use. The specific methods used to meet these standards should be decided at the local level.

- Too many standards can make a plan too cumbersome. A broader and more general rule that gives a vision and sets priorities for forests will allow for more flexible management.
- Many of the issues facing forests extend beyond jurisdictional boundaries. Forests need to be aware of what is happening beyond their borders and seek to build collaborative and coordinating relationships with adjacent landowners and agencies.
- Forest planning and management should involve stakeholders throughout the process and at all levels. New technologies and the internet can be used to engage and solicit feedback from more people.
- A collaborative group (possibly a FACA committee) that is very involved and meets regularly can ensure that all issues are thoroughly considered and can help make decisions which are more robust and withstand judicial scrutiny.
- It is very important that this rule and plans made under it withstand judicial scrutiny. The more time these documents spend in court, less time is devoted to forest management.
- It is important to use language and terminology that is easily and widely understood. These documents need to be accessible by all users.
- Multiple-use is a very important consideration. Individuals and communities rely on both economic and recreational uses. The rule and plans need to think about ways to foster multiple-use within the context of sustainable forests.
- The Forest Service should seek to educate forest users about proper use and care of the forest. Forest users can be great stewards of public lands if they are educated about the methods and importance of doing so.

The accompanying report and appendices cover these topics and how they relate to aspects of forest management in more detail.



Summary Report

Introduction

On April 8, 2010, stakeholders met with US Forest Service at a series of Intermountain Region roundtables aimed at creating collaboration and dialogue around the revision of the Forest Service planning rule. These roundtables focused on the principles and questions laid out in the Federal Register Notice of Intent and questions developed by the rule-writing team. This summary report and information on related events in other regions and at the national level are available on the planning rule website, <http://fs.usda.gov/planningrule>.

The purpose of this summary is to provide a sense of the breadth of the diversity of ideas presented throughout the meetings. This summary is not meant to replace the need to review the input from each meeting. Concepts noted below do not represent a consensus of the meeting participants.

Meeting Overview

Twenty-eight meetings were held across the US Forest Service Intermountain Region at fourteen different sites. Each meeting was associated with a national forest in the region. Two meetings, one in the afternoon (1:00 pm to 4:00 pm MDT) and one in the evening (6:00 pm to 9:00 pm MDT), were held each of the following locations:

- **Salt Lake City, UT** – Uintah-Wasatch-Cache National Forest
- **Vernal, UT** – Ashley National Forest
- **Boise, ID** – Boise National Forest
- **Jackson, WY** – Bridger-Teton National Forest
- **Idaho Falls, ID** – Caribou-Targhee National Forest
- **Richfield, UT** – Fishlake National Forest
- **Sparks, NV** – Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest
- **Las Vegas, NV** – Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest
- **Elko, NV** – Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest
- **Price, UT** – Manti-La Sal National Forest

- **Cedar City, UT** – Dixie National Forest
- **McCall, ID** – Payette National Forest
- **Salmon, ID** – Salmon-Challis National Forest
- **Twin Falls, ID** – Sawtooth National Forest

212 participants from a broad diversity of interests participated in the roundtables, including: recreational interests (e.g., motorcyclists, snowmobilers, mountain-bikers, and hiking groups); youth organizations; environmental NGOs; private sector representatives (e.g., coal, agricultural, and timber); state and local government; and academia. Forest Service staff, including members of the rule writing team, representatives from each region and representatives from the forests, was also present at the roundtables.

Facilitators and Forest Service staff were taking notes at the meetings. Reports including these notes are included in Appendix A. Additional written comments that were given to facilitators were incorporated into the report. They were also forwarded along to the Planning Rule Team.

Background

The National Forest Management Act of 1976 requires all national forests and grasslands to develop land management plans, the use and development of which is guided by the planning rule. The first planning rule was written in 1979. It was revised in 1982. All plans have been completed under the 1982 regulations. There have been three attempts in the last decade (2000, 2005 and 2008) to rewrite the rule. The first attempt (2000) resulted in a rule that was considered un-implementable by the Department. The most recent two attempts were enjoined in court for violations of the National Environmental Policy Act.

As the Forest Service approaches this rule revision, they have committed to trying something different – a nation-wide collaborative effort that seeks to educate, engage, and work with stakeholders to highlight both shared values and differences of opinion. This effort includes a Science Forum, roundtable meetings in all nine Forest Service regions, three National Roundtables, an inter-agency working group, an internal working group, Tribal Consultation and collaboration, and an online blog discussion.

This summary of the Intermountain Region meetings will be utilized by the rule-writing team to guide decisions about rule content and is intended to help the Forest Service understand specific regional differences and concerns.

This summary will also help inform discussion at the third and final National Roundtable, where some of the key questions, concerns, and cross-cutting topics will be further explored

with the benefit of input from the Science Forum, National and Regional Roundtables, and other collaborative efforts.

The planning rule revision has been designated as one of USDA's flagship projects for President Obama's Open Government Initiative. As the Forest Service begins to develop draft rule language and the draft Environmental Impact Statement, the Forest Service is going to continue to explore new and creative ways to make the process more open, transparent.

General Feedback on the Rule

Participants were asked for general feedback. They provided suggestions for the characteristics of a "great" planning rule. They were also asked to reflect what was working well in the current planning process and what is not working and should be discarded.

What would be a Great Rule?

- A great rule would be simple, clear, concise, and intuitive. It should include all of the necessary information in a clear and very straightforward way.
- A great rule and great plans would make policies for forest users acting at their best, and would educate forest users about the proper forest use.
- A great rule would identify the characteristics of "Best Available Science" and would guide forests to use it during the plan development process.
- A great rule would recognize the economic, social, and ecosystem benefits of the forests and would work to maximize these benefits in the context of healthy, resilient ecosystems.
- A great rule and great plans would be able to adapt to changing conditions so that it is always current.
- A great rule would recognize and provide tools for confronting the many new challenges and stresses facing forests.
- A great rule would provide for open, honest, and transparent forest planning processes.
- A great rule would give forests tools to think beyond their administrative boundaries to address landscape and regional level challenges.

What is Currently Working?

- Keep using multiple methods for generating a wide variety of public input.

- Keep the multiple-use language in the rule.
- Keep the management indicator species and minimum viability standards in the rule.
- Continue to consider a range of alternative options when evaluating forest plans.
- Maintain collaboration and coordination with local governments and private entities.
- Continue to have designated wilderness areas.

What is Not Working?

- The planning process is too long and cumbersome.
- The appeals process is too long and cumbersome.
- Coordination with the roadless rule and limitations on access.
- Plans are too rigid and unable to take into account new science or deal with rapidly changing environments.
- Discontinue the use of management indicator species. Single species management is not effective.
- The species viability requirement is not doing enough to protect declining populations.
- There is not enough feedback to the input generated in the public engagement processes.
- The planning rule is not able to address new uses or demands on the forests (such as mountain biking).
- NEPA should not apply to every forest project. The Forest Service is interpreting it more broadly than it was intended.
- There is too much emphasis on commercialized commodity production and services.

Plan Content and Consistency

Many participants suggested that the planning rule and plans should be clear and easy to understand. Most suggested that plans should be outcome-oriented. There was some disagreement on the extent to which standards and guidelines should be included in the rule. Some participants thought that clear national standards and guidelines were important to ensure healthy forests nationwide, others thought that specific standards should be developed at the local level and the rule should give guidance on how and where to develop them. Suggestions included:

- Plans could define purposes, priorities, and the specific niche of the forest.
- The rule needs to be simple and clear; it should not look like the tax code. The more onerous the rule is, the more it will impede science-based management.
- If standards are used, they should help plans interpret the rules the same, make concrete decisions, be consistent across the country and be accountable. Some participants preferred standards over guidelines, because standards require action. Some felt that Forest Service does not always follow its own guidelines. However, other participants noted that guidelines would better allow for plans to account for regional differences.
- Some suggested that plans need to be flexible to allow for unique conditions at the local level and that standards and guidelines limit the options for flexibility in a forest plan. However, others suggested that standards and guidelines build consistency and accountability into the plan.
- Plans should be clear and outcome-oriented. The planning rule should develop standards that are outcome based for resiliency, connectivity of lands, water quality and quantity, local economic development, recreation, biodiversity, climate change, forest stressors and restoration. These standards of outcome should be standard across the country. Plans could develop the specific requirements to meet these outcomes.
- The planning rule could outline a basic structure that all forest plans should have. This could include spelling out the different topics that each forest plan needs to address. The specifics for how to address these issues would be developed at the local level. This would also allow for users to easily access relevant information.
- The rule should explore options for using adaptive management. The rule could foster accountability by requiring plans to conduct monitoring and include triggers for management actions based on the monitoring results. It will be important to determine how and when thresholds should be set, monitoring should be conducted, and changes should be implemented. The specifics could be outlined in forest plans. The rule could set rules or give guidance on how to develop these specifics.
- The rule should set standards for good science. The Forest Service should engage with all science to use all valid data to monitor lands. This will allow more data to be utilized. Forest Service monitoring should be done with consistent measurements across the country. Data analysis should work to separate trends from natural variability.
- Science should be balanced against the practical implications of implementing good forest plans. The Forest Service should seek to find a balance between plans dictated by science and plans that are simple to implement. Science-based management should also be balanced against the social benefits of forests.

- The rule should address how plans inventory and address multiple-use, including economic benefits and all types of recreation.
- The rule needs to include clear and simple definitions and terminology. The rule should educate readers about its content and objectives.
- The rule should give guidance on how to best engage in collaboration with stakeholders, including users, adjacent landowners, youth and local, state, and federal governments. However, collaboration and adaptive management cannot allow the Forest Service to sidestep standards or good science.
- Forest plans should focus on restoring and maintaining resilient forests. Plans need to be able to address changing conditions as population growth and climate change increasingly affect conditions in the forest.
- While science-based management is a good goal, there needs to be a balance between the social benefits of forests and the mandates of science.
- Plans could focus on identifying opportunities for improved land management instead of focusing on constraining users.
- There is a concern that forests are typically funded around standards and guidelines and that if they are replaced with a different management scheme funding be affected.
- Forest plans should not develop specific standards for anything that might change in the fifteen years between plan revisions.
- Many forest issues extend beyond jurisdictional boundaries. Plans should be consistent across a landscape or eco-region.
- There should be consistency in the approach and process across forests; however the specifics need to be developed at and tailored to local conditions.

Forest Planning, Plan Amendments, and Plan Revisions

Participants had many suggestions for making forest planning simpler, faster, more straightforward, and less expensive. In general, many of the suggestions focused on opening up the planning process, including more consistent evaluation, making small changes to forest plans between major revisions and keeping the parts of forest plans that work intact while revising only the pieces which need to be addressed. Suggestions included:

- Make the plans living documents. They should not stay static for fifteen years between major revisions. They should be changed and updated as conditions in the

forests change. Utilize new monitoring technologies to understand the changing nature of the forests.

- Conduct comprehensive annual or biennial assessments of the forest. Have a streamlined amendment process where changes to forest plans can be developed and implemented quickly.
- Consider implementing sector planning. The forest plan would give guidelines for how to develop plans for a sector. Sector plans could be updated more or less frequently than the forest plan. Sectors where management actions are out of sync with forest goals and priorities should be updated before other sectors. Thresholds for revision and/or a public petition process could trigger a sector plan revision. All sector plans should also be examined after a certain amount of time.
- Forest plans could be more strategic in nature, outlining, goals, priorities, and processes for land management. More specific decisions could be made at the project or management level.
- Clearly define terms and goals in the rule and in plans. Also define objections and appeals. Clarity will protect plans from legal action.
- Follow the guidance laid out in federal laws such as NEPA, ESA, and NFMA to protect the documents from legal challenges.
- Streamline the public input process using new technologies. Make information easily available online. Utilize discussion boards, blogs, e-mail, and other online tools to gather feedback on ideas and proposals.
- Utilize a collaborative group or FACA-like committee. These groups can generate valuable dialogue and comprehensively examine important issues. While these types of groups require more investment on the front end, they often result in plans that are more robust, stand up to legal action, and are cheaper in the long run.
- The process should be headed up at the local and regional level. Local groups and users should be involved in the planning and management process.
- Third-party facilitators can be used to generate dialogue and ensure that everyone has an equal chance to participate in public meetings.
- Don't start over with every plan revision. Carry-over what works and focus energy on changing what doesn't work.
- Utilize internal resources as much as possible. Outsourcing this work can put it in the hands of consultants with few local ties that may not be able to fully understand the issues and impacts of different options.

- There is too much regulation. This encumbers the process and results in a lot of wasted time and resources working through them.
 - Consider requiring that plans are completed within a certain amount of time, maybe within eighteen to thirty months.
 - There are so many interests and so many things to consider that it may not be sensible to make the process shorter. Doing so may result in certain issues, needs, or stakeholder groups not being addressed.
 - Large-scale and dramatic changes, such as flooding or fire, should trigger plan amendments. The Forest Service needs to be able to change its land management policies immediately following these types of events.
 - Be able to trigger a plan amendment without having a specific solution in mind. The amendment process could include research and investigation for a solution to the issue.
 - Plans should not change too often. There should be some consistency in management and land use over time.
 - Plans should be peer-reviewed. This will enable them to withstand judicial scrutiny.
-

Involving Stakeholders and Partnering with Private Landowners and Government Agencies

Involving stakeholders is a critical part of developing forest plans. In general, there was support for public involvement through traditional mechanisms, such as that defined by NEPA and NFMA; however, there was a lot of interest in thinking about ways to involve stakeholders more in both developing plans and in managing forests. It will be important that the Forest Service actively listen to, engage with, and respond, either through words or through actions, to the input generated by this process. Suggestions for involving stakeholders included:

- Public participation requirements need to be specific and defined. Make a toolbox or provide help for groups who want to start collaborative efforts. Pull together lessons learned and resources for use by leadership and groups. Establish a range of opportunities for public participation, including private comment, at forest plan and project level. Stakeholder involvement needs to develop trust between stakeholders and the Forest Service and among stakeholders.
- There should be collaboration at different levels (not only nationally for this rule) with stakeholders in order for the forests to understand what type of management needs and options exist. There needs to be collaboration at all levels and throughout the

management process, not just during plan development. Most forest decisions should be made at the forest level.

- Keep the decision-making and engagement processes open. Make sure that people have an equal opportunity to participate. In meetings, use a facilitator to allow groups to talk openly.
- Decision-making processes need to be transparent. If people understand why and how a decision was made, they would be more willing to give you the time to see if it works. Make all pertinent information readily available.
- The feedback needs to be utilized. Decisions should not be made until the Forest Service has had the opportunity to get feedback from and engage in dialogue with forest users and stakeholders.
- Stakeholder involvement should be able to help address issues across the landscape and that extend beyond forest boundaries. Engagement and collaboration with private landowners and agencies with control of adjacent lands will be critical to addressing landscape level needs.
- Stakeholder involvement should move discussions beyond the formal comment period. Update and involve the public more frequently than is required by an EIS. Hold meetings between the scoping process and the draft and between the draft and the final document.
- The Forest Service has improved their efforts to involve the public through soliciting comments after draft documents are published. Streamlining the process is desirable but not at the cost of removing the stakeholders' ability to comment.
- It will be important to identify who the different stakeholders in the forest are, including state and local government, local, state, and regional elected officials, other federal agencies such as the BLM and FWS, NGOs, landowners, and users. The Rule should provide non-local members of the public, such as urban residents with opportunities to participate in planning efforts outside of the collaboration context. Engage the youth in forest planning. Grassroots groups should be meeting with established stakeholder groups in this process. It could be important to give more weight to local users and those who have the most direct impacts.
- Forest plans could include or integrate with local, county and state land-use plans and management practices of adjacent landowners.
- Federal agencies need to be coordinating with each other to support and compliment each other's land management decisions. Coordinating agency agreements, MOUs, and other legal arrangements can all be used to engage with state and local governments.

- Establish procedures for public involvement that clearly and effectively convey information and provide avenues for public input and discourse. There should also be options for continuous and regular discourse, such as a quarterly public meeting.
- A variety of media sources should be used to advertise public meetings. This should include traditional methods of outreach such as public service announcements, newspaper ads, and radio spots combined with new media such as web-postings, Facebook, Twitter and other social media. Personal invitations can be used to bring key people to the discussions. Information about how to engage could also be included on trailhead signs, permits, and in retail locations.
- Outreach should happen early enough that people can plan to attend meetings.
- Everything should be posted online. Information should be easily accessible. Websites need to be orderly and easy to read. Information should not be scattered across many websites. Blogs, websites, online surveys and social media can also be used to generate discussion and allow feedback on specific issues.
- Forest planning should be an iterative process that continually engages the public. The roundtable format with many different stakeholder groups is very effective for generating dialogue and creative solutions. Many small meetings can help develop ownership of proposals. Use a FACA committee similar to a Resource Advisory Committee to guide the planning process. Establish advisory groups for projects and plans. Groups that meet regularly with consistent memberships are more effective. These groups could help identify local significant issues, but they are not a panacea. The process must still comply with NEPA requirements.
- When explaining the legal requirements and possible options for plan topics, use language that people can understand. Too much jargon and too many technical terms make it difficult for many forest users to participate in the discussion.
- Educate stakeholders. Explain the various laws and rules each step of the process is subject to. The stakeholders must understand in plain language what can and cannot be done in order to appropriately direct comments and manage expectations.
- If the planning process is shorter, simpler, and provides results, people won't get burnt out and will be more willing to invest their time.
- The Forest Service needs to respect the resource and time investments that people are giving by holding fewer, but more effective meetings and not making unreasonable financial requirements on stakeholders. Hold meetings at a variety of times to accommodate everyone. Resource and contact information should also be tracked more thoroughly and on a continuous basis after the Forest Plan is implemented.
- All input, whether gathered online, via written communication, or in public meetings needs to be treated consistently and fairly, and evaluate each communication based on

its substantive content, not on who submitted it or how it was received. Our society is rapidly changing in many ways, including how we communicate, and the Forest Service needs to accept and readily adapt to these changes to remain contemporary, respected, credible, and effective.

- Collaboration with stakeholders and agencies should include sharing and utilizing data, scientific research, and scientific and monitoring tools. Stakeholder involvement should include a mechanism to address scientific uncertainty. There is a need for an accountability process that shows the results of the monitoring. This could be done as part of a collaborative meeting with the stakeholders.
- Utilize relationships with different agencies and organizations to leverage a wide variety of resources to achieve land management objectives.
- The Rule must not allow for collaboration to circumvent regulatory requirements – the Forest Service cannot use collaboration as a tool for abrogating its regulatory authority and responsibility. Private-public partnerships, conservation easements, NGO funding and state funding can all be utilized to fund forest projects.

Restoration

Many participants said that restoration should be a key priority for the US Forest Service, but that it is critically important to define what is meant by “restoration.” To many, restoration suggests that forests should return to a historical state. However, it will be important to determine which historical state and its characteristics are targeted. Some suggested that instead of forest restoration, the Forest Service should aim for “resilient” forests. Suggestions included:

- Resilient forests would be healthy, diverse, dynamic, sustainable, and able to adapt to new impacts and changes. While this focus on resiliency could be informed by past conditions, the focus of forest management should be on desired future conditions. This strategy would allow the Forest Service to recognize if a forest is healthy and would reduce management action in that forest. In time, properly managed forests should be healthy enough that restoration is not needed.
- Achieving restoration or resiliency may be best accomplished through standards or guidelines. These standards or guidelines could clearly define the ecological goals and desired outcomes of forests. Some suggested that the forest plan is the best place to define desired outcomes, while others thought some clear guidelines should be established in the planning rule.
- The planning rule could give guidance on how and where to prioritize restoration activities. Different participants suggested top priorities including: sites damaged by extraction activities, lands crucial to habitat connectivity, lands damaged by noxious

weeds or invasive species, economic resources such as water for industry or irrigation and watersheds. Other participants said that prioritization decisions should be made at the forest level.

- Restoration should focus foremost on ecological balance and ecological processes. Other uses can and should happen in forests, but creating sustainable forests should be the main priority and a precondition for multiple-use considerations.
- When defining the goals for restoration, there should also be an attempt to balance multiple-use considerations against each and against ecosystem services and processes. The impacts of different uses (such as grazing, horse traffic, or snowmobile traffic), should be analyzed and planned for in the context of healthy forests.
- It will be important to consider restoration at broad scales. Many of the issues that affect forests and forest restoration cross jurisdictional boundaries, watershed boundaries, and traditional management boundaries.
- There are connections between the different components of forests such as plants, animals, soils, users, and watersheds. Management that targets a single species or location will often miss critical issues and connections. Analysis of forest issues and solutions should consider the interconnectivity of forests and lands.
- Forests need to be able to respond quickly to changing conditions.
- Forests should be monitored regularly so that changes can be quickly noticed and addressed. New technologies such as GIS, remote-sensing, inventory-tracking and satellite imagery can all be used to collect data. Trend analysis would help identify changes against a backdrop of natural variability.
- Using secondary monitoring (such as using habitat to identify the presence of a species) is not as useful as direct monitoring.
- The Forest Service should play an active role in developing monitoring tools.
- A range of eco-system treatments that target the stressors or underlying causes of change or decline should be allowed. These treatments could include passive treatments such as minimizing access, or more active treatments such as decommissioning unused old-growth and rebuilding fire brakes. Some participants would prefer the Forest Service to focus on active mitigations rather than prohibiting activity, others preferred the opposite.
- The Forest Service could partner with forest users, partner agencies, and local governments in applying these treatments. Different forest uses could possibly be leveraged during restoration. For example, by dropping the logging fees in pine-beetle infested areas the Forest Service could incentivize the removal of dead trees, or

through forest education and interaction courses, non-motorized users could be trained to be better stewards of forest lands).

- Conscious engagement and education of users will enable the Forest Service to create more effective partnerships.
 - A planning rule and plans that withstand legal scrutiny will allow for better and more immediate action.
-

Climate Change

There was a lot of disagreement about the extent to which climate change is occurring and how much the planning rule should address it. Some participants did not believe that climate change is occurring and that the Forest Service should not address it. Some thought climate change is going to be the underlying driver for much of the coming ecosystem change, and assumptions about climate change need to drive most forest decisions. There was concern that the words “climate change” are politically loaded and that the use of these words introduces a political component that is not useful. Suggestions for addressing climate change included:

- This discussion should focus not on climate change, but just on change. It should be assumed that forests will face changing conditions, and plans and forest management should be able to respond and adapt to these changes. An adaptive management framework could be used.
- Forests could be monitored consistently for many characteristics (plants, animals, temperature, precipitation, fire, variability, etc.). This data would be analyzed for trends that emerge beyond natural variability. The US Forest Service could then implement different land management policies to address these changes. These land management policies would be developed to help the forest reach the level of desired conditions spelled out in plan.
- It was suggested that because the full effects of climate change are still unknown, the precautionary principle should be used, and that the primary focus of land management should be on healthy, diverse, and resilient forests.
- Resilient forests may be better able to adapt to changing conditions.
- Some noted that data collection should not occur only through Forest Service staff. Data should be shared with other agencies, citizen scientists, and academics. Data should be collected according to “best science” practices and should be peer-reviewed. The compilation of this data is what should be utilized.

- This greater set of data could also be used to feed into climate change models. By increasing the amount of local data available for these models, they could provide better resolution of the potential changes and effects expected at smaller scales.
 - Predictive models are not very accurate and they should not be used to make land management decisions.
 - Forests play an important role in the carbon cycle. Forests can capture carbon through new growth and increased diversity. Forests can also release large amounts of carbon through activities such as logging or through natural processes such as fire or widespread tree death due to a disease or invasive species (such as pine beetle). Forests may be able to mitigate against growing carbon emissions.
 - There is a possibility that Congress or CEQ will carbon budgeting in America's forests, and the planning rule should be able to adapt if this is the case.
 - There is a need for flexibility. While there is uncertainty about the mechanism of, the extent to, and the rate at which change will occur, forests, forest uses, and the plants and animals which reside in the forest, all may be affected. Rapid and flexible response to these changes should define forest management in the future.
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Water

Many participants suggested that water concerns and watershed protection need to be a part of the planning process. Particularly in the West, where water has been over-allocated, there needs to be direction for improving and maintaining watersheds so they are clean, healthy, productive and connected to the greater regional ecosystems. However, some people did question whether it was appropriate for the Forest Service to be involved in water resource management. Suggestions for water resource management included:

- Forests are often sources of water for downstream users, and the Forest Service should be looking for ways that forests can provide more and higher quality water resources for downstream communities and users.
- It is important to understand the watersheds often cross multiple jurisdictional boundaries. Forest plans and the planning rule need to comply with State Law and federally reserved water rights and rights-of-way across forest lands. The planning rule could require that watershed resource concerns and management needs are coordinated with state and local government laws, needs and dependence. Work with state and local groups should be collaborative and cooperative.
- Forest plans could be designed to coordinate, collaborate, or integrate with local water resource plans.

- Recognize that state and local water scientists and engineers sometimes have better knowledge about watersheds. Forest plans should be able to utilize this quality data.
- Forests should work collaboratively with agencies, stakeholders, local landowners and forest users to make better and more connected water resource management decisions. These landowners and users could also be involved in helping make better, healthier decisions and improving forest management.
- There should be an emphasis on addressing how forest projects impact local water availability.
- Efforts to engage adjacent landowners need to recognize the future land tenure adjustment through sales and trades.
- Healthy watersheds are a key component of sustainable ecological communities, which the Forest Service should promote at the landscape level. Watershed conservation analysis should be used to determine the state and health of watersheds. Sustainable ecosystems will improve water quality and availability and gaps can be met through monitoring and adaptive management.
- The new planning rule should emphasize watershed health by focusing on the continued protection and enhancement of community water supplies, including those that are wholly or partially dependent on national forest lands. This can happen by reducing stressors (grazing, logging, drilling, invasive species); however, this should not happen at the expense of forest water residence time and recharge.
- There are many concerns about water quality, water quantity, and pollution. The Forest Service needs to recognize the role it can play in maintaining and restoring clean water resources. The Forest Service needs to accept this stewardship and defend its water rights from diversion by other users and needs.
- Water resource management should take into account multiple factors that may affect water quality and quantity, including vegetation, restoration, multiple use, erosion control, siltation, road-building and road maintenance.
- Water storage affects water quality in streams. The rule should direct that water stays within a watershed, and not piped or ditched to another watershed. Water storage in aquifers and water residence time in the forest needs to be managed and supported. Diverting watersheds for agriculture, industry or development does not support sustainable ecosystems.
- The Forest Service should seek to obtain primary watersheds.
- Some of these issues are broader than can be addressed in a forest plan and they should be addressed in other sectors of the Forest Service.

Protection of At-Risk Species

Most participants said that it is very important to protect at-risk species and to maintain levels of biodiversity. Participants recognized that it is most important to make sure that this rule complies with and integrates current laws such as the Endangered Species Act, the diversity requirement in NFMA, and NEPA, and suggested that the Forest Service clearly articulate its vision for the protection of plant and animals species in the context of whole forest management. Suggestions included:

- The Forest Service could work to educate the public about its priorities for species diversity. In doing so, it will be important to define the various terms that are used to describe management of at-risk species (including the term “at-risk species”).
- The language used in the 1982 rule that requires that forests maintain species viability is working.
- Viability is the bare minimum of what should be expected. The Forest Service should consider standards such as maintaining healthy, “contributing” to the species health or “conserving” species.
- The term viability should be dropped, because it is unable to be defined. It was suggested that language such as “biological diversity shall be maintained” is better to ensure a healthy diversity of species.
- The planning rule should not have any stricter guidelines for protecting species than other federal agencies. Some participants suggested that control of and management for at-risk species should be under the auspices of the Fish and Wildlife Service, not the Forest Service.
- Species diversity can be supported by maintaining healthy, diverse and sustainable habitats, which might then determine the composition and make-up of species diversity. Healthy landscapes should determine the species types and numbers that should be present.
- The species diversity standard should go through a scientific peer-review process.
- Some also suggested that riparian zones are critical habitats to restore, because of their importance in maintain species populations. While this may take active management early on, a sustainable system will require less involvement in the long-term.
- It is important to be thinking about species health in the long-term, often beyond the length of a forest plan.
- Specific standards and guidelines focusing on habitat quality are the way to achieve these goals.

- A broader, more general rule which gives more control to forests will result in better forest management.
- It is important to protect specific at-risk species; they suggested that monitoring specific species or using indicator species is better for tracking plant and animal diversity. The choice of these species could be determined at the forest level, and needs to ensure that the data collected is useful.
- Wildlife corridors are very important for protecting the health of a population. Since these corridors often extend beyond the boundaries of Forest Service lands, many proposed that the Forest Service work with surrounding landowners, including counties, states, the BLM, and private landowners to develop and maintain them. Conservation agreements, easements, coordinating agencies, and memorandums of understanding are all tools that can be used to work across boundary lines.
- Forests could partner with adjacent forests and NGOs with the capacity to work across many jurisdictions.
- The rule could suggest, guide, or require forests to reach out to surrounding lands and other agencies.
- Forest plans could be required to tie into recovery plans at other agencies such as the Fish and Wildlife service,
- To protect at-risk species, better monitoring, using new tools and which is both easily measurable and flexible enough to adapt to new locations and landscapes, should be incorporated into or mandated in the rule.
- The rule could require investment in personnel and technology to collect data. This would have to be supported with funding from the national level.
- The rule could also encourage the Forest Service to share knowledge, by accepting data from a wide variety of sources, including the Forest Service, other agencies, Academia, and citizen-scientists as long as that data met a certain level of truth or authenticity.
- Data should be integrated with and analyzed using the best techniques from modern science, including landscape ecology, conservation biology, and meta-population analysis to ensure that decisions are up-to-date and useful in ensuring species diversity.
- A goal of land management could be to reduce stressors on plant and animal life. The planning rule could require that measurable and enforceable thresholds are used to trigger changes in land management decisions. The baseline values and good science should be used to determine new management policies and the outcomes should be monitored to track the efficacy of new policies.

- Implementation decisions should be transparent.
 - Limiting human use seems to be a de facto solution to all forest problems. The Forest Service needs to rethink the assumption that humans need to be controlled or limited and that wilderness and primitive areas are being wasted because they are not allowing more human use.
 - There should be more conscious efforts to integrate human use with sustainable habitats and species populations, and specific types of controlled recreation especially should be allowed in at-risk species' habitat.
-

Multiple Use: Local Economies and Recreation

There was a wide range of opinions expressed on the types and extent of multiple uses that should be allowed in the forest. While most agreed that direction about multiple-use should be included in the rule, some suggested that use should be carefully controlled minimized to allow for more natural ecosystems, while others said that since these are public lands, they should be managed to allow for maximum sustainable recreation and economic access.

Suggestions of incorporating multiple-use in the rule included:

- Recreation and economic uses do not always have a negative impact on forest quality. The Forest Service should seek to achieve balance between management of sustainable ecosystems and management of sustainable multiple-use. If managed correctly, different uses can be used to achieve land management goals (such as logging to remove beetle-kill trees). The Forest Service could think about ways to use economic incentives to promote the kinds of uses that are beneficial for forest health.
- The level of detail should be in a forest plan not in a national plan. Even a forest plan should not be too specific. A national rule should say that public access is important and access should be carefully considered at each level of the process. It is an important value that needs to be considered at every level and implemented at the various stages. National rule needs state that it is an important consideration.
- Traditional uses, economic uses and recreational use are important for local communities. The value that uses add to cultures and economies needs to be considered when making management decisions. The Forest Service should define the specific role or niche that forests occupy in local communities.
- Increasingly, recreational activity is an integral component of local economies. Plans should recognize the intrinsic as well as economic benefits of recreation in the forest.
- The world is changing dramatically. With population growth and climate change, there are many more stressors on the forest. Uses need to be managed in much more conscious manner to account for the greater stress that forests are under.

- Multiple-use goals need to fall within a greater framework of sustainability and resiliency. If healthy forests are maintained, they will support a variety of uses. Data and research on carrying capacity and the effects of uses can help guide how and when different uses should be allowed.
- Science and data should also guide land management decisions.
- The Forest Service should conduct a detailed and supported socio-economic analysis that is objective, based on data and science, including impacts on range and impacts on local communities and economies.
- Plans could quantify the financial benefits of recreation, the economic impacts of closing trails, and the economic value of ecosystem services derived from the forest. This could be done in both a local (recreation) and national context (energy). It will be difficult to determine how this should be done.
- It will be important to engage youth to determine how some of these changes will affect their ecological and economic health in the future.
- Some people suggested that certain uses should be prioritized over other uses in the forests. Some suggested that recreational economies are now more important than timber or other extractive industries. Some suggested that non-motorized recreation should be prioritized over motorized recreation. However, others strongly disagreed with this idea.
- Grazing is a particularly challenging issue for the West. The rule should allow forest plans to address the benefits and stresses of grazing on forest lands.
- Water is imperative for the survival of local communities and economies. The Planning rule should provide exceptions to establish priority for management of local community resources (e.g. drinking water sources) and be allowed in otherwise restricted activity areas.
- If the rule sets standards or guidelines for multiple-use, it should clearly define what is meant by different terms. This will ensure that the rule is consistently implemented across the country. There was disagreement on the extent to which multiple-use should be defined by standards and guidelines.
- The extent to which recreation activity is allowed in wilderness areas needs to be defined in the rule. Some wanted wilderness areas to be opened up for more users, while others preferred that wilderness areas be controlled so they are quieter and more remote.

- Species viability should not be more important than all other resource or management goals and should not apply to every acre of national forest. Economics should trump other resource concerns in some specific cases.
- The Forest Service should recognize that social and economic uses are changing, and adapt to those changes. For example, clean alternative energy developments should be encouraged wherever appropriate, and they can provide many “green jobs” in local communities. Many western communities are also heavily economically reliant on tourism, and much of this may be dependent on maintaining a clean environment, beautiful scenery, abundant wildlife, and varied opportunities to engage in healthy recreational uses.
- Given the sad history of many “boom and bust” cycles of development in the West, that eventually devastated many communities, the Forest Service should strive to assist communities with establishing and maintaining more stable and reliable economic uses that would minimize future risks. The West is changing from a resource use and extraction economy to a recreation and restoration economy. The Forest Service should accept and reflect this change in the final planning rule in terms of guidance on social and economic uses.
- The Forest Service should also recognize that recreational uses are changing. There should be a framework to address and incorporate new recreational uses into forest plans. The Recreational Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) needs to be revised to include new uses such mountain biking and air strips.
- Mountain biking should be treated consistently from forest to forest. It should be categorized as non-motorized use. Mechanized use is an ill-defined grey area. Roadless, recommended wilderness and study areas highlight this issue. They become de facto wilderness. Mountain biking should be a non-motorized use and allowed in these areas.
- The Rule should require Plans to address strategic transportation planning needs and require decommissioning of roads not part of the system. There should be a clear analysis of when and where roads are needed. The Rule should require plans to close the forest to cross-country motorized travel (as is currently required), and identify specific areas within the forest that are open to cross-country motorized travel.
- “Zoning” a forest for various activities such as, recreational, or timber or oil and gas does not work. The rule should direct management for good land conditions, not economic conditions.
- Determining how different uses should be allowed and prioritized in a forest should be done through a collaborative process that gives locals, forest users, stakeholders, and non-local visitors a voice in management decisions.

- The rule should require plans to take climate change into account when allowing for different types of uses.
- The rule should make decisions about travel management within the scope of a plan revision.
- Access is important because it fosters support for forest system lands. The Forest Service should actively engage and educate forest users about the best ways to engage with and recreate in the forests.
- It is important to keep fees low. Even though, the agency is struggling with budgets, forests need to be accessible to all Americans. The privatization of concessions may result in higher fees that reduce access.
- There needs to be clearer definitions of what is meant by motorized, non-motorized, and mechanized use.
- Recreational access should be evaluated based on the land type, species, habitat, etc. More fragile areas may require limited access while other areas may be sustainable for heavier use.
- Spell out how the planning rule and forest plans will interact with roadless rules.
- The Forest Service should be more proactive and creative about developing recreational and interpretive programs that are accessible and will appeal to a wide variety of visitors, including different cultures, age groups, and education levels, and people with disabilities. This is especially crucial for young people who are increasingly suffering from the harmful “Nature Deficit Disorder” and their resulting health problems from the lack of enough healthy exercise.
- Effective law enforcement is key to protecting resources and providing safe visitor access. Fines should be greatly increased for infractions. The public already knows that with the scarcity of law enforcement officers, it is highly unlikely that they will be caught creating new motorized trails, driving off-trail, etc. If the punishment is too light, there is no incentive to obey the rules.

Conclusion

Participant feedback on the roundtables was mostly positive. In particular we heard enthusiasm for the Forest Service’s effort to seek meaningful input at this early stage, and appreciation for the openness and constructive nature of the process. The people who attended were clearly energized, and eager to contribute to the development of an effective, efficient, durable rule. Several stakeholders from very different perspectives expressed a desire for on-going engagement and dialogue following the roundtables. People are

concerned that this input will not be meaningfully used in the development of the rule. Many people were interested in seeing feedback and follow-up from these meetings, so that they can track their ideas. The overarching take-away from the meeting was a sense of cautious optimism - this process might actually result in a stakeholder-driven rule.



Appendix A: Forest Reports

US Forest Service Intermountain Region 4

Summary of Input from Forest Roundtables

Reports Produced in Each Forest's Meetings

Ashley National Forest: Vernal, UT	Page 28
Boise National Forest: Boise, ID	Page 35
Bridger-Teton National Forest: Jackson, WY	Page 46
Caribou-Targhee National Forest: Idaho Falls, ID	Page 69
Dixie National Forest: Cedar City, UT	Page 75
Fishlake National Forest: Richfield, UT	Page 86
Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest: Elko, NV	Page 90
Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest: Las Vegas, NV	Page 94
Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest: Reno, NV	Page 102
Manti-La Sal National Forest: Price, UT	Page 107
Payette National Forest: McCall, ID	Page 113
Salmon-Challis National Forest: Salmon, ID	Page 118
Sawtooth National Forest: Twin Falls, ID	Page 122
Uintah-Wasatch-Cache National Forest: Salt Lake City, UT	Page 126

Region 4 Planning Rule Roundtable

Summary of Input: Ashley National Forest; Vernal, UT

General Discussion

What do you think a great planning rule would look like?

- A great planning rule would have the involvement of the local government and agencies, and it should be based on NEPA documents as the local governments are familiar with that structure. NEPA provides an avenue for documentation of comments and response to those comments and can provide a greater amount of information exchange.
- There needs to be room for flexibility in specific management requirements at the local level.
- Science and traditional use should both be included; custom and culture should be able to outweigh science at times.
- A great planning rule would be simple, clear, concise, and intuitive. The document should include all the necessary information. Do not reference other documents throughout which requires you to find those other documents in order to understand what's being said.
- The Planning Rule should start with law, everything under the rule should feed from that. It should define monitoring and how the monitoring will be accomplished and adaptive management should be developed from that monitoring.
- There should be a balance between the needs of the public and the needs of the environment. While there is a need to preserve the forest for future generations there are still needs of the current generation to use and enjoy the forest.
- The Planning Rule should provide for an implementation plan after a decision is made. This plan should address specifics of implementation and monitoring. The plan should also include the need for a collaborative approach to review of the monitoring and development and use of adaptive management as a result of the monitoring; i.e. collaboration should continue after the Forest Plan decision is made, through the implementation plan.
- Have some monitoring in the plan, but keep most of the monitoring out of the Forest Plan and develop it at the project level and/or use mid level planning to deal with more complex issues. Continue collaboration when doing mid-scale and project level monitoring.
- The Planning rule should just be a vision statement that allows all the planning to be accomplished at the local level. For example: the rule should direct us to manage for "a

strong viable forest that serves the interests of local needs while maintaining a national balance” and leave everything else to the local officials and public.

- The Planning Rule needs to be consistent with the requirements of the Data Quality Act.
- The Planning Rule needs to be simple. It should allow the local and regional levels to write their own rules. The rule should be no longer than one page.
- The Planning Rule should be flexible and be open to new and innovative ideas. It should allow for creativity and flexibility, and shouldn’t become stagnant. The new Planning Rule needs to be adaptive to new or emerging issues and ideas.

What doesn’t work; what concepts would you like to leave behind?

- Remove CE authority for Forest Plan revisions. Forest Plans do influence on the ground activities and these influences need to be considered. To say that Forest Plans have no effects on the ground is incorrect because they change the probability of certain future actions occurring. Also CEs do not allow for appropriate levels of documentation and collaboration.

Plan Content

What kind of information should be included in Forest Plans, and should they include standards and guidelines? If so what kind?

- Forest Plans should include County land use plans and management practices of adjacent landowners (both private and other governments). There should be requirements for consistency with local county plans for both the forest and adjacent landowners.
- Forest Plans should build in consistencies with local governments, coordination and cooperation are both desirable.
- Forest Plans need to provide for flexibility. There should be broad goals in the national rule, flexibility in the Forest Plans and detailed analysis at the project level planning
- The Planning Rule should develop a high level of shared vision which will be used to develop forest goals and find common areas of agreement between the stakeholders and the managers of the forest.
- There is a need for maximum flexibility at the forest level. Standards and Guidelines in a Forest Plan limit flexibility. If you don’t have S&G in the Forest Plan then there is a need to do more analysis at the project level and this is where the analysis should be done.
- Use monitoring to identify the thresholds established by S&Gs. However, these should be triggers for responsive actions with flexibility to each situation and not come with a hardwired response.

- Standards and Guidelines build a certain amount of certainty into the plan and this has some benefits e.g. if a rancher knows that he will have to pull his cattle off if the range reaches a specified condition, he can prepare by finding alternate pasture. Use S+Gs when there is potential for measurable impacts to users if certain actions aren't taken; especially when there would be economic impacts to permit holders, or uncertainty prevents proper planning.
- All data used in planning needs to be tested and verified (ground truthed) prior to use in project planning. Don't plan based on speculation or theory.

How consistent should plans be across the country?

- Forest plans should be developed at the local level with local publics and governments. Consistency across the country would not work. Needs differ too much from place to place.

Process Topics

What suggestions do you have from making forest planning faster, simpler, more straightforward and less expensive?

- If NEPA is done properly there would be fewer challenges and costs involved and projects could be implemented in a timelier manner.
- A local advisory board with decision making authority could streamline the process and cut costs. *[FS note: We discussed FACA so the participants are aware that giving an advisory board a role in the decision is not legal; nevertheless they feel strongly about increasing the local public's role in the process so we are sending all such comments forward.]*
- If decisions were more sensitive to local needs there would be fewer challenges.
- There is a lot of wasted resources. There is so much regulation that it takes a long time in order to operate. Too much attention is given to special interests. It takes too long to do any activities and things are falling apart on the ground. Use planning process to give decision maker the ability to make decisions in a quicker, easier, manner. Focus on streamlining, be time sensitive, use common sense.
- Allow local groups to manage the forest. Local people should discuss the projects and make the decisions on the local level. This will save time and money.
- The level of inventory and analysis should be limited in new plans. Use the best available information that already exists, don't create new. This causes analysis paralysis and costs too much money.
- Use common sense rather than spending so much money on inventories and data collection.

- There should be a way to allow more power to employees in the field so they can take care of stuff right away. They can respond to a problem or situation using their own judgment rather than lengthy NEPA processes.

When and how should plans be evaluated to see if they are working? What should trigger plan amendments?

- The Forest Plans need to be flexible enough so that the forest can respond to monitoring information which might change the management practice (adaptive management).
- Plan amendment should be based on public input.
- Monitoring and evaluation should occur often enough to allow quick detection of problems and timely response. Don't wait for major revision efforts to make changes.

What is the best way to involve stakeholders in the planning process?

- Comments received from the public should be seriously considered and used in the planning and decision making processes, not ignored. The desires of the local public should be the primary consideration. There needs to be more accountability for how we use comments we receive.
- There needs to be collaboration at different levels (not only nationally for this rule) with stakeholders in order for the forests to understand what type of restoration needs and options exist and how to approach this restoration. There needs to be collaboration at all levels and throughout the management process, not just during plan development.
- There is a need for an accountability process that shows the results of the monitoring. This could be done as part of a collaborative meeting with the stakeholders.

How should the Forest Service collaborate with adjacent landowners, partners, and other agencies and governments in developing Forest Plans?

- The Forest Service at all levels needs to do a better job of presenting the rationale for decisions. The decisions need to be based on well documented facts and science.
- The Forest Service needs to put the management of the forest at a local level. There are several ways this could be accomplished:
 - The Forest Planning should include a local advisory board. This board need to have some teeth and be involved in the decision making process.
 - Cooperation and collaboration needs to continue after the decision is signed and into implementation.
 - Adaptive management needs to include collaboration.
 - Collaboration should include the incorporation of ideas and resources needed to complete projects on the ground
- Need to cast the net wide to include all interested parties. Need to invite all publics in for discussions. The discussions need to be real and there needs to real communication, both ways. This communication needs to include the rationale for the project and for the decision. The Forest Service needs to be accountable for their decisions.

How can the next planning rule foster restoration of NFS lands?

- Part of this comes from the vision – taking the uses into consideration. Take an area and given all the uses you balance those out and decide what you are looking for [desired condition] then make the decision. Need to answer the question “restore to what?” Needs to be linked to a desired condition and needs to include a balance of uses and be kept at a local level. Use historical conditions to inform but not as the desired condition itself.
- Forest plans should be focused at the landscape level and not manage outside of what is sustainable or within the natural range of conditions for that landscape. If we focus on maintaining an appropriate mix of healthy plant communities [appropriate to each landscape] and make sure they are sustainable and diverse and not static at the watershed/landscape level everything else will fall into place (wildlife, water quality, etc. will be good as well). Make this part of the vision (desired condition).
- Management direction that targets individual species or communities is not desirable. You can’t take out one piece of a system and manage for that piece without having unintended consequences for other resources. Using a coarse filter approach is almost always better. Fine filters (management direction that is specific to one species or plant community) should be used sparingly, when the broader scale approach cannot address a critical need.

Substantive Topics

What, if any, climate change assumptions should be used when developing Forest Plans?

- The jury is still out on whether climate change is real or not. When we deal with climate change we should be dealing with only the real science. Climate change may be good or bad for the forest. To put anything in the planning rule that dictates change in management for climate change purposes is wrong, but the rule should provide for adaptive management for proven needs such as drought cycles or whatever.
- It’s a known fact there is trouble with the science dealing with climate change right now, but if the rule were to include adaptive management then the forests can make adjustments for occurrences such as drought cycles. Climate change should be dealt with as it occurs (if it occurs) through monitoring and adaptive management. Don’t guess.
- Climate change should be handled through monitoring not preset prescriptions.
- The forest should use past data collection (monitoring) of climate conditions to address climate change. The data used should be from local sources.
- The forest should develop solutions based on fact not theory or assumptions.
- Any goals or objectives based on climate change need to be developed at the local level.

- If you institute a flexible plan which is not based on uncertainties and theories the plan will be more believable. If you keep responses local you can use local knowledge in responding to the management.
- Make the plan flexible so you can respond to change when it happens. Don't try to guess what changes are coming when you don't really know what they are.

How should the Forest Service take into account water availability, and water quality factors, that are outside of Forest Service control?

- See comments on restoration. If the forest links everything to sustainable ecological communities at landscape levels then everything else will fall into place including water quality and availability. Any gaps can be met through monitoring and adaptive management.

How should the planning rule guide monitoring and protection of at-risk species of animals and plants and their habitats?

- While the planning rule should provide for threatened and endangered species wildlife, they should be managed for by maintaining habitat/healthy landscapes. Don't change the habitat to fit the needs of a few species, rather let the habitat drive the wildlife numbers and determine what is possible. Use historic references to help inform and develop the right levels/diversity of vegetation (desired condition). There may be a time (until you reach the desired condition) where you may have to actively manage more for the individual species, until we get things back in balance. Example: artificially depressing predator numbers until a reintroduced population of bighorn sheep reaches sustainable levels. This would be a short term approach, with the goal of getting back to self-sustaining systems. Sustainable systems require less maintenance. Management for individual species costs more and is not maintainable over the long run. Anything done outside the "natural" order is not sustainable without high levels of investment.

What should the planning rule say about how Forest Plans deal with providing goods and services that contribute to vibrant local, regional, and national economies?

- The Rule should address how to meet the needs of rural economics and local areas. The needs of people should weigh as much or more in decisions as resource conditions.

What should the planning rule say about recreational access, and visitor facilities and services?

- Again, the needs of people, especially local residents who have a long tradition of using the Forest, should be an important consideration in plan development.

Is there anything else you would like to suggest about the forest planning rule?

- Should the Planning Rule include a vision (desired condition) at the Forest level?
- The risk of writing direction for a vision statement at a national level is that it would constrain development of the local vision for the forest.
- It could be worthwhile for the Planning Rule to provide a high level (not detailed) shared vision (desired condition). This would help the forest develop its goals.

Region 4 Planning Rule Roundtable

Summary of Input: Boise National Forest; Boise, ID

General Discussion

What do you think a great planning rule would look like?

- Management priority to functioning ecosystems
- Facilitate meeting Forest Service mission
- Planning rule as simple and brief as possible
- Connectivity, highly functioning resilient ecosystems
- Flexible to incorporate new information
- Pass litigation
- Manage for really long term – 100-200 years
- Address needs of all stakeholders
- Understandable for everyone
- Simplistic
- Conservation emphasis
- Broad emphasis to include everything, i.e. recreation economy, etc.
- Science –driven
- Embrace multiple-use
- Preservation of watersheds
- Consider local impacts
- Re-connect waterways/watersheds to improve fish passage
- Protect and restore natural functions
- Allow migration corridors to accommodate connectivity
- More inclusive collaboration process
- Maintain public use without excessive fees
- Work across boundaries – landowners, agency, etc..
- Method to prioritize allocations for each resource
- Fairness for all parties involved
- Set sideboards that provide flexibility to address local concerns (social, environment, economical, climate change)

What works now; what concepts would you like to continue into the next planning rule?

- Important to have designated wilderness areas
- Species viability
- Re-visited every 10-15 years
- Provide opportunities for plan amendments

- Wildlife population viability
- Accountability –standards and guidelines
- Requirement for public involvement
- Opportunity for public appeal
- Interdisciplinary approach
- Standards “have to do’s” in the Forest Plan – overall guidance at forest scale
- Make standards stronger
- Continue with transparency brought by Internet
- More science-based fluidity to incorporate change

What doesn’t work; what concepts would you like to leave behind?

- Needs to include winter travel planning
- Old ’82 forest plan process not working
- How to translate plans into action – need balance between planning and action – planning should not be “the end”
- Planning doesn’t clearly define outcomes
- Planning is expensive given current budgets
- Increase implementation and monitoring
- Need to be dynamic, fluid, easier to amend – have to be willing to amend
- May have lost expertise and staffing in implementation (lots of planners)
- Don’t maintain SPP viability
- Emphasize role of partners in implementing, monitoring
- Cost and time to re-write plan
- 5-year monitoring report doesn’t work – what’s the benefit of this report?
- Plans are not adaptable
- Annual monitoring reports can be improved – often don’t address issue
- ASQ – leave out – it’s a distraction or re-define its definition to modern times
- Amendment process takes too long – even for small projects
- Every acre shouldn’t have to provide everything for everybody and every species

Plan Content

What kind of information should be included in Forest Plans, and should they include standards and guidelines? If so what kind?

- No net loss of forest public lands
- Inventory and be aware of traditional uses – what’s currently happening
- Science to validate uses on public land
- Qualitative and quantitative data
- Standards and guidelines should be flexible – not start from scratch. Adaptable.

- Accommodate change. Standards and guidelines should be rigid to be held accountable.
- Encourage standards and guidelines in forest plans
- Firmer rules with science base
- Effects of climate change on fish and wildlife
- Broad spectrum for issues like climate change
- Balance between social and science values
- Greater transparency – making information available to decrease FOIA's.
- ACS and WCS and include guidelines for timber, weeds, resources, etc.
- Keeping standards and guidelines – monitoring the guidelines
- Consider cost and economic efficiencies
- Keep management prescriptions
- "Standards and guidelines backbone of plan. Measures accountability."
- Goals and objectives for short/long term
- Standards and guidelines developed at local level – not at a national level
- Reference to state and local plans
- Multiple-use statements and reports
- Collaboration and adaptive management are used to get around standards – also allows FS to not use best available science
- Minimum set of chapters –broken out by topic area (every plan should address climate change, invasive species accessibility, clean water)
- Don't micromanage forest – one size does not fit all
- Money where needs are
- Clean safe drinking water needs to be guaranteed across all forests
- Management areas ought to follow watershed boundaries
- Description of desired conditions: what does success look like?
- Maintain old growth forests and rare habitats, address roads and accessibility – incorporate impacts of wilderness

How consistent should plans be across the country?

- Depends – certain issues re universal, but others need to be more specific to that area
- Consistent set of chapters, topics to address
- Address by ecosystems – consistency across all forest plans should direct and emphasize project planning to address cumulative effects
- All address ecosystem resiliency, incorporate climate change
- Diversity as a way to help maintain resiliency
- Address connectivity
- Consistent format, standards and guidelines flexible
- Broader perspective, collaborative, work with other agencies to work together
- Improve consistency to ensure quality plan. Arbitrary boundaries don't impede good management decisions
- Idaho forests have same roadless rule as other states
- Less direction from national level, more local

- Regional consistency in shared states
- Need to look the same – basic outline should be consistent, layout consistent, same components
- Same numbering system
- Allow local flexibility to address issues and concerns
- Communication between forests to address different approaches
- Regional consistency based on similarities with neighboring forests
- Coordination between similar forest situations
- Adaptive management

Process Topics

What suggestions do you have from making forest planning faster, simpler, more straightforward and less expensive?

- Keeping politician interest to a minimum
- Not revise every 15 years if not necessary
- Less emphasis on outputs and more on what forest can actually sustain. More logic and sense to what forest can actually provide.
- Streamline public input process through technology – web-based comments. Consistent platform for public input.
- Transparency/accessible information on web
- Clear policy, objectives and goals
- More public outreach
- Minimize use of consultants who tend to gloss over issues/impacts
- Forest plan that is site specific
- Follow laws to avoid legal actions
- Programmatic agreements between agencies to avoid political process
- Collaborate and extensive public involvement will make better, more accepted plan – but not shorter or cheaper
- Up-front collaboration can make it shorter, cheaper
- Collaborate on desired future conditions, then let land managers go do it
- Trust the professionals
- Hold managers accountable.
- Making some mistakes and learning – taking a little risk or nothing will get done
- Desired future condition – establish up front
- Forest plans need to be strategic
- Write for average person - simple and succinct
- More photos and graphics
- Better web sites – better graphic design
- FS – don't rely on collaboration as decision making – FS ultimately needs to make decision
- Dedicated pots of money that can't be siphoned off – i.e. monitoring
- Make monitoring mandatory

- Too much time spent on NEPA due to NEPA requirements
- Analysis is important
- Develop committees that are facilitated to work through issues to develop solutions. External groups, interdisciplinary teams. Provide opportunity for creative solutions.
- Less detail in forest plan/ more detail in project
- Don't start from scratch when revising plan. Tweak what works. Better use of adaptive management. Revision versus re-creation
- Science is being questioned – definition of what is being looked at

When and how should plans be evaluated to see if they are working? What should trigger plan amendments?

- Leverage current technology
- Provide consistent public comment
- Monitor incoming feedback via web
- Current system works
- Need for collaborative monitoring (representative group, public group, interested parties)
- Increase of species monitoring/evaluating
- Public involvement in evaluation process
- Variation from a standard
- Notice of a change, or change in condition
- Legal action
- Outcome of 5 year study
- Incorporate stakeholders during evaluation – to a higher degree than current
- Continue annual and 5 year report
- Currently subjective and based on new information
- More willingness – amending requires money, litigation
- Find way to amend that is less expensive
- Major event should trigger amendment
- Monitoring can trigger
- Evaluation to determine next steps
- Hesitancy to open “pandora’s box” through monitoring and evaluation
- Include a specified time for monitoring report
- Threats and how to eliminate. Monitor and evaluate
- How to build in flexibility – stressors – threats don’t necessarily follow bureaucratic timeframes – tie to timeframes that science is finding
- Shorter monitoring intervals for same items

What is the best way to involve stakeholders in the planning process?

- Have to know about process; via web, media, organizations
- Zillions of Forest Service users but are not involved
- Social networking in a targeted way

- Figure out how to involve young people!
- More creative meetings: roundtables a good start
- Retail locations
- Be creative with outreach
- Stakeholders aren't just people next door: they are all taxpayers!
- Web site: ways to "register" to be involved in projects x, y and z
- Drive people to your blogs
- Some people want to get involved only when their interests are affected: how to get in touch with them beforehand?
- Trailhead signs
- Website address on permits
- People tend to want to be involved in specific projects and that's okay!
- "Sex up" the planning process
- Technology (blogs, e-mail lists, web)
- Consistent delivery of info
- Collaboration close to the ground
- More outreach
- Innovative in public interaction (i.e., field trips, get uninterested people interested in projects; on the ground meetings)
- Open house/town hall meetings
- Public hearings – speak in microphones
- Video clips that cover projects
- Traditional methods: newspapers, radio, TV
- Through NEPA process
- Put more information on website (Forest)
- Consistency on website
- Get more user groups involved; subscribable website
- Local stakeholder groups, video teleconference; weblogs – using a number of different methods to reach audiences
- Web: having a go-to place
- Also see notes for question 9 below

How should the Forest Service collaborate with adjacent landowners, partners, and other agencies and governments in developing Forest Plans?

- Need for collaboration
- Upper management needs to listen
- Video teleconference
- Roundtables with interested parties
- Focus collaboration on goals and objectives
- Engage stakeholders in the beginning
- Also see notes for questions 5, 8 above

How can the next planning rule foster restoration of NFS lands?

- Restoration needs to be defined: what does restoration include/exclude?
- Desire future forest conditions should remain
- Adaptation in terms of restoration
- Make definition of restoration well known
- Rule could allow forests to identify restoration areas
- Restoration = desired future condition
- Restoration as defining what we once had may not be realistic or achievable
- Sustainable – protecting resources and providing what we want
- Restoration is targeting sustainable conditions – proactive, not reactive
- Need definition and timeframe
- Nonmotorized fosters restoration.
- But horses create impacts! Snowmobile tracks don't last
- What IS restoration?
- Areas managed for multiple use where necessary. Balance opportunity.
- More integrated ecosystems. Creating a balance
- Consistent definition. Find ways to minimize human disturbance as treatments. Natural systems.
- Less engineered solutions.
- Better job of infrastructure inventory. Knowing what we have and not building more.
- Mitigation and monitoring instead of prohibition.

Substantive Topics

What, if any, climate change assumptions should be used when developing Forest Plans?

- A potential assumption
- What does climate change mean to Forest Service?
- Recognize as potential influence and make “tweaks” as necessary.
- Maintaining diversity at landscape level
- Assume it's a changing state
- Forest Plans should recognize climates will change and have always changed
- Maintain habitats so wildlife can adapt
- Things moving fast but still need to adhere to NEPA process
- Rec patterns will have to change (i.e., less snow)
- Forests are carbon sinks: grazing releases carbon and makes less of a carbon sink
- Climates changing at a faster rate now (due to human influence?). More quickly than wildlife can adapt – may not be able to maintain habitats.
- Uncertainty – not sure how climate change will affect Forests – have Plans that are adaptable

- Create diversity in structure and size to enhance resilience.
- Some structures and species may be more adaptable.
- Intensive management may not be socially acceptable.
- Forest Plans should look at climate change regionally.
- Use Precautionary Principle: use caution when making decisions so as not to cause damage.
- Use existing climate change science
- Use actual knowledge – don't make assumptions
- Maintain areas of habitat that aren't fragmented
- Majority consensus to make decision: standard for percentage of agreement
- Forest can act as "safe haven" for wildlife, fauna, etc.
- Protect higher elevation lands and watersheds
- Emphasis between BLM and Forest Service in working together. Winter/summer habitat collaboration.
- Make plans with the understanding that forests trap carbon that if released will have an effect

How should the Forest Service take into account water availability, and water quality factors, that are outside of Forest Service control?

- Crucial water quality/quantity are not overly consumed or impacted
- Pollution concerns. Buffer to minimize impacts of pollution on water quality
- Water accessibility and availability
- Aquifers – not just what is on the surface.
- Be cautious not to overstep boundary on water rights.
- Coordinate with State and other agencies.
- Each Forest should review this based on situation.
- Issue needs to be addressed outside of the plan.

How should the planning rule guide monitoring and protection of at-risk species of animals and plants and their habitats?

- Species viability. Monitor species populations.
- Do we need more policy on top of existing policies: no need to replicate
- Mitigate and monitor; don't prohibit without knowing effects
- FS needs rules and regulations and to monitor. Take ownership of wildlife on FS lands.
- Multiple land-use needs collaboration. Collaborative process in place.
- Management indicator species – expand and retain
- Need more indicator species
- Lack of education on decision process for species: listing
- Mindful of mitigation corridors/habitat conditions
- Need baseline information, including systematic surveys in order to determine trend.
- Assessment over large-scale: good communication between regions to assess movement

- Determine responsibility for species to determine who monitors and pays for
- Consistency in data sources
- Maintain management indicator species (“canary in a coal mine”) – make sure the ones you pick are appropriate
- Need to have the tools to deal with the threats
- FS talks across Forest boundaries and to Research
- Enforceable viability standards
- Monitoring of populations AND habitats
- Wildlife Conservation Strategy and Aquatic Conservation Strategy
- Standards and guides
- Spatial genetics
- Consultation with State agencies
- Population viability

What should the planning rule say about how Forest Plans deal with providing goods and services that contribute to vibrant local, regional, and national economies?

- Need to be considered
- People living near forests need a voice (rural)
- Everyone needs a voice (urban and rural, those making or not making living off forest)
- Accountability on those making a living off forest products
- Provide balance for all people, not just locals
- Every acre cannot provide everything for everybody
- Definition of goods and services changing
- Need viability (timber, wildlife, etc.) to be sustainable
- Everyone has a definition of goods and services
- Maximize goods and services
- Sustainable goods and services
- Make clear: clean water, sense of place, ecosystem values, recreational opportunities
- Make broad
- To contribute to vibrant economies, need “certainty (i.e., likely availability) of supply – on the other hand, what industry really gets that certainty?
- Loggers help us achieve our silvicultural objectives
- How do we place a value on the nonquantifiable things that are important, without privatizing them?
- People value things even if they are not next to them: national economy
- How to we maintain the skills that allow us to get the work done?
- Accept the fact that there’s not much demand for foresters, miners. Recreation helps economies keep going.
- Planning rule should say that Forest Plans should consider and account for all economies and support them.
- The change in the timber industry has forever changed the culture, lifestyle and economy in areas of rural America that traditionally made their living in the National Forest system.

The planning process should incorporate considerations to address this. Some would say that the people impacted should move, re-educate or adapt to cope, but I would argue that for some this is simply not possible whether due to age, disability or other factors. The plan should consider this socio/economic factor as previous plans and policy are to, in part, blame. Ideas to generate new industry for the local economy should be considered such as recreation, alternative fuels and other modern industries.

What should the planning rule say about recreational access, and visitor facilities and services?

- Addressed at local level
- Develop standards and guidelines
- Follow template of Travel Rule
- Make it required
- Providing info on recreational access etc
- Make available
- Should address airstrips
- Not one size fits all
- Recognize local communities are affected economically and socially. Disagree: functioning ecosystems should be priority, not social and economic effects.
- Bicycles should be treated as non-motorized.
- No one recreational vehicle or user has more right than others.
- Open up new opportunities in addition to or in lieu of restrictions – but one size does not fit all – not true in all cases.
- Fees for mountain bikes, etc: voluntary or required. They use facilities too.
- Gas tax/motorized fee facilities are open to all!
- Honor grandfathered uses!
- Rule should require winter travel planning and account for motorized impacts (i.e., noise)
- Greater understanding of impacts that various uses cause and not assume that one use has more impact than another. Negative and positive effects. Use science to help determine impact.
- Recognize cultural and wildlife management role of hunting.
- Understanding what best places to hunt and fish look like.
- Don't privatize our lands or permitting processes.
- Important to economic situations
- Encourage people to recreate – sense of place, healthy for society
- Fancy facilities are not necessary – rustic, primitive. "Not Disneyland in the woods."
- Balance recreation with sustainability.
- Emphasis on children in woods, education
- Education outreach
- Public lands belong to everyone with all abilities. Multiple use, multiple access.
- Long-term perspective: wildlife sustainability, watershed sustainability. Availability for future generations.

Is there anything else you would like to suggest about the forest planning rule?

- Keep public involved
- Keep more people involved
- Keeping perspective of money – not too frugal: this is important!
- Summary for people to help with understanding
- Better understanding of current plan
- Airstrips need to be addressed
- This roundtable is good approach to hear others' interests
- Another way to collaborate with one another
- Closely evaluate cost of forming a new rule vs. making tweaks to existing rule
- Not totally convinced this new process will be successful
- Difference in approaches to various roundtables across Regions: why?
- Have 45-day comment period after FEIS, to allow for comment before a decision is made. Then make appeal period short.
- Make above true for Forest Plans and other NEPA docs.
- Need good public outreach!
- Adopt WAFMA recommendations for domestic sheep and goat management in wild sheep habitat.
- Implementing a process is not success! Sustaining the health, diversity and productivity of land and resources is!

Region 4 Planning Rule Roundtable

Summary of Input; Bridger-Teton National Forest; Jackson, WY

General Discussion

What do you think a great planning rule would look like?

- Current issues/adaptive portion/different scale/short term-long term
- Recreation as additional element in forest planning rule
- New rule should require that we address the climate change issue
- Long term perspective....shifting out of 1950s era commodities based process into recognition of preciousness of forest service areas to provide various services...from overarching perspective very definitive requirements that these aspects of watershed, species conservation be the overarching objective.
- Enforceable standards and guidelines
- 2000 rule elevated ecological above social and economic – ecological long term sustainability of wildlife, water, ecosystem services should take precedence
- New rule should be transparent, accessible...so that we see everybody's viewpoint all along...so..that there are no backroom discussions that are private...they should be public
- Landscape level...ecosystem approach accommodate the paradigm shift with an ecosystem approach...not to be owned by political boundaries but by ecosystem boundaries
- Structure within planning rule for individual forest units to retain information for future iterations
- Science-based decision making and planning (e.g. BLM RMP decisions are being made behind closed door by a group of cooperators/elected representatives, and is not a situation where it's science based...it's politically based)
- Inclusivity should be an integral part in the planning rule....
- Accountability....there should be a mechanism for feedback
- Local emphasis of planning rule
- Keep the public engaged in entire planning process
- More emphasis on roads
- Specificity of plan...contract with public for use of land
- Local support of outdoor alliances

- Comprehensive transportation vision should be a component...also planning for the future...multi-modal...
- Multi-jurisdictional approach to transportation...
- Plan should be specific about what the Forest should look like down the road at different intervals...
- Maintain health of the Forest...needs to be funded and maintained annually....above wildlife preservation...live trees vs. dead trees
- Plan needs to address use of the Forest, by everyone in every way
- This planning rule is a wonderful opportunity for the FS to create structures to insulate and de-politicize the process of managing national forests. To think through a science based process to develop insulations within the rule...so...that every few years we don't have to recreate new rules and new plans...there are structures within the rule that insulate the plan from being a political football....
- Worried about consistency...if we get everything standard aren't we susceptible to the winds of change...likes the inconsistency by individual forest rather than overarching plan.
- Better address concept of visitor experience...provide guidance on what are the minimum standards to describe economic development and trails and tourism
- Some standards need to be required in all forests in the overarching planning rule...and, then, some adaptive management at the regional level...
- Needs to address human powered recreation better...is a significant contributor to state and national economies
- Plan should be insulated to shocks from outside forces...ie when a new chief comes in everything changes...that shouldn't happen...the planning rule should insulate the plan from such changes
- Should be an advocacy group for the Forest Service...the FS is the great step-child of American gov't....we're the only agency that doesn't have a strong advocacy group
- Science-based planning and decision making; not political, back-roomed based
- Inclusivity
- Accountability, monitoring, feedback of results
- Current
- Adaptive
- Landscape scales; not political boundaries; scale varies
- Short term and long term planning cycles and perspectives
- Include recreation as an element of the Rule
- Climate change
- Watershed functioning
- Species conservation

- Enforceable standards and guidelines
- Ecological
- Transparent process (again, not backroom decisions)
- Ecosystem boundaries, not ownership or political bdrys
- Keep the Plan alive; structured review, revision or updates at planned points
- Change focus and tone of Rule from 1950's commodities to services not able to be produced on private lands.
- Responsive: to people, to change; to laws.
- Timely, flexible – NFMA requires a 10 year planning timeframe; too long.
- Ecological management (water and wildlife, etc) should be the most important component of the Forest Planning effort.
- Use ecological boundaries for forest planning, not political.
- Decision making should be based on the best available science, not on political whims.
- The Plan must be inclusive of all resources. All multiple use interests need representation in the planning process.
- It would be wise to look at a more programmatic approach to land management to help in capturing the cumulative effects that are occurring. The project by project approach of accounting for cumulative effects might be missing the impacts.
- This process is an opportunity for the Forest Service to de-politicize forest management and to make it science-driven. Structures should be developed to insulate the process from politics to keep management from being a political football.
- Inclusive but time-sensitive
- Responsive to laws and people's needs in a timely way so people aren't waiting for voices to be heard (include a feedback loop)
- Forests shouldn't be trapped by old rules in Forest Plan if landscape / ecosystem has changes before new Forest Plan can be written (FP needs to be adaptable and responsive to changes in environment)
- Ecosystem Function as the foundation, strengthening the ecosystem
- Maintain health of the forest through action and funding
- Streamline the Forest Plan process so it doesn't take 10 years to write a Forest Plan
- Current AND Adaptive (to stay current)
- Needs to address both geographic scales and short- vs. long-time scales
- Recreation needs to be an additional element within the Rule
- Require that climate is addressed
- Long-term perspective means shifting the priority of Land Mgt Plans to focus on watershed function and species conservation
- Must require enforceable standards (and guidelines)

- All analysis needs built-in feedback loops for accountability/transparency
- A 'nested approach' could offer levels of requirements that hold the same core value but with more or less depth required might allow adaptation to various constraints.
- Tribal consultation important at all levels, not just at National Level
- Who determines how 'feasible' a proposed Rule requirement might be? Be cognizant of need for transparency when making this determination.
- A great Rule would reconcile the useable parts of historical Rules with new/updated ideas.
- Rule must require responsive feedback loops with changing national/global conditions.
- Forest planning needs to be inclusive but time sensitive, none of this going on forever and ever. It needs to be responsive to people, changes, laws and people's needs in a timely way, not decades down the road. Right now it's anything but that. The planning process needs to take into consideration changing conditions, look at climate change in year 1 or year 20. Require interim feedback from users that help meet needs and is flexible. For example some challenges facing ranchers regarding predators need to be addressed. The answer is not kicking them off. They feel trapped. Rules in places where there are no bears and wolves, don't work well here where we do have them. Allotments that spreads over two ranger districts where rangers don't see eye to eye create problems for permittees. Forest plans need to be organized, consistent and responsive.
- People need to get involved. They complain that they had no input but when asked, they don't come to the table.
- It's frustrating that one comment is as good as 300. For example when the Sierra Club creates a standardized postcard with a comment for members and the public to sign and send in and that only counts as one comment but when an individual sends in their own comment it carries the same weight.
- Current issues should be adaptive at different scales both short term and long term.
- Add an element in the plan for recreation. It should be its own element in planning the rule.
- New rule should require that we add climate as an issue/element.
- In the long term perspective we need to shift out of the 1950 era commodities mode and recognize the preciousness of public lands and be able to provide services that are not provided by private or commercial sources.
- Open lands here should not be owned by political boundaries.
- Good plan should contain structure that requires the Forest Service to consider what is known, and maintain assessed structure w/in the west, very important for water resources, species conservation, soil conservation, overarching foundation which timber sales et met before commodities .

- Planning rule needs enforceable standards and guidelines. 2000 rule elevates standards above range of multiple use and is not well represented by government.
- Diverse interests should be recognized.
- Look at multiple use as well as financial considerations.
- Ecological sustainability at the ecosystem level should take precedence.
- Procedural rule should be transparent, open and accessible.
- Submitted comments should be on web for all to see.
- Process should be open, not special interest groups in back room getting their own way.
- Need landscape level ecosystem approach.
- Individual units need to maintain their existing plan from year one so they don't have to go back and start over.
- Should use science based decisions and planning process.
- BLM RMP decision was being made behind closed doors by cooperators.
- Science based, not political based planning.
- Inclusivity should be focus of planning process.
- Have feedback loop for accountability to do project monitoring effort," did we do it?"
- Instill needed budget for monitor or research.
- Share data/information with other districts and agencies. Do not develop brand new database or mesh files [shouldn't have to recreate or duplicate efforts]. Incorporate cooperation and sharing of data given budget constraints.
- Deals with current issues and is adaptive
- Looks at different landscape scales
- Considers short and long term issues
- Addresses Climate Change
- Takes the long term perspective
- Shifts out of a commodities based perspective to a perspective that views the land as a precious resource that provides invaluable services such as watershed, wildlife habitat, etc.
- Recreation should be an additional element
- It should have enforceable standards and guidelines
- The old rules treat ecology, social and economic considerations as equal—the new rule should place ecological issues above social and economic considerations
- Ecology should be the foundation for everything else
- Structure the Planning Rule to insulate it from politics, so that the rule isn't changed every time an administration changes—it should be science driven not politics driven.
- It should provide guidance on the contribution of recreation to economic development—recreation may be more economically valuable than commodity production.
- Emphasize the social/economic value of human-powered recreation

- The Rule should provide guidance at the ecosystem scale rather than at the Ranger District.
- There should be a built in feedback loop so that when changes occur, Forest Plans can be amended quickly to respond to a changing environment.

What works now; what concepts would you like to continue into the next planning rule?

- Excellent job with winter planning rule and would like to see it incorporated into the summer planning rule
- Avoid pitfalls of issues surrounding viability
- Putting ecosystem function as foundation as opposed to other situations...strengthening it from a good idea on paper to a real action on the ground
- Planning rule should require that all forest plans go through the NEPA process
- Travel Planning on the BTNF is a great example of great planning that worked; No appeals. Now need to complete task with winter travel planning
- Focus on Species Viability needs to be kept from 1982 Rule
- Perception that decisions are already made prior to NEPA scoping is changing.
- Motorized planning process—with intensive public outreach in developing proposed action—was great. Include Winter Travel Planning in Rule to require similar process.
- Species viability focus and ecosystem functioning requirements are good (on paper).
- Full NEPA compliance for Forest Plans is important.
- Summer travel plan effort went well, would like to see it expanded into the winter travel plan. Winter travel needs to address motor vehicle routes, have component added to planning rule. Winter travel planning included in plan rule.
- Species viability issues surrounding an ecosystem should be used as foundation as opposed to other situations.
- Planning rule should result in real action on the ground.
- Implementation has worked, need the ability to conduct EIS's . New planning rule should require forest plans go through the full NEPA process.
- Need good communication? Is there a need for revising NEPA process?
- Climate change is a consideration.
- Go through the full NEPA process
- Summer Travel Planning is an example of a very inclusive and successful project—bottle it
- Species viability should be a component of the next planning rule
- Ecosystem function should be a component
- Winter travel planning should be a component
- Open meetings where everyone gets to hear what everyone else is saying works well—dividing the public up into tables for individual discussion does not work well—it is a

divide and conquer approach that seems to be aimed at limiting the public's exposure to all sides of the various issues.

- Meeting with individual groups privately to hear their viewpoints works well (as in the Northern Travel Plan)—this allows groups to express themselves fully without being interrupted or intimidated by people with opposite opinions.
- Tribal consultation is important—there is an impression that this had been lacking in the past. It was explained that this is a Nation to Nation consultation and it is required.

What doesn't work; what concepts would you like to leave behind?

- In 1982 mountain bikes didn't exist...mountain biking should be considered non-motorized with clear regulations for that use...shouldn't be lumped with motorized use...should be clumped with human motorized uses...hiking,
- Species viability issue was nice on paper....but, as we see species declining, the process as it is currently being implemented is not sufficient
- Focus on desired conditions...outcome in management area or larger part of Forest where you have seemingly opposite desired conditions in the same Forest area...then the FS chooses 5 or 6 that aren't workable together...some better workability of management of desired conditions
- Process be applied uniformly across Forests....during each planning for each Forest...how should the content be uniform?
- Universal zones/colors on all FS maps/information
- Project by project approach doesn't work so well.....look at something more programmatic
- Forest planning is very resource intensive..so...in order to do that well, the agency needs to provide the Forests with additional resources to accomplish their planning goals
- Gap between research and management...between researchers and feet on the ground
- Public didn't know impact of their input in past discussions....
- Aspirational nature of forest plans (plan should be contract for use and processes of the Forest...so that there's specificity and not...we'd like to have healthy this and enjoyable that...)
- Social sciences need to be better applied...especially addressing recreational conflicts...
- Getting people to attend more meetings. Always asking people to attend, seeking input, not using it, and then making decision other than what the people presented.
- Finding new ways to get people involved; email is new, but don't forget that not everyone has moved to the email world; some still operate by hard mail and FAX....don't switch totally.
- A focus on Desired Conditions across the Forest has highlighted the incompatibility of activities on the same piece of ground without necessarily providing for a prioritization of uses. What is the point?

- Mountain Biking needs to be classified as a non-motorized use
- Species Viability process not sufficient in current implementation
- Focus on desired condition; Conflicting desired conditions don't mesh well with one another in current land management areas
- Need the same process for each forest to apply uniformity in planning
- Monitor cumulative effects for multiple projects at the same time
- Mountain biking needs to be treated as a non-motorized activity.
- Species viability process as written is insufficient.
- Strengthen requirements for social science inclusion.
- Roads (see Outdoor Alliance comments on NOI): require assessment and plan to decommission, invest in, or convert roads to trails.
- Comprehensive Transportation Assessment/Vision should be a required element and should be both multi-modal and multi-jurisdictional.
- Collaboration across agencies not currently required.
- Ways of counting comments—especially group form letters that are discounted but represent a viable comment from large numbers of busy constituents—needs to change.
- People need to get involved. They complain that they had no input but when asked, they don't come to the table.
- It's frustrating that one comment is as good as 300. For example when the Sierra Club creates a standardized postcard with a comment for members and the public to sign and send in and that only counts as one comment but when an individual sends in their own comment it carries the same weight.
- The new planning rule should look at activities that were not an issue in 1982 such as mountain Biking. Now mountain biking should be included as non-motorized activity and given clear regulation for use and not lumped in with motorized use. Mountain biking needs better inclusion and consideration.
- Species viability is nice on paper as seen as a process but implement as it is now is not sufficient.
- Currently there is too much focus on desired future conditions (Dfc's) and the outcome is that a management area can have opposite desired conditions in same area. Dfc's don't work together. It's frustrating to have the different interests mashed together where you have incompatible uses of the same area. They decide what are desired conditions then choose all of the activities as compatible.
- Process should be applied uniformly across ecosystems during each planning for each forest.
- There should content be uniformity. The "dfc zoning" project by project approach is frustrating. It's difficult to track and monitor if on project by project level. The focus is on

gathering data at the risk of having cumulative impacts. Let go of project by project approach.

- There is a gap between research and management. Using scientific data is critical to get work done on the ground. It is hard to do and we need to make that smoother.
- Don't want to lose sense of "localness". Have broad FS cookbook for overall but each area has different concerns and issues. Locals need to be included in rule. Need to be kept in the loop as to where we're going. Don't know how much weight our input has. Keep the public engaged as you develop alternatives and at every step. Need to frequently update the public.
- FS plans should be a contract for the use of public lands and dictate the process to go through. Contract for use of public lands what and will happen on the land with details planned out.
- Social sciences need be better applies to FS planning.
- More on ground addressing of roads network on the land. Fs plan process should be three steps; 1) decommission un-used roads 2) better maintain current roads 3) convert rails to trails. Local support for outdoor all submission of NOI.
- The new planning rule should require a comprehensive travel vision that both assesses the current system and plans for the future by including transit opportunities. Appropriate for rule to be assessed at multiple jurisdiction approach. Fed hwy program rule should required that it be assessed.
- Mountain biking should not be considered with motorized transportation
- Get rid of the desired future conditions (DFCs)—incompatible DFCs are often included on the same piece of ground—which makes them meaningless
- The process of determining species viability is not sufficient
- The Planning Rule should better address visitor experience
- The NEPA process should not be outsourced to contractors—contractors are more expensive and do a poor job as compared to the documents produced by Forest Service personnel.
- There is too much emphasis on commercialized commodity production and services—more emphasis should be placed on aesthetic/spiritual values that are hard to put a dollar value on.
- There should be a different way of evaluating public comments—one letter with one opinion should not be equal to 300,000 letters expressing the same opinion.
- The process takes too long. It should not take 10 years to develop or revise a Forest Plan.
- Forest Plans of different forests should not be contradictory.

Plan Content

What kind of information should be included in Forest Plans, and should they include standards and guidelines? If so what kind?

- Standards and guidelines
- Science, monitoring, assessment
- Climate change adaptation language
- Information and science re: at risk species; prioritize
- Forest Plans should provide a high level of specificity regarding potential zones for future projects.
- Perception - Concern that historically, Forests have been funded based some on Stds & Gds; If this goes away, will it affect the budget?
- Stds & Gds should be coordinated across resources; often one program area Std & Gds is at odds with another program area, so they cancel out each other.
- Forest Plans should be contractual, not aspirational in determining land management decision-making.
- Citizen time is limited. Forest Plans should be specific enough that members of the public can be involved at that level and not also feel the need to be involved in every project.
- Standards and Guidelines have been the drivers for budgets if they are eliminated how will Forest budgets be determined?
- Address use and enjoyment of the Forest in Forest Plans
- Insulate Plans from political back and forth
- Year-to-year Forest Plan updates should be required
- Economic Development assessments should be required
- Standards addressing Wildlife and climate change need to be in Planning Rule
- Need time requirement for Forest Plan development to implementation (1 ½ - 2 ½ years)
- Are guidelines even with the explicit reasoning behind them strong enough?
- Science-based standards might buffer from political winds.
- Standards must be carefully crafted so as not to compete against each other across resource categories.
- Do standards still drive budgets? If not, what does?
- Must fully address 'Use and enjoyment'
- Forest Health Focus, eg. Live Trees, including specifying funding mechanisms, must be part of each Forest Plan.
- Rule must specify that plans use rigorous social science to address visitor experience and economic analyses (econ benefits must consider trails/tourism importance).
- What is agency take on standards and guidelines?

- Why wouldn't we want to have standards? I don't like to see it go up and down. We need to have standards and guidelines to keep consistency.
- One problem with Standards & Guidelines is that they were written to cancel each other out. The outcome is left to discretion. Someone has to decide. Standards are not always a solution. They compete with each other and it is not helpful. Standards & Guidelines are drivers for resource management, they drive budget. Where would that direction come from without Standards & Guidelines? Planning rule should require that standards not be self defeating. They must work together.
- Ecosystem functions are similar by geographic regions. Don't need to be a lengthy process, just overview. Site specific standards & guidelines can be added on top. Plans should incorporate a large group of forests by ecosystem. Regions meaning area with similar characteristics not FS Regions.
- Have provisions for standards and guidelines.
- Best management practices based on ecosystem management.
- Plan has to address use of Forest and how it's going to be used.
- The number one thing is to maintain health of forest. FS has done a bad job so far. Agencies need to be funded and maintained. Health of Forest should be number one above use. Live trees instead of dead trees. Act on issues and problems, not talk on. Need to become forest management agency that manages for everyone not just a few. Start at bottom with the taxpayer, not at the top. Not by making rules.
- Maintaining the health of the forest should be the number one consideration
- It should be a science driven process
- Some standards should be in all Forest Plans but other standards may be specific to certain forests or regions
- Every Plan shouldn't look the same –there should be overarching standards but also individual standards and guidelines
- Standards are more valuable than guidelines since the Forest does not have to follow its guidelines.
- Standards should not contradict or compete with each other.
- If you don't have funds, how do you implement standards and guidelines?
- Right now standards and guidelines drive the budget process. If you do away with standards and guidelines, what will be the driver?

How consistent should plans be across the country?

- Should be singular set of standards and guidelines across Districts and Forests on an ecosystem basis in the rule...the site specific stuff can be added later on in actual Forest Plans...more like a regional ecosystem

- Plans should be based on landscape zones; Greater Yellowstone area differs from the Nebraska area or from the New England area. The Rule should provide some connection to the landscape, which will likely affect the Plan and result in differences in Plans.
- Landscape zones or types may also cause the various forests to work more closely together, again in the case of the Greater Yellowstone Area, which could help forest users and or permittees better understand the resources and management needs.
- The lack of uniformity in Plan level direction across different Forest units is problematic for the public and commodity users.
- There needs to be allowances in Planning for local differences between Forest units.
- Standards and Guidelines for a Forest Plan should reflect and be unified for a larger ecoregion; i.e. the entire West should use the same set of standards and guidelines
- Individualized Standards and Guidelines for each forest prevent Top-Down political influence
- Plans should be consistent within eco-zones; each eco-zone would be autonomous to address logical consistencies in its ecosystem.
- Current administrative regions are not good ways to establish different planning templates (eg GYA is R1, 2, 4).
- Consistency level should be based on science: landscape or eco-regional consistency.
- Too much consistency (nation-wide) could yield political vulnerability.
- Some standards in the Rule would be useful.
- Problems with consistency create confrontation; ex. "is it possible to have more wilderness areas created?" The answer in one forest is "No, there is a lock out". How then, can one forest say yes? Inconsistency is hard to work with. Direction should be people based, or by each forest. As it is now it is confusing.
- There has to be a broader perspective.
- The development of a new planning rule is a good opportunity to create structure and to depoliticize the FS planning process. Avoid creating new plan rules and FS plan elements that insulate plans from being political football. So we don't have to keep changing process. Scientist who develop standards and guidelines for a plan and then insulate it from political forces/influences.
- Need consistency but don't standardize everything. Need to also keep individuality of each Forest. One size doesn't fit all.
- Every ten years update not throw out all.
- New rule should require that plans better address concept of visitor experience. This is an important part of managing forests.

- What are minimum standards for economic development such as tourism? Plans need to address these items. Rule should require rigor to economic issues from a tourism/trails standpoint.
- Need to include human powered recreation. How recreation relates to economy locally.
- Some standards need to be required in all forest plans and also adaptive management practices.
- Some standards should be required in planning process but also flexibility at local level. On certain topics there are tradeoffs with consistency standards. If every plan is the same they are more subject to political whims. National quota on board feet etc.
- Require standards for such overarching issues as climate change and other important areas, which should not be left to each individual forest to decide.
- Planning rule should provide some way to insulate the process so it is not subject to political change. Science based not political based process.
- The new planning rule should include time requirement for planning process with a deadline (2 yr etc).
- We need a paradigm shift from basing everything on political boundaries to ecosystem boundaries.
- The landscape and other ecosystem factors should determine how consistent Forest Plans should be. Forests in the intermountain region may need to be different than Forest Plans in the Northeast.

Planning and decisions should be science-based not politics-based.

Process Topics

What suggestions do you have from making forest planning faster, simpler, more straightforward and less expensive?

- Outsourcing costs a lot more with much lower quality...much more expensive than if the Forest had just hired their own people to do the work...should be NO outsourcing...
- Another person thinks that consultants can be useful with data collection, meeting content management, etc....thinks that NEPA done by the Forest is well done
- Perception that there is too much planning and nothing actually results from planning.
- Two to three years from "tension" in conversations to dialogue to decision/implementation. Then feedback and start the process again as needed.
- People are tired of Planning; can't wait until the next life to see results.
- Outsourcing does not increase efficiency – it ends up costing more for lesser quality.
- Hiring professional facilitators helps public involvement efforts.
- Plans should be required to be completed in 1.5 to 2.5 years max.

- Update plans regularly so they do not need a major, time-consuming revision effort.
- Forest need resources to complete/revise plans – the work should not be “other duties as assigned” – 2 years is a good goal.
- Confrontation between forest plans difficult to work through
- Use adaptive planning on a fairly regular basis in the Forest Plan to make things faster so don’t have to reinvent the entire Forest Plan if a change needs to be made
- Don’t use outsourcing, it costs twice as much and has a reduced quality
- Consultants can be helpful in certain roles
- Increased transparency including explaining/presented to be understandable would avoid FOIAs.
- Utilize Rule Changes.
- Need interim process.
- Solving issues before they get big would save a lot of time and money.
- Every 2 years some have some process for comprehensive evaluation. Correct some situations so every 10 yrs don’t have to re-create plans.
- Do updates, small changes, to fix what’s broken. It is a massive undertaking to write plan and the agency needs human resources to help accomplish this huge task.
- Address the use of advocacy groups. FS currently does not have that.
- There are not funds adequate to do on ground work. BT deserves enough funds to manage the resources adequately.
- Outsourcing is usually more costly, the quality much worse, and generates worthless material. I do not want to see outsourcing of forest planning.
- I disagree, FS knows what it’s doing but contractors also know what they are doing and can have a role in getting comments etc. and can play helpful role.
- Yes data collection ok but not for actual planning and actual work.
- Doing an annual review is a good idea and may make the process shorter.
- Involve the public by in by keeping them informed and involved along the planning process.
- The process should be applied uniformly across the forests.
- Keep the public engaged with regular updates
- Dump the aspirational nature of Forest Plans
- The Forest Plan should be a contract for the use and management of the land
- Update the Forest Plan annually
- There should be more time efficiency in developing Forest Plans—they shouldn’t take more than 2-2 ½ years to develop.
- Apply adaptive management—solve problems before they get big—amend the plan—so every 15 years the plan does not need a major revision.

- The Forest Service needs an independent national advocacy group that can advocate for funds and other assistance on behalf of the Service.
- Hiring professional facilitators for public meetings is well worth the money spent—this would be an exception to the general rule that the NEPA process should not be contracted out.
- The process should be responsive to people's needs, changes in the environment, and laws.

When and how should plans be evaluated to see if they are working? What should trigger plan amendments?

- Annual review of the forest planning process is good...it seems to make the entire process be shorter
- Should not take longer than 2-3 years to revise Plan, may be no need to do a total restart from ground zero. Build on what is working; add new needs; revise quickly.
- Resource Information needs to be tracked more thoroughly and on a continuous basis after the Forest Plan is signed.
- An iterative process—maybe every 2 years—would evaluate and correct Plans, so new Plan mostly makes itself by year 10.
- FS needs to better utilize an advocacy group (Nat'l Forest Foundation insufficient, needs to be private) to secure funds necessary for Planning.
- Outsourcing can be helpful for public inputs/comment analysis.
- Do you have any good example of good plans that are working? Answer; BT's 1990 plan is good it just needs tweaking....not a full revision.
- What kinds of changes is the public asking for in the [current BT] plan? Answer; When something comes up or there is a change, those portions of the plan need amended. Keep the plan alive.
- People ought to expect a feedback loop about what is going to happen and be able to see that that it happens. Every three or six months or quarterly, get feedback then work it into process. People feel they are not being heard.
- How many groups do you invite during planning process? Answer; We invite interested members of the public
- Apply research to management
- Forest Plans should be more programmatic –the public is frustrated by the Project by Project process
- There should be some kind of feedback loop – so if something is not working – you can change it (adaptive management)
- Social science needs to be better applied to the plan

What is the best way to involve stakeholders in the planning process?

- Re: comp plan...some of the best meetings were where stakeholders were invited to meetings for discussions...they especially targeted/chose people/groups who were particular stakeholders in the subject..it was very effective...
- Meetings like this are very effective...there's good, open dialogue in a large interested group..a good collaborative conversation
- Work with stakeholder groups
- Talking about process in developing the Bridger-Teton travel management plan....it was effective....there wasn't any litigation...a good example of collaboration with public.
- One person said that he was in those meetings and didn't feel like he could really participate...it was more commercialized than across the board groups....good cross section of the community
- Update and involve the public more frequently than is required by an EIS. Hold meetings between scoping and the draft and between the draft and the final
- Engaged citizens should have their concerns addressed at a Forest planning level, rather than feel a need to follow a quarterly schedule of Proposed Action Report
- Need humans on the other end of the telephone line; need a response, not a voicemail; often no follow up response to voicemails.
- Need to insist and assist people to attend meetings; personal invites.
- Again, not just informing by the new electronic methods; still people out there who use regular mail.
- Meeting format has changed too much from podium (speaker platform) to stations (diffused small groups), sometimes necessary to reduce the conflict. Sometimes, however, there is a proper situation for grandstanding, to allow people to make a statement and be heard by others. Stations have defused conflict and with it, discussion.
- Too many meetings; people get worn down. The Forest Service is not the only community group to ask for public involvement; people's time is divided amongst many options. People's lives are very busy. Forest Service can do better by reducing the number of meetings while making the meetings more effective.
- Often a feeling that decisions have already been made and the information presented at the public meeting really doesn't matter.
- Resource Information needs to be tracked more thoroughly and on a continuous basis after the Forest Plan is signed.
- Public meetings should be conducive to dialog. Being heard is critical.
- Breaking into small groups can feel like a "divide and conquer" strategy. Just being able to hear a group report out at the end is not enough – the conversation itself is valuable.
- Forest Plan development and should be an iterative process that continually engages the public.
- Equal air time at meetings.
- Direct invitations to all known stakeholders (participants were known by FS but not directly invited, found out in paper).
- Purchased ads work better than free news releases.

- Need proof of sincerity: could be direct changes on the ground, or simply basic responsiveness to stakeholders.
- Rule needs to insist/assist in improving involvement processes across the country.
- Move to results MUCH faster to avoid burnout, and people will be more willing to invest.
- Take time for many small meetings to develop ownership of proposals.
- Where invited stakeholders meet, public attendees must also be allowed a voice.
- An Enduring Rule will help keep public engaged in Plans and Project level work (because they won't have to keep repeating this Rule revision work, which is so abstract.)
- The agency needs to get better at engaging people. If people think you are sincere and want to listen they will get involved. At some point people will say, "What is it going to take? Am I ever going to get a response?" They get tired and give up. Rule must insist that the Forest engage the public more successfully than they have in past.
- Whoever is involved, interest groups or whoever, we should see if there is some way to mandate their attendance.
- There has to be better approach to get people to hook on.
- New electronic tools such as twitter, blogging, social media, may be useful tool in addressing new challenges and new publics.
- Roundtables make people unhappy because they want a podium. They want to voice their issues and concerns to all in attendance not just a few at a table. They want to Participate but people don't like roundtable format. Don't feel like they are being heard. Let people voice their opinions.
- People who are concerned and have something to offer and learn, they get worn down, and say it doesn't matter and have the perception that the decision is already made. People are more receptive when they believe they can make a difference and can work collaboratively. It means something to be asked to be involved.
- The process should be open and accessible
- No back room deals—no undue influence by special interest groups
- Post everything on the WEB
- Inclusivity should be the focus of the planning process
- Pay for add space rather than just sending out News Releases that may not be published in a timely fashion.
- Have a master list of interested individuals and groups.
- The Planning rule should insist and assist in engaging the public better.
- Get rid of round table discussions where you only get to talk to a few people. People want a podium and the Forest Service should let them express themselves to everyone present.

How should the Forest Service collaborate with adjacent landowners, partners, and other agencies and governments in developing Forest Plans?

- Expand Government cooperation sessions to give all multiple use interests a seat at the table
- Collaboration is critical. Needs to be transparent and to provide equal time between stakeholders.

- Public remains suspicious of government. Forest Service needs to increase transparency of information provided, foster an understanding, and involve stakeholders in the decision process. (FOIA is an excellent example of transparency gone wrong...if the discussion had been transparent and the public was aware and a part of the process, there would be little need for FOIA).
- Greater Yellowstone Coordinating Committee is an example of collaboration among federal agencies, although the actual management remains very independent as five national forest and two national parks. The stakeholders are very limited in any collaboration role. While the potential for collaboration is there, there remains much opportunity for improvement.
- Currently have Questionable transparency
- Biased collaboration with select agencies is unfair
- Need more transparency to help people want to engage
- Rule should direct Plans to address eco-regional collaboration and activity.
- Administrative Boundaries make little sense for ecosystem management.
- Avoid any involvement that is not transparent or readily available to public scrutiny
- During the BT Forest Planning process, the State got too involved. How much should other groups be involved and how transparent should it be? Too much time is given to government representatives and not enough to the public.
- Transparency helps a lot. If there were a commitment to have decision open and help foster understanding of process, why would you need FOIA's? Projects/planning need to be presented in substantive way upfront. Make feedback loop shorter. Show me that what you said you would do is done and if not then show me that you are going to do it. Need to build trust to let public know you are committed to the task. Transparency fosters understanding.
- Be careful about how you engage other agencies and groups—there is suspicion that certain groups or individuals are having undue influence and that the process is not transparent.
- The Planning Rule should commit to transparency. The public should know how decisions are being made—FOIAs shouldn't be necessary.
- If people understand why and how a decision was made, they would be more willing to give you the time to see if it works. Make all pertinent information readily available.

How can the next planning rule foster restoration of NFS lands?

- Passive restoration (stopping the actions that caused the degradation to begin with) should be the first step in any restoration element in a new planning rule.
- Forest Plans should address the need for restoration and conservation to protect and enhance the resilience of ecosystems to survive changes inherent in climate change.
- Monitoring is critically important to effective adaptive management and protecting ecosystem resiliency to survive climate changes. The USFS should develop tools to monitor and report on important elements of ecosystem structure and function that respond to climate changes.

Substantive Topics

What, if any, climate change assumptions should be used when developing Forest Plans?

- New Planning rule must be proactive in addressing climate change, ie:
- Reduce stressors (logging, grazing, drilling...)
- Give species room to roam – wildlife corridors
- Landscape-scale planning
- Adaptation and mitigation
- Suggest that the question be rewritten as, what science-based climate change data shall be used?
- The rule should focus on resource effects of climate change and not respond to politically driven discussion.
- Forest Service should lead the idea that climate change is scientific not just assumptions
- If Forest Service leads with climate change it will be subject to political winds
- Rule should direct Plans to address eco-regional collaboration and activity.
- Administrative Boundaries make little sense for ecosystem management.
- Avoid any involvement that is not transparent or readily available to public scrutiny
- What are the projections for science based climate change? Planning needs to be proactive in the future to address this.
- FS direction is in direct conflict with whatever political prevailing wind is blowing. FS has to respond to that. This is a reality of life that must be addressed.
- Pine bark beetles have spread because it does not get cold enough anymore. It's a definite issue and some still don't see this as science based.
- It comes down to following laws; it's not rhetoric but just a matter of doing it. Finding a balance in terms of application, there is plenty of info out there. Shortcuts usually come back to haunt you. It's not that difficult to address in the planning status but is difficult on the ground. We need to find a way to make it work or walk away. The new planning rule does not need to do a lot but follow existing laws. We don't have the latitude to do whatever we want. The planning process needs to integrate laws in ways that really include people rather than try and sell ideas. The agency has to get better at implementation. The fact that NFMA requires that plans be rewritten every ten years is part of the problem and should be taken out of new planning rule.
- The rule should take politics out of climate change. Otherwise the Forest Service will have to adjust to the prevailing political winds rather than managing the land according to science.
- A long term vision has to guide us. Short term solutions come back to haunt us.

How should the Forest Service take into account water availability, and water quality factors, that are outside of Forest Service control?

- Must protect H₂O resources:
- Emphasize watershed health and reduce stressors (grazing, logging, drilling) on watersheds

- The rule should direct that water stays within a watershed, and not piped or ditched to another watershed. Changing watersheds for agriculture or development is not ecologically smart.
- Water concerns have to be a part of planning
- Must address over allocation.
- People want to take water from Green River...it's already gone. We must take this issue into account
- There needs to be better connection and coordination between the forests of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem.
- The new planning rule should include standards not to "address" watershed health but to protect watershed health.

How should the planning rule guide monitoring and protection of at-risk species of animals and plants and their habitats?

- Provide for species diversity:
- Keep viability standards from '82 rule
- Science and monitoring
- Prioritize at-risk species and reduce stressors
- Simpler, faster, straight forward.
- Follow laws: make decisions within existing laws such as ESA-planning rule needs to say no more
- Design a shorter feedback loop; design in a process for modifications or adjustments to a decision.
- The rule needs to guide or direct implementation and feedback.
- Follow laws already in place and don't take shortcuts in monitoring requirements
- Information already available but not always used
- Shorter feedback loop
- Implementation needs to be better
- Integrate and follow current Laws. (Rule almost irrelevant.)
- Apply science more rigorously to management, including transparent implementation and shorter feedback loops.
- Agency should describe long-term vision.
- There is not a good connection between GYA forests and that needs to change. The rule needs to go further in creating consistency with the values of GYA management.
- How much collaboration goes on between forests, parks, other agencies now?
- Old forest plans were created in a way that didn't mesh with adjacent forest plans. The rule should get better at that.
- Habitat connectivity between Forests is of paramount importance to protect at risk species of animals.
- There needs to be better connection and coordination between the forests of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem.

What should the planning rule say about how Forest Plans deal with providing goods and services that contribute to vibrant local, regional, and national economies?

- Prioritize ecological health over economic concerns
- The Rule should guide protection of resources first. The national forests are not just commodity (oil & gas, timber) driven. Forest Service is here for resource protection; goods and service may be derived from the land, but should not be the driver in decision making.
- Goods and services need to be commensurate with the niche filled by the particular forest. For example, the Bridger-Teton niche is global in terms of recreation and wildlife, and therefore the goods and service must reflect that niche. Oil & gas and timber production may occur, but again, not at the expense of the forest's niche.
- "Zoning" a forest for various activities such as, recreational, or timber or oil & gas does not work. The rule should direct management for good land condition, not economic condition.
- Consider the economic contribution of human-powered recreation (and recreation generally).
- Goods and Services important but not the top priority of forest management
- Integrate and follow current Laws. (Rule almost irrelevant.)
- Apply science more rigorously to management, including transparent implementation and shorter feedback loops.
- Agency should describe long-term vision.
- National Forests are about natural resources and you should protect that. Resource should take precedence over economic businesses.
- Outfitters do more than provide service; they also provide education and experience. Some believe the FS manage resource for their own welfare.
- BT contributes enormous amount to regional and national economy. It is a national treasure; we are seeing that this forest is being managed differently because of local issues, ex. oil & gas drilling. We need to do whatever we/the forest can do to take a long range look and to protect the resources here. The BT attracts an enormous number of people here to recreate and visit the community. It is extremely critical to local economy.
- Each forest should have guidelines as to what is being provided in this niche. Goods and services offered as well as other issues as wildlife, rivers etc.
- The BT is a global, world entity. The Wyoming legacy act is good example of how people respond to the treasures that we have and their importance.
- The old plans parcel out portions of the forest that produce outputs. Timber, range, recreation, which has changed and limited opportunities to other uses. There was a need to put economy in front of conditions. People are pushing back away from limited single use. The new rule needs to find a mechanism to reconcile issues and priorities that standards and guidelines drive.
- Given choices, I would not think goods & services are the highest priority. It's not the reason we are here. It is an important factor but we need balance between economic and ecologic issues.
- The Forest Service's primary purpose should be to protect our natural resources for present and future generations.

- The economy should not have priority over ecology.
- Although the BT contributes to the national and regional economy, the Forest should take a long term view—once the ecology is damaged the economy will suffer.
- This Forest attracts people from all over the world because of its intact ecosystem.
- The BTNF provides different goods and services than other forests—every forest should find its own niche rather than all forests providing the same goods and services.
- Reconcile the Economy and Ecology—get rid of timber targets and determine what a forest can provide according to its own unique qualities.
- Find a better balance between the ecology and the economy. Every forest cannot provide everything. Find a better mechanism to determine what the forest will provide. Land condition should be a major consideration.
- Goods and services should not be given priority over anything else.

What should the planning rule say about recreational access, and visitor facilities and services?

- Forest should protect Natural Resources above recreation if needed
- Old B-T Plan parcels out areas for different economic niches—since those have been implemented, those available resources change, but Plan doesn't keep up.
- Avoid use of zones to direct kinds of development.
- Effective law enforcement is key to protecting resources and providing safe visitor access. Fines should be greatly increased for infractions. The public already knows that with the scarcity of law enforcement officers, it is highly unlikely that they will be caught creating new motorized trails, driving off-trail, etc. If in addition the punishment is light even if they are caught, there is no incentive to obey the rules.

Is there anything else you would like to suggest about the forest planning rule?

- Professional facilitators can be very effective
- It's frustrating for the public to work on projects and not have them go anywhere or be thrown out....
- Clustering and conceptualization of ideas today is what's really important....
- There's a danger in having too much structure in a meeting that's supposed to generate ideas....there needs to be a balance....
- Forest Service is a national treasure and should be managed for long term sustainability and protection
- Needs to bring together consistency in collective thought
- The Planning Rule process should be structured so that all information is maintained and everything does not have to start from scratch every 10 years when the revision process begins.
- Major Themes from combination of both meetings:
 - Ecological concerns should be prioritized over short-term economic concerns; this will yield long-term mutual and balanced economic/ecological benefits. If the ecology is healthy and working correctly, it will be used socially (recreation), and

will provide for a healthy economy; business comes from healthy ecology, therefore ecologic concerns of highest priority.

- Science-based information and decision making should be of greater priority than politically-based information or decision making.
- Appropriate ecosystem and landscape scales should be overarching considerations. Planning rule should expand the forest boundary beyond political or jurisdictional boundaries to encourage collaboration at the appropriate landscape scales based on the resource.
- Collaboration, as exhibited in this series of meetings was appreciated, and should be built into development of the planning rule and subsequent Forest planning processes. However, collaboration must be transparent and be inclusive; no closed door meetings. (There is a large degree of skepticism: does my input have any effect; did you hear me; and did it matter?).
- Plans should be revisited more frequently, and modified as needed rather than waiting for 10-15 years or more and having to do a complete overhaul. Planning processes should be iterative and adaptive, with ongoing reviews every 2 or 3 years providing opportunity for any needed changes
- Recreation is a resource, a real thing, and should be addressed in the rule.

Region 4 Planning Rule Roundtable

Summary of Input: Caribou-Targhee National Forest; Idaho Falls, ID

General Discussion

What do you think a great planning rule would look like?

- The 1982 rule with the additions of climate change and adaptive management.
- The rule would include managing for sustainability and species diversity.
- Would include the needs of local communities in addition to the natural resources. It has to be sustainable and managed long term.
- Local issues need to be considered.
- Should be 5-10 pages and just be guidelines.

What works now; what concepts would you like to continue into the next planning rule?

- The appeal process in the 1982 regulation. An appeal process to the Chief for the Forest Plan needs to be included.
- Include regulations similar to the 215 regulations which would allow for an informal resolution outside of the court system.
- Managing for ecosystem sustainability.
- NEPA process
- Public input
- Address fire management

What doesn't work; what concepts would you like to leave behind?

- Eliminate the Agency Preferred Alternative.
-

Plan Content

What kind of information should be included in Forest Plans, and should they include standards and guidelines? If so what kind?

- The structure of the Forest Plans should be kept the same.
- Include goals and objectives to achieve desired future conditions.
- Establish a baseline of current conditions on the ground utilizing monitoring data.
- Include a standard and guide for noxious weeds.
- Avoid substituting guidelines for standards.
- Clarify in the plan the difference between a standard and a guideline.

- Keep management indicator species.
- More standards and guides on roads and road construction.
- More enforcement should be included.

How consistent should plans be across the country?

- The process and structure should be consistent. This will make it easier for the public to comment. It will make it easier for employees to move to new Forests and Regions. The standards and guides and goals in the plans can be different.
- The same components should be included in all the plans across the nation. The desired conditions and the means to achieve those conditions can be flexible.
- Establish consistency in how the science is used. Science should inform the process, not drive the process. The science should not be the sole factor in the decision process.
- Utilize local governments in the process.

Process Topics

What suggestions do you have from making forest planning faster, simpler, more straightforward and less expensive?

- Address budgeting issues and provide the funding to complete the planning process. The juggle FS employees have to make between planning and resource management is a stumbling block to the process.
- Have a dedicated ID team specific to planning.
- Needs to be lead at the local and regional level. The WO encumbers the process.
- Everyone around the nation should have equal voice.
- This process can't be simplified to the point that we lose sight of what we are managing for. The NEPA process is the best way to accomplish this. If you hurry the process it will be unsuccessful. Be efficient but you can't cut corners.
- Don't use subcontractors to write the alternatives. The specialists have to redo their work spending more time and money.
- Public input collection should have a variety of means including: meetings, writing, internet, and social networking.
- With all the differences of opinions there are no areas we can shorten the system. The question noted should be can we? I don't think we can.

When and how should plans be evaluated to see if they are working? What should trigger plan amendments?

- Law suits are the main trigger for a revision or amendment of a plan.
- Annual monitoring and standards that are not being met or desired future conditions that are not being met on a yearly basis.
- If you aren't moving closer to your goal then it needs to be adjusted.

- Use the monitoring data to measure the objectives. Determine what it will take to achieve the desired condition. After a period of time assess the data to see if you are achieving your goals.
- The decision to amend the plan should not be frequent or taken lightly.
- When there are changes in Federal Law that need to be addressed in the plan, such as the clean water act.
- Follow-up to monitoring must be required to use adaptive management in planning and decision making. The plan should incorporate a requirement to review the monitoring and how the monitoring is dealt with. Monitoring data should be used for adaptive management.

What is the best way to involve stakeholders in the planning process?

- Ask for input on specific ranger districts in addition to the entire Forest.
- Conduct on-line surveys.
- Allow people to comment on specific issues on-line.
- Include blogs
- Use social media including Facebook and twitter.
- Use Facebook to provide information on websites or email addresses which would allow them to comment privately or direct them to specific websites.
- Roundtable format
- Cut the FS jargon and acronyms. People don't understand the language and have a hard time understanding how these issues relate to them
- Keep the decision making process open. Use a facilitator and talk openly and then follow through with the public requests and comments.
- Get everyone involved and use the feedback received.
- Explain the various laws and rules each step of the process is subject to. The stakeholders must understand in plain language what can and cannot be done in order to appropriately direct comments and manage expectations.
- Have more frequent check-ins with the public.
- Increase communication. Advertise the meetings more and through more means. Get the word out.

How should the Forest Service collaborate with adjacent landowners, partners, and other agencies and governments in developing Forest Plans?

- Follow standard practice to consult with Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) on Endangered and Threatened species.
- No individual, group or entity should have special status beyond what is required by law. Everyone should have equal consideration.
- Enter into agreements and MOUs as appropriate.
- Conduct regular meetings to open planning dialog together.
- Don't invite NEOs or other entities to meetings and not allow them to participate.
- Have a series of meetings at the Ranger District level. Treat it like a working group.

- Coordinate management policies and practices with the BLM. When boundaries touch it is confusing for the public to have to know two different sets of rules.
- Work to secure more right of ways and access for the public.

How can the next planning rule foster restoration of NFS lands?

- Clearly define the expectations.
- Encourage the cooperation and partnerships of local governments.
- Inform the public how they can help solve issues and participate in restoration opportunities.
- Encourage the decommissioning of old growth that is not being used.
- Focus on ecological process.
- Restoration needs to meet ecological goals.
- Maintain connectivity with wildlife corridors. Keep natural barriers intact and avoid fragmentation.
- Keep it broad in the National Planning Rule. Issues in one Forest or Region are not across the board. Base it on ecological goals and specify in the Forest Plan.
- Restore to a healthy condition and not a particular period of time.
- Encourage area revitalization, fire brakes, and protection of small streams and springs.
- Plan for what happens beyond the Forest Service boundary. Plan in the context of the FWS in the landscape cooperative.

Substantive Topics

What, if any, climate change assumptions should be used when developing Forest Plans?

- Humans have no control over climate change. It fits into a realm of things that the FS cannot deal with. It is a reactive thing.
- Realize that areas are dryer then they have been in the past. The climate is warmer.
- Pay attention to WUI and keep people from building in the Forest as the areas get drier.
- Assume we will have a bigger problem with invasive species and plan accordingly.
- Assume that it is occurring. Use the soil as a climate mitigator.
- Allow species to shift and habitats to shift to adapt for the species.
- Climate change should be an overarching issue to be addressed at the Forest Plan level to mitigate those issues.
- Climate change should be a driving force in the new rule.
- Focus on cyclical weather patterns rather than climate change.
- Provide each region with the authority to address climate change in their local areas. The conditions vary too greatly across the nation.

How should the Forest Service take into account water availability, and water quality factors, that are outside of Forest Service control?

- Watersheds don't respect boundaries.

- Water storage affects water quality in streams.
- Partner and improve coordination with government agencies and municipal water owners who control the water to improve protect the watersheds.
- Recognize the future land tenure adjustment through sales and trades.
- Seek to obtain primary watersheds.
- Manage forest vegetation restoration as it might affect water yield.
- Manage water quantity coming off the forest to benefit downstream users.
- Look at increasing water yield from the forest through prescription.
- Take into consideration erosion control and siltation.

How should the planning rule guide monitoring and protection of at-risk species of animals and plants and their habitats?

- Abide by NFMA requirement to ensure species viability across the forest. The 82 regulations are good framework for that. It requires the forest to set standards for wildlife.
- Provide the funding to the forests to conduct the monitoring
- Predict the at risk species be beyond the life of the plan. Think beyond the forest plan timeline for species considerations.
- Stop the use of species viability. No one can define it. Use biological diversity will be maintained. Use vegetation diversity as a proxy for species diversity. If you keep a mix of all those ages across the landscape then you will maintain those species across the landscape.
- Maintain a variety of habitats.

What should the planning rule say about how Forest Plans deal with providing goods and services that contribute to vibrant local, regional, and national economies?

- There needs to be a balance. The impact on local economies should be considered although not exclusively.
- The rule must ensure that we enhance water quality and wildlife. Commodity production needs to take a backset to the long term national benefits such as clean air, clean water.
- Mining, logging, etc should only take place if it can be completed without damaging the resources and the productivity of the land.
- The planning documents need to communicate the forest roles in the culture.
- Not every use must be allowed everywhere or on every forest. The Forest's role in the local culture should be investigated and communicated.
- The rule should provide a mix of social and ecological use on the forest that meets the needs of the public. That mix will change from forest to forest. People around each forest would need to be involved to define the mix for that specific forest.
- Don't jeopardize the health of the forest to provide goods.
- Look and cause/effect relationships.

What should the planning rule say about recreational access, and visitor facilities and services?

- The level of detail should be in a forest plan not in a national plan. Even a forest plan should not be that specific. A national rule should say that public access is important and

access should be carefully considered at each level of the process. It is an important value that needs to be considered at every level and implemented at the various stages. National rule needs state that it is an important consideration.

- Recreational access and visitor facilities/services should take second seat to other important ecological values.
- All aspects need to be maintained in balance with the environmental needs to make this viable.
- There needs to be a feasibility study for any implementation. Everything needs to be taken into consideration. The NEPA should be followed for recreational access.
- Include ADA – even in the wilderness.

Is there anything else you would like to suggest about the forest planning rule?

- The disappointment that there was not a Federal Advisory Act Committee of Science. The forum is different than a FACA. The process is being shortchanged by only having the forum. The FS would have done well to include a committee of scientist to help develop this rule. With the 2005 and 2008 rules it might have helped in the court process.
- Disappointment in the separation between the science and social values. There should be more collaboration between the two groups. There needs to be exchange and creative ideas. This allows solutions to be developed but just to have a committee of scientist is not going to be beneficial. It needs to be broadened.
- Forests are for people and not just products and resources.
- More emphasis should be placed to better protect the designated wilderness areas.

Region 4 Planning Rule Roundtable

Summary of Input: Dixie National Forest; Cedar City, UT

General Discussion

What do you think a great planning rule would look like?

- Similar to BLM planning manual. Needs to be clear for the public.
- Great planning rule would state the overall mission, emphasizing restoration and sustainability.
- Ensure that forest fulfills its Organic Act responsibilities, and Multiple-Use Sustained Yield Act mandate.
- Account for intergenerational equity.
- Harmonized and coordinated management of the various resources.
- Without impairment of the productivity of the land
- Written in simple, plain English.
- Include clear descriptions of intended goals, objectives, and desired future use levels and resource conditions
- Emphasize that the best available scientific information shall be used, including related to landscape ecology, conservation biology, and metapopulation analysis.
- Because the multiple use mandate can only be fulfilled by healthy and functioning ecosystems, the needs of the resource-forest and grasslands, soil, water, flora, fauna and air should be given priority.

What works now; what concepts would you like to continue into the next planning rule?

- Keep MIS and keep minimum viability standard.
- Plans should include species that are indicators of effects of management (e.g. beaver (riparian management), cheat grass (range management)), but should also have indicators of effects of environmental change (e.g. pika for climate change)
- Planning process should include development of alternatives
- During development of each new or revised forest plan, a reasonable range of alternatives shall be fully analyzed in an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) as required under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)
- During development of any proposed amendments to existing forest plans, an Environmental Assessment (EA) under NEPA may be appropriate to fully analyze alternatives so long as there are not likely to be any “significant” impacts on the human environment as a result of implementing that amendment.

What doesn't work; what concepts would you like to leave behind?

- Rule needs to define what is considered "science" for the science-based – currently without definition the term creates ambiguity, not specificity.
- The appeals process should be retained. While it may slow things down some, it is an important method to ensure balance.

Plan Content

What kind of information should be included in Forest Plans, and should they include standards and guidelines? If so what kind?

- Plans should lay out what the Forests have to do and what processes they would be using.
- Standards and guidelines are useful if they give sideboards but not be so stringent that they take decision space away from local managers.
- How stringent should the plan be and how do we build in flexibility?
- Prescriptive or descriptive?
- Provide sound process and adaptive management to formulate a plan rather than strict, stringent elements.
- Plans should be opportunity based rather than constrained.
- Standards may define processes for identifying local needs.
- Planning rule process itself needs to include identification of local needs.
- Plans could be used as a barometer for climate change.
- Standards are important to support other resource management objectives.
- Standards could have some discretionary room or flexibility to make changes from evaluations at small scale or short-term (as opposed to evaluations and triggers for plan amendments or revisions).
- Standards shall be included and mandatory, and be designed to define how forest plan goals, objectives, and desired future conditions will be adequately implemented
- Guidelines should be included as guidance to assist in implementing required forest plan standards
- There should be frequent monitoring to determine both whether standards and guidelines are being adequately implemented, and whether such implementation is having the intended results or outcomes.
- After forest plan adoption, the public should have a clearly-defined formal process to file complaints to the Regional Forester if they believe that any standards or guidelines are not being properly implemented, monitored, or enforced. Forest Service employees should also have a similarly well-defined process for filing internal complaints on these grounds without fear of any job retaliation.
- Forest Plans should include standards that are upheld. The EIS and the range of alternatives is an important tool to try to consider both short and longer term implications of a Forest Plan.

How consistent should plans be across the country?

- Rule should not require plans to be consistent.
- Plans need to be based on the resources and needs of a particular area.
- All plans should have consistent global goals (health and sustainability of resources) but have ecoregional consideration.
- Consider using ecoregions as a scale for consistency (need to clarify or make consistent across agency's ecoregion concept).
- Emphasize all lands approach to management (e.g. consistency across ecoregion not limited to administrative boundary).
- Collaborate with other agencies, e.g. BLM, for consistency across ecoregions.
- There should be national consistency on overall goals (like sustainability, watershed health, ecological restoration, and protection of biological diversity), but regional and local flexibility based on the best science for how those goals could or should be accomplished in each national forest.

Process Topics

What suggestions do you have from making forest planning faster, simpler, more straightforward and less expensive?

- Eliminate appeals. If there are real objections, they can take it to court.
- Substantive not frivolous appeals can be important.
- Determine minimum data required for a plan and obtain prior to starting the planning process with the public. Example – endangered species location.
- Planning process should be about analysis, not information gathering.
- Forest Supervisor should be the decision maker for Forest Plan not Regional Forester.
- An objective arbitration process should be considered to attempt to resolve appeals before they may result in litigation
- Past Forest Service efforts to circumvent doing EISs on forest plans violated NEPA and thereby resulted in much of the past delay, uncertainty, and expense. This was dumb and enormously wasteful. The Forest Service should learn from this history, and not repeat it going forward. The Forest Service cannot control whether appeals or lawsuits are ultimately filed, but they can control whether they do things out of political expedience that end up making things worse. As such, the Forest Service should follow the law and best science, be as responsive to public concerns as possible, and respect the role of due process in our democracy.

When and how should plans be evaluated to see if they are working? What should trigger plan amendments?

- Make sure plan stays alive and viable. Reevaluate every 5 years.
- Develop a passion for keeping the plan alive. Allocate funding, develop process (monitoring) and make it an ongoing priority.
- Let field staff drive the planning process rather than have a dedicated planning team.

- Changing science about key resources would be an appropriate reason for plan amendments.
- Process for plan amendments should be more responsive, i.e. timely.
- Portions of plans that involve the environment should be revised as the environment changes.
- Plans need to follow the science, but they can't be "knee-jerk," changing with every small-scale or short-term change in condition.
- Evaluations need to identify short-term vs. long-term in determining which changes or observations or data are included as triggers for amending or revising plans.
- The Forest Service should use the NEPA guidance on when supplementation of an EIS or EA is necessary to help determine whether an environmental change or new information warrants consideration of a forest plan amendment.

What is the best way to involve stakeholders in the planning process?

- Listen.
- Establish RAC's for forest planning.
- Bring in relevant interested parties at the earliest possible date and allow them to continue throughout the process.
- Don't make unreasonable financial requirements on stakeholders.
- All citizens should be given meaningful opportunities to participate in Forest planning.
- Process should require use of up to date technologies, cultural media, social media (e.g. facebook).
- Engage kids in schools on Forest Planning.
- Process should require active solicitation of stakeholder participation (e.g. not just passively putting information on the web).
- The Forest Service should treat all forms of public communications (snail mail letters, E-mails, faxes, phone calls, face-to-face conversation notes, etc.) consistently and fairly, and evaluate each communication based on its substantive content, not on who submitted it or how it was received. This would eliminate the real or perceived bias that the Forest Service may tend to give greater weight to communications from "respected" sources (like county officials or business leaders) or from more traditional methods (paper letters over electronic messages). Our society is rapidly changing in many ways, including how we communicate, and the Forest Service needs to accept and readily adapt to these changes to remain contemporary, respected, credible, and effective.

How should the Forest Service collaborate with adjacent landowners, partners, and other agencies and governments in developing Forest Plans?

- Be sure local governments are involved as cooperating agencies.
- Work on language in cooperating agreements between forest service and agencies. Need to be clear and identify expectations.
- Avoid contradiction with other agencies.

- Have more coordinated effort with wildlife management at the State level. Example – managing landscape level ecosystems such as aspen can be difficult without close cooperation with State wildlife agencies.
- Consider/incorporate existing non-forest management plans (e.g. County management plans, wildlife management plans, BLM RMPs).
- Planning rule might address regional air quality
- Planning process should include working with other agencies to address regional air quality.
- Secretaries Vilsack and Salazar should explore ways to better coordinate the respective planning and NEPA processes of USDA and DOI agencies so that they are more integrated, consistent, and effective. For example, going forward, it would be desirable if more BLM RMP and Forest Service Plan development was concurrently scheduled where those administered lands are adjacent or proximate. This could lead to streamlined work, greater public understanding, and more efficient allocation of shared USDA/DOI resources to tackle shared challenges and opportunities.

How can the next planning rule foster restoration of NFS lands?

- Strong and specific restoration standards and guidelines that are effectively monitored and implemented
- Restoration of Forest Service lands is a priority. Restoration should begin with understanding the causes for degradation and the removal or minimization of those causes. Restoration plans should include both budget and monitoring. The goal is healthy and sustainable ecosystems.

Substantive Topics

What, if any, climate change assumptions should be used when developing Forest Plans?

- Very controversial. No one knows what impacts we will have in the future. Science or impacts are unclear.
- No evidence showing that it is man caused. Data are now being called into question – not sure if data are accurate about climate change being man caused.
- Science is strong – man has negative influence on climate. Not clear how Rule should instruct the forest to address it; however, more forest is better than less. Forest should err on side of positively changing climate rather than negatively.
- If concern is real, need to reduce stocking and biomass in the forest.
- Grass has more positive effect than trees. Plans should address long term contributions to addressing climate change.
- Plans have limited time scope and cannot address climate change because they are in place for a relatively short time.
- Impact of forest planning on climate change will not be measurable from individual or collective plans.

- If climate change is part of the rule, at some level there will be discussion to make it relevant.
- Agency has taken stance that climate change is occurring.
- If uncertain science, be conservative.
- Keep pollution and air quality in mind.
- Healthy ecosystem has greater positive impact on climate change. Manage for a healthy forest.
- Plans should anticipate climate change.
- Plans should take into consideration how to mitigate or adapt to climate change.
- Planning process and plans should attempt to look at climate science.
- Is the National Forest System (not just one Forest) a tool to positively mitigate climate change?
- Plans should describe a carbon budget (considering activities such as fire management, vegetation management, minerals, special uses, etc.).
- Plans should identify how its implementation would affect the carbon budget.
- Plans need to be mindful of effects of climate change on the environment and resources (e.g. pika).
- Plans should identify species that are indicators (and monitoring thereof) for key features in climate change.
- It is foreseeable that Congress or CEQ will require the Forest Service and other federal agencies to develop and follow “carbon budgets” to strive to reduce harmful carbon emissions and increase carbon sequestration. This approach will likely include some evolving scientific models that will factor in the cumulative effects from a variety of vegetation and fire/fuel management programs and projects. The new planning rule should anticipate and include this approach. It would be very foolish not to do so, as the new rule might be finalized just in time to have to change it again to add this approach.
- Recognize that the issue is not “global warming” but rather “climate change.” In other words, the rule should acknowledge the future likelihood of more unpredictable, erratic, or severe changes in climate, such as stronger storm events and much longer periods of wet or dry conditions. To adapt to this increased uncertainty and variability, the Forest Service should emphasize a precautionary approach of erring on the side of managing natural systems so they will be as resilient as possible. Levels of consumptive use that might have equaled “sustained yield” in the past may become excessive and harmful moving forward. The Forest Service needs to build in a management “margin of error” to avoid potential irreversible resource loss or destruction due to climate change effects.

How should the Forest Service take into account water availability, and water quality factors, that are outside of Forest Service control?

- If Forest Service does not have control over water, then it shouldn't try to exert control.
- Responsible for water that is coming out of the forest.
- Plans should recognize water issues that are outside our control.
- Water quality is connected to soil impacts, which could also be out of Forest Service control and off-Forest but affect water quality.

- Plans should just ensure Forests abide by State water laws.
- Forest should be involved in managing water resource.
- Plans should address how to improve watersheds.
- Is watershed management and improvement an appropriate role for the Forest service?
- This roundtable question needs to be clarified. Group could have had different answers if it thought the question was about watershed management, not water quality out of Forest Service control.
- Forest Service should not be involved in using forest plans to acquire more water.
- Plans should identify need to thin forests so that there is more quantity of water coming from the forest.
- Higher elevation areas get more precipitation; therefore, Forests tend to be the water sources; need to consider their effects on water quality downstream off-Forest
- Restoration for watershed health should be an element of a planning rule.
- Collaborate with the state division of environmental quality for water quality issues that are off-Forest but affecting Forest resources.
- Water is an essential piece of Forest management and there is a need to involve a variety of diverse stake holders.
- Planning should address waters as broadly as needed, e.g. beyond watershed if activities elsewhere are affecting air pollutants that affect snowfall and snowmelt.
- Some issues need to be considered at larger than the Forest scale to be effective.
- The Forest Service should actively defend its reserved federal water rights when competing state or private applications are filed to divert or remove water necessary to maintain or restore wetlands, riparian habitats, instream flows, or other resources on Forest Service administered lands. Past deference to state water law has been excessive and improper where it abdicated Forest Service management responsibilities and resulted in loss of water properly reserved to a National Forest based on appropriate and senior uses.
- The Forest Service should recognize that it has a pivotal role in terms of overall water quality and quantity in the West because it manages many large and critical watersheds that supply that water for downstream uses.
- Recognizing that a watershed may include areas outside Forest Service boundaries, and recognizing the importance of water and watershed health, the Forest Service should be proactive in seeking cooperation in the restoration and maintenance of watersheds. Ensure the number of roads in a watershed is appropriate for watershed health.

How should the planning rule guide monitoring and protection of at-risk species of animals and plants and their habitats?

- Plans should use conservation agreements with the state.
- Plans should be strong in addressing management for riparian health.
- Plans should include seeking opportunities to assist in protection of at risk species along with other partners, including cooperative management across boundaries.
- Plans should include direction to use full authorities and available avenues to seek changes in off-forest management that is affecting on-forest species at risk.

- Maintain or provide consideration for wildlife corridors and connectivity of wildlife habitat and connectivity for populations.
- The scientific disciplines of landscape ecology, conservation biology, and metapopulation analysis should be fully used and integrated to ensure that decisions are “smart from the start” and do not inadvertently contribute to an at risk species’ further decline. In many cases, an at risk species is an indicator of the decline, fragmentation, or loss of its associated habitat, so strong standards and guidelines should be developed, monitored, and implemented to more effectively manage, conserve, and restore that associated habitat.
- Faithfully applying the minimum viability and MIS requirements should assist with the recovery or restoration of many at risk species.
- The Forest Service should be proactive in seeking out and entering cooperative conservation agreements with other federal, state, and local agencies, as well as with NGOs (The Nature Conservancy, Trust for Public Lands, Defenders of Wildlife, World Wildlife Fund, etc.) to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of programs and projects designed to help at risk species and their associated habitats.

What should the planning rule say about how Forest Plans deal with providing goods and services that contribute to vibrant local, regional, and national economies?

- Detailed and supported socio-economic analysis. Needs to be objective based on data and science, including impacts on range and impacts on local community and economics.
- Complete socio-economic analysis, including all components (i.e. all resources and activities being managed) at the forest/local level.
- Scale should be local or forest level, not regional or national level.
- Deemphasize revenues to the treasury; rather emphasize investments in ecosystems and human communities.
- Plans should include impacts to local economies.
- Economic impacts could best be identified through analysis of alternatives.
- Identify opportunities to maximize benefits to local economies while considering achieving/maintaining sustainability of resources.
- Consider benefits of present and benefits of future.
- Consider as well with sustainability of resources.
- Providing for continuing growth.
- The Forest Service should emphasize that sustainability is indispensable to providing long-term economic, social, and other public benefits. Sacrificing long-term sustainability for short-term benefits would violate the NFMA sustained yield mandate, reduce the potential for future uses, and steal from our progeny.
- The Forest Service should recognize that social and economic uses are changing, and adapt to those changes. For example, clean alternative energy developments should be encouraged wherever appropriate, and they can provide many “green jobs” in local communities. Many western communities are also heavily economically reliant on tourism, and much of this may be dependent on maintaining a clean environment,

beautiful scenery, abundant watchable wildlife, and varied opportunities to engage in healthy recreational uses.

- Given the sad history of many “boom and bust” cycles of development in the West, that eventually devastated many communities, the Forest Service should strive to assist communities with establishing and maintaining more stable and reliable economic uses that would minimize future risks. For example, watershed health, ecological restoration, and invasive/noxious weed control programs that require the use of local contracted labor or temporary hires should be designed wherever possible to last many years. This would make the contracting or hiring process more efficient long-term, and give those benefitting a more stable and reliable source of employment. In addition, these programs should coordinate with temporary fire/fuel summer hires to strive to give employees more year-round employment. The West is changing from a resource use and extraction economy to a recreation and restoration economy. The Forest Service should accept and reflect this change in the final planning rule in terms of guidance on social and economic uses.
- The benefits to local, regional or national economies are of secondary importance to the restoration and the maintenance of healthy ecosystems – which are then better able to provide sustainable socio-economic benefits.

What should the planning rule say about recreational access, and visitor facilities and services?

- Forest plan should have an ROS in it.
- Plan should provide for direction on all resources and resource uses. How do you weigh other interests against endangered species or non-consumptive wildlife issues?
- During planning process identify how we are going to deal with monetary and non-monetary resources.
- Plans should aim for healthy forests to provide recreational opportunity.
- Plans should give equal and distinct consideration for social and economic impacts.
- Plans should consider mountain bikes (bicycles), and mountain bikes are in low impact category, non-motorized, human-powered.
- Plans should include identification of Forest access needed that’s off-Forest, and should direct proactive acquisition (acquire, easement, etc.) of access.
- Plans should look at recommending additional wilderness.
- The Forest Service should be more proactive about striving to protect or restore solitude or natural quiet, especially in statutory wilderness areas as well as in areas that have been administratively allocated or designated for non-motorized recreation. Where visitors expect or want to experience nature and solitude, they generally want to leave the sights and sounds of the cities behind. For example, where appropriate, the Forest Service should comment on FAA planning and NEPA documents relating to proposed permit allocations for lower-elevation commercial air tours that may affect the Forest Service’s “noise sensitive areas.” No one on a backcountry hike likely wants to be buzzed by a low-flying air tour plane or helicopter, particularly if they are in the middle of a statutory wilderness and they went to great time, expense, and effort to get there.

- The Forest Service should be more proactive and creative about developing recreational and interpretive programs that will appeal to a wide variety of visitors, including different cultures, age groups, and education levels. This is especially crucial for young people who are increasingly suffering from the harmful “Nature Deficit Disorder” and their resulting health problems from the lack of enough healthy exercise.

Is there anything else you would like to suggest about the forest planning rule?

- Risk management needs to be a component of resource management outlined in the forest plan.
- What’s in NFMA that are constraints? If identified, is there willingness to change NFMA legislation, i.e. sustained yield and non- declining yield. If written in NFMA, it is up to Congress if change is needed. If changed, the ‘82 planning rule would be up for grabs.
- Direction through Administration, such as on climate change, needs to be considered in planning processes.
- All parts will be fed into a team, science forum, etc., to be sorted and formed into a single rule.
- People think our planning rule needs to be simpler – less litigation.
- People who engage at the roundtable need to receive feedback – formal response.
- What is a planning rule and what is in it? (Copy of 1982 rule provided to questioner).
- Are there timeframes? Need to be made available.
- When will there be access to science forum information? (Date of science forum provided; interim report provided).
- Cooperating agency status – is it going to be a part of the rule making? Where in the process for rule-making can local government representatives be heard? We will ask the question.
- Need to be consistent with the mission of the FS. Chief’s comments didn’t appear to be placing emphasis on the Organic Act and Multiple Use mandates.
- The Forest Service should recognize the often serious cumulative impacts of each national forest’s system of roads and routes. In many cases, the existing route density is excessive from ecological and watershed health standpoints, and is way beyond what the Forest Service could ever afford to properly maintain. In addition, the Forest Service may lack the capacity in many cases to effectively sign or close routes consistent with relevant decisions, or to effectively enforce those decisions. Therefore, the planning rule should encourage a more pragmatic assessment of which areas of each forest are suitable or unsuitable for a dense system of routes. This is separate from the roadless area conservation rule that seeks to maintain existing roadless areas. This would be to look at areas with a high density of routes that collectively provide fewer benefits than their impacts or problems, and to consider closing those areas in lieu of the expensive, tedious, and difficult task of trying to address the signage, closure, or other maintenance requirements of each route within those areas.
- While it may not be a forest planning rule issue, I encourage the Forest Service to evaluate whether its existing budget coding system is too narrow and compartmentalized. Given the need for broader, more holistic, and interdisciplinary planning and implementation

work teams, it may be desirable to create new lumped budget codes for appropriate programs like ecological restoration, watershed health, and comprehensive resource monitoring. Past codes limited to things like soil, water, or range may be unrealistic as we move forward with more integrated and comprehensive programs and projects.

- There is a need for greater recognition of the role of top predators in maintaining ecological and watershed health. In many cases, the success of riparian or aspen restoration efforts may be severely limited by excessive ungulate browse pressure. While the Forest Service can and should limit or remove domestic livestock in such cases, they cannot control whether these areas will be subject to excessive use by elk, deer, or other wildlife species. In such cases, the Forest Service should proactively work with the relevant state agency to improve management of game populations in the affected area, and to encourage better management of top predators. Where appropriate, this should include supporting efforts to reintroduce extirpated top predators. These top predators not only help control the population of browsers, but also significantly affect their browsing behavior. This can be a key factor in whether the Forest Service's management efforts can be successful, and whether the desired outcomes for riparian or aspen resources can practically be achieved.
- The Planning Rule should seek and use the best peer-reviewed science as the basis for planning and decision making.

Region 4 Planning Rule Roundtable

Summary of Input: Fishlake National Forest; Richfield, UT

General Discussion

What do you think a great planning rule would look like?

- Needs to provide a coordinated decision making process with state and local governments
- FS personnel need to be familiar with requirement for coordination with state and local governments
- Considers economic and social impacts to local communities
- Ensure that forest fulfills its Organic Act responsibilities and Multiple-Use Sustained Yield Act mandate.
- Would demonstrate what the desired outcome would be via clear goals, objectives, and resource conditions
- Would include measurable objectives
- Utilizes Best Available Science and identifies sources for determining BSA
- Would allow for flexibility within forest plans
- Utilizes data from agency professionals
- Has a balanced approach between science and public opinion
- Focus on stewardship and ability to manage
- Addresses forest health
- Addresses and prioritizes maintaining functioning ecosystems

What works now; what concepts would you like to continue into the next planning rule?

- 82 Rule requires FS to consult state and local governments should be carried forward
- Keep public involvement requirements with a broad cross section of public
- Utilize reference areas to determine what conditions should look like
- Maintain the MIS viability requirement
- Retain wildlife corridors
- Consider a reasonable range of alternatives when revising forest plans

What doesn't work; what concepts would you like to leave behind?

- Discontinue use of MIS. Single species management is not productive
- Eliminate the requirement for determining lands suitable for timber production

Plan Content

What kind of information should be included in Forest Plans, and should they include standards and guidelines? If so what kind?

- Utilize silviculture prescriptions to identify forest health
- Allow opportunities to modify at the landscape level
- Include s&g must be quantifiable
- Plans should include budgetary parameters and resource allocation guidelines
- Monitoring requirements
- Law enforcement requirements
- Oil and Gas and renewable energy policy
- Regional air quality modeling and set standards
- Adopt strong riparian function and diversity standards

How consistent should plans be across the country?

- Keep decisions as local as possible
- One size does not fit all
- Stick to the rules in plans limit the use of mitigations
- Maintain flexibility and recognize unique characteristics of individual forests as much as possible
- Rule should allow for plan development the produces plans relevant to local communities wants and needs

Process Topics

What suggestions do you have from making forest planning faster, simpler, more straightforward and less expensive?

- Focus on implementation not process for process sake
- Utilize trained professional inside and outside the agency
- Allow for adaptive management for quick response to resource conditions

When and how should plans be evaluated to see if they are working? What should trigger plan amendments?

- Need measurable monitoring requirements to identify issues and flexibility to adjust to changing conditions
- Potential for negative impacts over a large area would trigger an amendment

What is the best way to involve stakeholders in the planning process?

- Identify who stakeholders should be including local government
- Hold meetings at a variety of times to accommodate everyone

- Establish procedures and policy for public involvement that is clear and effective both in conveying information but also providing avenues for public input and discourse. Possibly a quarterly public meeting.
- Utilize RAC type groups
- Keep discussions at the local level
- Use Public Service Announcements as well as mailings and web postings
- Carry issues forward don't let public concerns fall into a black hole

How should the Forest Service collaborate with adjacent landowners, partners, and other agencies and governments in developing Forest Plans?

- Weight public comments to the people who use the area and are directly affected
- Continue with current appeal and objection process but require fiscal responsibility if appeals are lost
- Utilize other agencies data
- Incorporate latest science regardless of agency

How can the next planning rule foster restoration of NFS lands?

- Must address noxious weed spread
- Allow FS to manage lands more time spent on implementation v. planning. No need to restore if managed properly
- Provide flexibility to address rapidly emerging issues and changing conditions ie. Insect and disease
- Allow for a range of acceptable ecosystem treatments
- Address ecosystem sustainability and activities that threaten sustainability
- Utilize local publics for restoration work
- Address underlying causes of ecosystem decline ie. Reduce grazing in aspen regen areas during drought conditions
- Provide for species diversity
- Remove ecological stressors
- Prioritize watersheds for restoration and protection

Substantive Topics

What, if any, climate change assumptions should be used when developing Forest Plans?

- Should be addressed utilizing different groups data

How should the Forest Service take into account water availability, and water quality factors, that are outside of Forest Service control?

- Must direct protection of and availability for clean water
- Need accountability for water loss associated with sub-surface mining

How should the planning rule guide monitoring and protection of at-risk species of animals and plants and their habitats?

- Monitoring must be measurable and include flexibility to change practices based on results

What should the planning rule say about how Forest Plans deal with providing goods and services that contribute to vibrant local, regional, and national economies?

- Rule should address wilderness where suitable
- Care for the land first and people second
- Should not put economy over the environment

What should the planning rule say about recreational access, and visitor facilities and services?

- Maintain access and allow for a broad range of access not restricting use based on users economic status

Is there anything else you would like to suggest about the forest planning rule?

- Rule should require resolving roadless areas

Region 4 Planning Rule Roundtable

Summary of Input: Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest; Elko, NV

General Discussion

What do you think a great planning rule would look like?

- More adaptive rule
- Uniformed plan across nation with exceptions
- Include local cultures and customs
- Generic uniformity with decisions made locally
- Exceptions should be made public and why they were made
- Keep signing authority locally of plan
- Keep historic uses
- Allow new uses at expense of existing uses
- Fast, simple, less expensive and straight forward
- Involve local governments
- Define how inconsistencies with local plans be addressed
- Coordination with other local planning efforts
- Allow for flexibility in development of local plans
- Provide for healthy and sustainable ecosystems
- Direct multiple uses
- Require some soils survey, etc. to determine land capacity and suitability
- Consider traditional use and customs and cultures
- Support multiple uses
- Adaptability
- Don't preclude something just because we don't know about and the science isn't there yet

What works now; what concepts would you like to continue into the next planning rule?

- Keep coordination with other local planning efforts, section 219.7 – concept needs expanding
- Land suitability – don't need more rules and policies
- Suitability
- Monitoring should be area specific
- Wilderness recommendations
- Management areas

What doesn't work; what concepts would you like to leave behind?

- Range suitability out-dated
 - Bid and prospectus does not work
 - Don't duplicate rules and laws already in place
 - Plan decisions should be more local
 - Legal process is too easily manipulated and litigated
 - Lack of flexibility
 - Too much "Red Tape"
-

Plan Content

What kind of information should be included in Forest Plans, and should they include standards and guidelines? If so what kind?

- Land suitability
- Where and how to use fire
- Concerns about grazing policy and procedures as they relate to the ownership of cattle/sheep
- Common procedures across agencies – ie..range use
- Use grazing as a tool for vegetation management
- Keep plan general and use stakeholders in decision making
- More flexible guidelines
- Stakeholder involvement
- Do not use standards
- If standards are used be sure to follow other agency rules, standards, and/or guides
- Standards/guidelines need to be more flexible and adaptable to local conditions
- Adaptive management
- Local input into standards
- Consideration of local plans – city, county, state, etc.
- Coordination with local governments
- Use "all lands" approach
- Standardization between agencies, ie. BLM, FWS, etc.
- Allow for post mining land uses

How consistent should plans be across the country?

- Define "consistency" – loose definition of consistency
- Some consistency – i.e. weed free hay, mapping, etc.
- Consistency in definitions
- What consistency at the national levels, but allow for local conditions

Process Topics

What suggestions do you have from making forest planning faster, simpler, more straightforward and less expensive?

- Tools necessary to implement a forest plan, such as using grazing, recreation, special use fee to do improvement locally
- More local input
- More Forest Service output to get better input from locals
- DO NOT add anymore layers of “red tape”
- Use past data that is justifiably sound
- Allow for re-use of infrastructure without long process
- Limit amount of amendments needed for planning
- Shortcuts for emergency situations, ie., drought, flood, etc
- Forest plans should be more strategic

When and how should plans be evaluated to see if they are working? What should trigger plan amendments?

- Get out and talk with stakeholders – open houses, polling, etc.
- Mix of qualitative and quantitative measures
- Third party monitoring
- If we have standards, allow for deviations from standard
- Input – more electronic means

How should the Forest Service collaborate with adjacent landowners, partners, and other agencies and governments in developing Forest Plans?

- Involve the people who have the most direct impacts
- Those most affected should have more say and credibility
- More meetings, round tables, etc
- Need more Regional, Supervisor’s and Ranger Districts employees at meetings, etc.
- Uniform public outreach between agencies, i.e. BLM, FWS, etc.
- How can the next planning rule foster restoration of NFS lands?

Substantive Topics

What, if any, climate change assumptions should be used when developing Forest Plans?

- Do not put climate change assumptions in Rule
- Focus on sustainability not political issues
- Label climate change as a “hoax” and leave it out
- Yes, put climate change assumptions in the Rule
- No, do not put climate change assumptions in the Rule

How should the Forest Service take into account water availability, and water quality factors, that are outside of Forest Service control?

- Consider state water laws
- Involve state agencies in water quality

How should the planning rule guide monitoring and protection of at-risk species of animals and plants and their habitats?

- Multiple use is important and provide balance for
- Maintain maximum recreational access
- Rule needs to address ADA in land use plans

What should the planning rule say about how Forest Plans deal with providing goods and services that contribute to vibrant local, regional, and national economies?

- Proper multiple use
- No motor vehicles in Wilderness
- Everything has boundaries
- Signing and education

What should the planning rule say about recreational access, and visitor facilities and services?

- Sustainability – environmental, social, economic, etc.
- Proper weight for vibrant local economics
- Education of what and how important public lands are to everyone
- Noxious Weeds need to be addressed as they affect recreation, grazing, mining, etc.
- Need tools to implement restoration – weeds
- Allow for social programs in project implementation
- Is there anything else you would like to suggest about the forest planning rule?

Region 4 Planning Rule Roundtable

Summary of Input: Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest; Las Vegas, NV

General Discussion

What do you think a great planning rule would look like?

- Don't repeat legal problems of the past rules. Know why the prior rules were not defensible. The new rule should be defensible and withstand court scrutiny.
- Simplify the rule language. Begin by defining primary keywords such as users and economic development. When defining economic development include recreation along with natural resources such as timber.
- Simplification—write one rule that is flexible enough to cover a wide variety of resource conditions.
- Rule should carefully define what should be contained in plans.
- Rule should address biodiversity, economics, watersheds, timber, mining, recreation and preservation of economics and recreation.
- Rule should be flexible to address different ecosystems.
- Rule should encompass the aims of NFMA.
- Rule should be adaptable, with reasonable time frames for revision to keep plan up to date with emerging and changing conditions.
- The planning rule needs to be adaptable for differences in area conditions, and give reasonable time frames to address specific events, e.g. fire and/or other needs.
- Mountain ranges make sense for dividing ecological and local human interests/concerns, which would be similar if they were geographically based.
- The planning rule should focus on sustainability and be broad at the national level.
- The planning rule should address special management areas such as roadless areas and designated wilderness and incorporate wilderness management planning and travel management planning into the forest plans. Inventoried roadless areas need to be ongoing and adjusted through the forest planning process.
- Rule should be written incorporating conversations with other agencies.

What works now; what concepts would you like to continue into the next planning rule?

- Keep multiple use language of the planning rule.
- Add access (trails, roads) into the planning rule and involve the public in making decisions concerning access.

- Planning rule needs to address watersheds across the national forests as a top priority, above other resources. Erosion control to prevent groundwater siltation is equally as important to the national forests and should also be given a top priority.

What doesn't work; what concepts would you like to leave behind?

- Reduce timber emphasis—broaden other emphases.
- Shorter planning periods to provide more flexibility to changing conditions/issues.
- Practical/local knowledge can be as valuable as scientific knowledge.
- Use federal RAC's (resource advisory committee), interagency within a geographic area.
- Leave behind the details and specific items the courts found unacceptable in previous rules.

Plan Content

What kind of information should be included in Forest Plans, and should they include standards and guidelines? If so what kind?

- The planning rule should direct that forest plans include standards and guidelines.
- The rule should require plan-specific standards and guidelines in forest plans. Broad standards and guidelines should be defined in the planning rule.
- Standards and guidelines are necessary for wild horse and timber management.
- Base standards and guidelines on definitions, past practices, and past uses.
- If there is no environmental degradation, then there is no need for change.
- Framers of forest plans should consult people on the ground.
- The rule should educate and provide explanations.
- Start moving away from planning for timber harvest.
- Rule should be broken down to address specific resource areas.
- Address sustainability of resources, but couch it in broader terms.
- Protect wilderness for urbanites.
- There should be a balance between science and the practical implications of implementing forest plans.

How consistent should plans be across the country?

- There is an urban and rural disconnect relating to the ways people live, which must be taken into consideration. The multiple-use concept does address urban and rural considerations. Urban children are poor and often do not get a chance to recreate on forest lands, while rural people drive multiple vehicles and enjoy those advantages.
- Define plans to a much finer scale at the local level. Use the BLM RMP for Southern Nevada as an example.
- People need easier access to Forest Service information; it is difficult for people to engage with the Forest Service at present. Information should be available to people across the land.
- There should be consistency in formats for plans across the country.

- The planning rule should provide templates to develop forest plans.
 - Sections of forest plans should be consistent across the country; e.g. section four should be grazing.
 - Forest plans should be consistent where forest landscapes are similar; similar forests should have similar plans. No loopholes should be built into forest plans so that similar forests are managed differently.
 - The rule should contain guidelines for consistency across the country. There should be consistency in approach and process, so all plans consider the same types of concerns with similar formats and forest-specific details.
 - The rule should provide for a methodology similar to NEPA in developing forest plans.
 - Each plan across the country should have a similar structure so people can pick up any plan and find what they are looking for.
-

Process Topics

What suggestions do you have from making forest planning faster, simpler, more straightforward and less expensive?

-
- The review process slows the planning process down. There are too many forest specialists; they take too long with the review process and it slows down the planning process. Having staff unfamiliar with the area slows reviews down. There should be more generalists tasked with forest management.
- Require forest plans to have executive summaries of the document; each section would provide all major points for quick reading.
- Put information in one spot.
- Planning rule should be written to be flexible to address different ecosystems without being too flexible to allow inconsistencies between forest plans. Add to the rule inter-agency and inter-state collaboration.
- The rule should require consideration of past practices and uses, require consultation with the people on the ground, and require education of the people about the issues, applicability and actions before implementation.
- Approach planning process in smaller bites—instead of tackling the entire forest, consider completing smaller discrete management units to speed the process.

When and how should plans be evaluated to see if they are working? What should trigger plan amendments?

- Fifteen years seems too long to wait between revisions. Shorter periods between revisions would help incorporate what the FS has learned and would help apply adaptive management. A time period of five years would allow revision of issues that need to be addressed.
- Revise the forest plans more often; require annual reviews and evaluations on how things are doing and have quantifiable goals.

- Use violations as a trigger to evaluate if a plan is working. Use enforcement reports to evaluate problem areas. Annually assess problem areas.
- Review certain areas at a time, not the entire planning area.
- Shorten the time necessary for forest plan revision to ten years. Revisions and reviews should occur more often.
- Rule should provide for forest plan outcomes, milestones and goals.
- There should be signs, such as population increases or dying trees, which signal that change is necessary.
- Agency personnel should be familiar with their plans so they can inform management when revision is necessary.
- Evaluate strengths and weaknesses of plans, as well as changing conditions; e.g. accessibility and access, or loss of roads due to fires or erosion.
- There should be a two to three year review of plans in response to fire and other changing conditions.
- The rule should provide for review of certain policies. Consideration of policies should be spread out over time to see if they are working.
- It is imperative that plans be assessed annually.
- Emerging issues should trigger review of plan components.

What is the best way to involve stakeholders in the planning process?

- New media options should be employed to make plans public and to educate the public. Send out emails; there is no longer a need for mailings.
- Public feedback should be sought using question and answer techniques. This provides an opportunity for the public to get immediate access to answers.
- The planning rule should require forest planning that connects to local communities and their life styles using committees like the BLM RMPs use of RACs. The committee would take into account diverse lifestyles of stakeholders.
- Change the planning rule so that urban communities participate.
- Involve local-, regional-, and state-elected officials.
- The planning rule needs to address common ecosystems across agency and state boundaries. Set up committees around geographic areas.
- Get to know stakeholders.
- Educate stakeholders.
- Information should be easily accessible.
- Websites should be organized uniformly across the country; less is more on websites; don't scatter information.
- Use signage more often.

How should the Forest Service collaborate with adjacent landowners, partners, and other agencies and governments in developing Forest Plans?

- Get to know stakeholders and allow them to get to know the Forest Service. Use a common sense approach; tell the public in person what is going on, and why things have to change; don't inform them on the trail, in the federal register, or via legal notices in the paper.

- Make access to Forest Plans and other management issues, inventories, monitoring, events, etc. easier to find, in one place on the web, and include data. The format of the plans should be the same. Standardize individual forest websites and update regularly to contain current information. Send out tweets when new information is available. Use new technologies and media to communicate more efficiently and effectively, instead of out-dated methods such as mailers, community postings and the legal notices section of the newspaper. Use social networking sites to ease access and get the public involved. Include a question and answer system to get better feedback on the plan during the planning process. Include education on the webpage.
- The planning rule should address defining the scale of forest plans at finer levels, such as mountain ranges with similar ecosystems, because of the diversity of ecosystems at the current HTNF forest plan level. By involving local people, the forest plan will meet the local needs of the community. For example, two-thirds of the 1982 Planning Rule talks about timber and not other resource areas applicable here in Nevada. The national policy needs to be broader than just timber. Rural communities have a lot of practical knowledge and their knowledge should be sought along with scientific knowledge. Utilize committees, local, state, and interagency.
- The rule should provide for more involvement with ranchers, who will tell you what will work best for grazing and conservation.

Substantive Topics

How can the next planning rule foster restoration of NFS lands?

- Restoration in the planning rule can be fostered through sustainability requirements, through inventory and monitoring requirements, and trend analysis. Evaluating natural resource trends should consider the practical side. There should be a better way to establish trend data, such as the use of satellite imagery for inventory and monitoring and remote sensing databases, especially for rare plants and noxious weeds.
- Restoration needs to be defined. Restore to what—is it yesterday's picture, last years, 100 years ago? Currently, there is no guidance as to what constitutes restoration. It should be defined based on the health of the ecosystem not on disturbances.
- Foster restoration by getting a planning rule that withstands legal scrutiny.
- Awareness of issues can help solve them.
- Talk about maintenance rather than restoration.
- Establish a baseline for understanding the dynamic nature of forests.
- Restore forests to healthy, resilient systems.
- The rule should consider sustainability for native grasslands and provide a process through which to work.
- The rule should provide for restoration where there is mineral extraction or mining activity.

What, if any, climate change assumptions should be used when developing Forest Plans?

- Incorporate best science available for climate change assumptions. Use peer review or science advisory committees, with scientists who are impartial. Incorporate science based recommendations. BLM and FWS do not provide for peer review.
- Require recording/monitoring of climate change and review of records.
- Climate change is unknown and should not be considered in the planning rule.
- Climate change is real and should be considered in the planning rule.
- Things are changing, but the public does not know how; records should be kept of where we are at all times with NFS lands.
- Look at changes resulting from other sources such as air pollutions and reflected heat.
- There should be a process to prepare for changes so the FS can adapt.
- Climate change is an unknown and the rule should make provisions for consideration of urban effects, such as solar radiation.

How should the Forest Service take into account water availability, and water quality factors, that are outside of Forest Service control?

- Have representation from adjacent land owners
- Have interstate and interagency involvement to take into account water issues during the forest planning process. Create a resource advisory committee as a better way of bringing in outside agencies. For example Nye County, Nevada meets quarterly and meetings involve not only federal agencies, but state agencies.
- The rule should provide for involving state agencies and state engineers, who have the best available science on water.
- The rule should address the application of salt on roads.
- Involve the public to put pressure on polluters so that everybody knows where the problems lie.

How should the planning rule guide monitoring and protection of at-risk species of animals and plants and their habitats?

- Change the planning rule to require that the forest plans tie into FWS recovery plans and critical habitat land use decisions to protect at-risk species of animals and plants.
- Define at-risk species and who you need to consult with besides FWS.
- Keep rule general regarding at-risk species and their habitats.
- The regulations should provide for a peer-review standard as to how the FS evaluates what guides monitoring and protection of at-risk species. For example, the desert tortoise protection standards were developed by scientists, and oversight committees were established.
- The rule should provide for flexibility from the ground up.
- The planning process needs to incorporate new decisions to protect species.
- The rule should provide for education of the public on species.
- Let USFWS decide how to write guidance.
- Recreation access in at-risk species' habitat should be controlled, although not excluded.
- Consult with other agencies, including state agencies and county.

What should the planning rule say about how forest plans deal with providing goods and services that contribute to vibrant local, regional, and national economies?

- Recreation economics should be a higher priority than timber today.
- The rule should recognize that people are part of the ecosystem and recognize their needs.
- Recognize that plans will somehow affect economies.
- The rule should consider that mining and timber are no longer as important as grazing issues.
- Be careful on use of modifier adjectives, such as “vibrant” when writing the rule. What is considered to be “vibrant” local, regional and national economies?
- Goods and services as topics are too broad; the FS should be aware of specific issues and address them.

What should the planning rule say about recreational access, and visitor facilities and services?

- Recreational access needs to be limited to protect the species.
- Consider local and regional economics.
- Consider watershed and forest health and impacts from horses and other non-mechanized means for access.
- Consider the costs associated with horse trailers and feed bringing in noxious weeds.
- Provide for variety of recreation opportunities.
- Integrate decisions in the travel management process with transportation planning processes. Access is key.
- Consider other resources in making recreation access decisions. Consider the demands of specific recreation types on the resource.
- The rule should incorporate the multi-use philosophy, where people enjoy public lands as part of their lives.
- The rule should provide for integrating OHV opportunities into forest plans.
- The rule should take into account all access opportunities, including accessibility and transportation. There is nothing in the 1982 rule about trails access.
- Include public involvement in transportation planning, making it a collaborative process.
- Involve OHV users in planning for transportation access.
- Mountain bike use should be treated as a non-motorized and non-mechanized use, so bicyclists can access wilderness.
- Don’t treat mountain bikes as non-mechanized because it will open up wilderness to mountain biking.
- Horses and mountain bikes should be treated equally.
- Consider how we develop recreation activities to protect watersheds and healthy forests.
- Forest health should come first before recreation activities.
- Consider how different modes of transportation have different needs.
- Consider how big a space is necessary for each use.
- Define equal access for each use and evaluate impacts and costs associated with such uses.
- Recreation should be given a high priority on the list of concerns.

- Define recreation in terms of value to the public.
- Evaluate population growth and how it will affect access in the future. Put some language in the rule about it.
- Define what constitutes passive and active recreation.
- Rule should direct planners to look at access to wilderness.
- Wilderness designation must have quantifiable criteria for designation.
- There should be no more politics relating to wilderness.
- Rule should state that wilderness is intended to provide for wildlife.

16. Is there anything else you would like to suggest about the forest planning rule?

- Plans should be consistent with the planning rule.
- Avoid adding loopholes into the planning rule that allow for inconsistencies between plans; this makes the rule is too flexible.

Region 4 Planning Rule Roundtable

Summary of Input: Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest; Reno-Sparks, NV

General Discussion

What do you think a great planning rule would look like?

- Structure, Structure, Structure, Not a shot gun approach.
- Clarify the process for decision making at national and forest level. Define process for dealing with (prioritizing) conflicting needs (wildlife habitat vs. livestock forage), including economics.
- Should include a structure/foundation that is based in core beliefs and principles of the Forest Service. Elements in legislation (NFMA, ESA) From these get objectives. Form the objectives define practices. NOI identifies practices on principles. Need to build planning rule form the foundation of core beliefs.
- A rule based on practices will need to be changed in time to address “new” practices that were not included in the current rule.
- Resource values we need to protect, risks to these resource values, why we need to protect them
- Primary risk factors in relation to a resource value. Prioritization of the management of the risks to the values at risk
- Standards and guidelines should be in Forest Plans, not in the rule.
- Requirement that decisions on the ground get disseminated to public

What works now; what concepts would you like to continue into the next planning rule?

- Encourage interaction with public. Use plan as guiding document. It is hard for people to build a strong relationship with the Forest when the employee turnover is always pulling personal away.
- Need to encourage a sense of community.

What doesn't work; what concepts would you like to leave behind?

- Need to move away from project specificity in Forest Plans.
- Plans need to be dynamic
- Plans and FS need to be responsive to changed condition and public.

- Need Accountability
- Identify priorities and goals

Plan Content

What kind of information should be included in Forest Plans, and should they include standards and guidelines? If So What Kind?

- Priorities and purposes need to be defined.
- Forest Plans need to be resource tools and include vegetation types, soil types, and land use objectives.
- The Plans need to be accessible, Digital versions; include detail in attached documents, Digital plans should be more interactive.
- Informed public=healthy public
- Make the rule short and concise
- Plans should be written in simple understandable language.
- Standards and Guideline
- Plans need to include rules for management (standards and guidelines)
- Rules (S&G) should guide how forests meet objectives. Objectives need to be flexible to changes in condition; and so the rules (S&G) need to be flexible.
- If plan is too difficult to change don't include things in the plan that may need to change.
- Plan revision should be subject to annual review and amendment.
-
- Protect the highest quality lands and water that are still intact. Reconnect landscapes that are fragmented. Move some back to a better condition.
- Engage communities in the restoration effort. It is not "lets protect areas regardless of local interest" it is "protect with local interest."
- Restoration and rehabilitation of areas at risk is critical in some areas.
- Restoration is an ambiguous term (Restore to what, when,) rather than restoration describe the condition/characteristics that you wish to have in the landscape. (Restore in the context of ecological function).
- Concept of restoration is good, the term is overused, ill defined, and means different things to different people.
- Sustainable and sustained conservation efforts.

How consistent should plans be across the country.

- Consistency across the country is not important. Plans should be specific to Forest.
- Some overarching consistency across Forest boundaries is beneficial.

Process Topics

What suggestions do you have from making forest planning faster, simpler, more straightforward and less expensive?

- See discussion (16) regarding Supreme Court Decision.

What suggestions do you have for making forest planning faster, simpler, more straight forward and less expensive?

- Build in continuous annual review/with cumulative look at past years impacts and trends.
- Public needs to be involved at every stage. The plans need to be proactive review (Forests seek input from interested publics)
- Maintain objectives look to changes strategies.
- Develop plans with more public involvement on review, development and evaluation.
-
- New Legislation, ESA as example. The accumulation of legal opinions and legislations hamper the forests ability to implement the plans. When methodologies or technologies change.
- Focus on desired condition and allow flexibility (adaptability) in plans to meet desired condition.s Allow for the adaptation responsive to new tools, new methods, and new technologies.

What is the best way to involve stakeholders in the planning process?

- There is language in NFMA that addresses involvement of public. Reemphasize language in NFMA in planning rule as a principle. Need to take things beyond the comment period.
- Need more outreach, provide more time for the public to respond and to plan for participation in the meeting. When the only outreach is in the paper it is pretty cold and impersonal. Need word of mouth and better outreach.
- Inadequate public outreach. This is not collaboration, or the genesis for collaboration. Need to include contact with Nevada's Coalition for Wildlife and others. Recommend extensive electronic contact/information dispersal.
- Collaboration is not a good term.

Substantive Topics

What, if any, climate change assumptions should be used when developing Forest Plans?

- How plans address opportunities for energy and opportunities to moderate production of green house gases and carbon sequestration and or emissions should be addressed in the rule.

How Should the Forest Service take into account water availability, and water quality factors, that are outside the Forest Service Control?

- Coordinate/encourage cooperative planning with entities that do have water authorities or ecosystem planning/improvements at a landscape scale.
- Watershed management needs to be coordinated with adjacent lands both private and agency.

How should the planning rule guide monitoring and protection of at risk species of animals and plants and their habitats?

- The plans should define a hierarchy that lays out the management priorities. If habitats for at risk priorities is a priority over some form of extractive management this needs to be spelled out in the plan so the public and managers can clearly move toward that goal.
- Where does the wildlife species fall into priority of management goals?
- Need to be knowledgeable about the needs of species/ collaborative with Fish and Game.
- Consider local input that is available. Take advantage of work completed by other agencies, and involved publics.
- Reduce overlap of monitoring efforts. (if Fish and Game is monitoring fish populations use their data for your monitoring effort).
- Use available population information from other sources.
- Replace the word “protection” with “conservation”
- Identify risk factors impacting species/habitat. Root plans and monitoring and management in science, and use that to reach goals and objectives.
- Substitute “protection” with “management”. Protection is too limiting.

What should the planning rule say about how Forest Plans deal with providing goods and services that contribute to vibrant local, regional, and national economies?

- The planning rule should lay out where the provision of goods and services fall into the hierarchy of management priorities. The rule should also require that plans identify the range of goods and services the Forest provides. In this list should include the ecosystem goods and service as well as the forest products (timber, recreation, forage, mineral...)

- Try and tie dollar amounts to the recreation on the National Forest, District. Work up economic profiles for counties.
- 1979 Rule tried to determine economic values and over evaluated. Focus more on specific values instead of all of them.
- MUSYA should be reiterated in the rule. Rural communities are in tough shape, the economic vitality is not there,
- Frame interaction with communities, work with them to determine county/community values and economic needs/lifestyle desires and include these in Plans.

What should the planning rule say about recreational access, and visitor facilities and services?

- Spell out how the planning rule will interact with roadless rules. Clarify how this rule may address, how changes may present themselves to interact with the travel management rule.

Is there anything else you would like to suggest about the forest planning rules?

- 1998 Supreme Court Decision Ohio Forestry Vs Sierra Club. Court pointed out that the ripeness argument is designed “to prevent the courts, through avoidance of premature adjudication, from entangling themselves in abstract disagreements over administrative policies, and also to protect the agencies from judicial interference until an administrative decision has been formalized and its effects felt in a concrete way by the challenging parties.” In light of this ruling why prepare an EIS for the Rule or the Plans when there are no effects to the ground from a rule or plan.
- The Rule should clearly state that plans do not include project specific direction.
- Avoid putting in legal handles that will end up being argued in court. Avoid Ambiguity.

Region 4 Planning Rule Roundtable

Summary of Input; Manti-La Sal National Forest; Price, UT

General Discussion

What do you think a great planning rule would look like?

- Forest Plans should be a guidance document.
- Want a Planning Rule that maintains the concept of collaboration – Collaboration has provided state, local and private entities with a sense that they are "at the table" and are influencing the management decisions that affect "their forest"; working as partners rather than adversaries.
- Want a Planning Rule that encourages the continued use of the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum or something similar. Recognize the variety of motorized and non-motorized uses across the Forest.
- Retain enforceable viability standards and MIS component from the 1982 NFMA regs.
- While a shared vision is important for the national forests, it must be remain within the sideboards of best science on long-term ecological health and resilience under climate change.
- The Planning Rule must allow for and recognize the regional and local differences between forests – one size does not fit all.

What works now; what concepts would you like to continue into the next planning rule?

- A "one size fits all" approach does not work. Forests are different and unique and their Plans should reflect that.
-

Plan Content

What kind of information should be included in Forest Plans, and should they include standards and guidelines? If so what kind?

- The Rule should require that measureable and enforceable standards and guides be used.

How consistent should plans be across the country?

- Commenters believe there should be consistency in management across boundaries to avoid confusion and address resource concerns – problems do not stop at boundaries.

Process Topics

When and how should plans be evaluated to see if they are working? What should trigger plan amendments?

- The Rule should establish that FP's appeals should be specific to a particular section, and that other parts of the FP can be implemented if not specifically appealed
- The Rule should identify and make some sections/parts of Plan non-appealable.
- Direction should be to amend the Plan when a forest wants to implement activities not specifically allowed in a geographic area.
- Plan amendments should happen as frequently as needed.
- Amending the Plan should not be a revision-type effort.
- When considering an amendment, do not require public involvement until after a proposal has been developed.
- The Rule could outline process to amend Plans by major sector (e.g., motorized travel, livestock grazing), prioritizing those sectors that are most sensitive to climate change and most outdated scientifically.
- Plans may not need to go through revision again if they are treated like “living documents” and updated as needed.
- Sections of the Plan should be reviewed on a recurring cycle so that each emphasis area is visited within a 10 year cycle.
- The Rule should require that Forest Plans be peer reviewed and accepted before approving them.
- The Rule should require early collaboration to establish buy-in from communities and entities that have a vested interest in the National Forest.
- The Rule should focus on process and not be specific.
- The Rule should be used to establish the Forest Plan and then manage the Plan as a “living document” thereafter.
- Streamline processes for interagency cooperation.
- “Push” information out to the public via email.
- Protect the stakeholders investment in the planning process that has been completed in the past 5 years. Don't change course so drastically that past work is no longer applicable.
- All Forest Plans should have the same “look and feel”. That way people can find their way around different forest plans. There should be consistency in the elements that are included and the format that should be used.

What is the best way to involve stakeholders in the planning process?

- The OMB/CEQ one-pager on collaboration must be adhered to when using the word “collaboration”.
- The Rule should provide non-local members of the public with opportunities to participate in planning efforts outside of the collaboration context.

How should the Forest Service collaborate with adjacent landowners, partners, and other agencies and governments in developing Forest Plans?

- Plans should use an all-lands approach to address consistency issues and broad landscape management opportunities.
- As states and other federal agencies identify restoration and watershed protection needs, there will be numerous opportunities to integrate those needs with revised forest plans. The agency should adopt a formal system for engaging other state and federal agencies.
- Numerous funding opportunities exist for private landowners to increase the resiliency and adaptability on their lands. Private-public partnerships provide opportunities to match funding and restoration goals across property lines and can result in much more beneficial landscape and watershed restoration efforts.
- The new planning rule should ensure a focus on the continued protection and enhancement of community water supplies, including those that are wholly or partially dependent on national forest lands. However, this should not be at the expense of forest water residence time and recharge.
- The Rule should obligate us to coordinate with local and state governments.
- Encourage face-to-face meetings with the public and local entities.
- The Rule must not allow for collaboration to circumvent regulatory requirements – the Forest Service cannot use collaboration as a tool for abrogating its regulatory authority and responsibility.
- The OMB/CEQ one-pager on collaboration must be adhered to when using the word “collaboration”.
- The Rule should provide non-local members of the public with opportunities to participate in planning efforts outside of the collaboration context.

How can the next planning rule foster restoration of NFS lands?

- Commenters said they wanted the Rule to focus on the populations of species of interest or concern instead of the habitat that they use.
- It was also suggested that the production of water resources for local municipalities and fiber production/harvesting should take precedence over other uses on FS system lands. This would include priority over such uses or designations as recreation and IRA’s.
- The planning rule must fully consider the environmental consequences not only of their forestry management, but also of their livestock management, in light of climate change. The latter, affecting nearly all of the national forest system lands, has been almost wholly neglected by the agency.
- Commenters believe restoration should be a part of every forest plan. The Planning Rule should establish/define what restoration is and some sideboards on how to evaluate. Each forest should have flexibility to address geographically specific restoration needs.
- The Rule should focus Plans to address underlying causes of forest, grassland and/or watershed decline.
- The goal of restoration should be ecosystem resilience. Remove stressors as the most ecologically valid way to increase ecosystem resiliency and prevent degradation. Active

restoration management, including logging, should be secondary tools, not primary tools, for restoration.

Substantive Topics

What, if any, climate change assumptions should be used when developing Forest Plans?

- Some commenters believe direction in forest plans regarding restoration should be guided by climate change. Other commenters do not want us to address climate change at all.
- The Rule could outline process to amend Plans by major sector (e.g., motorized travel, livestock grazing), prioritizing those sectors that are most sensitive to climate change and most outdated scientifically.
- The goal of restoration is ecosystem resilience . . . clean water and air, wildlife and fisheries habitat and connectivity and increased resilience to drought, insects and disease, especially in the context of climate change.
- Remove stressors as the most ecologically valid way to increase ecosystem resiliency and prevent degradation. . . . Limiting livestock grazing and the most ecologically damaging roads, along with activities to avoid and reduce the presence of invasives should be the priority restoration and conservation activities highlighted in new forest plans, especially in the context of climate change.

How should the planning rule guide monitoring and protection of at-risk species of animals and plants and their habitats?

- The Rule should require forests to conduct resource inventories and monitoring, allow for use of data collected outside the Forest Service, and place an increased focus on species instead of habitat.
- The Planning Rule should require forests to invest in personnel to collect data.
- The Planning Rule should require the use of measurable and enforceable triggers that would flag a need to step back and determine what is happening to species, resources.
- The Planning Rule should require forests to consider the use of MIS. Rule should require monitoring of some species and/or habitats, but not specify which ones – should be left to the forest to decide.
- Retain wildlife corridors (passages and linkages)
- Planning Rule should provide that each plan cover water, clean air, carbon sequestration, and species diversity (natural population with geographic distribution of native species)
- How should the Forest Service take into account water availability, and water quality factors, that are outside of Forest Service control?
- The Planning Rule should require that watershed resource concerns/management needs are tied to local government needs/dependence (emphasis on addressing how forest projects impact local water availability.)
- The new planning rule should ensure a focus on the continued protection and enhancement of community water supplies, including those that are wholly or partially dependent on

national forest lands. However, this should not be at the expense of forest water residence time and recharge.

What should the planning rule say about how Forest Plans deal with providing goods and services that contribute to vibrant local, regional, and national economies?

- The Planning Rule should provide exceptions to establish priority (Manage for the "Greater Good") for management of local community resources (e.g. drinking water sources) and be allowed in otherwise restricted activity areas (e.g. IRA's).
- Water is imperative to the survivability of local community economics. In some cases the ability to manage for water quality needs is limited by land management restrictions (e.g., roadless). Forests should be able to manage resources for the "greater good" of the local needs.
- The Planning Rule should support commodity production of grazing, timber, seed gathering, recreation, coal, oil and gas development. The Rule should recognize the importance of "traditional uses" of NFS lands. The Rule should also recognize the importance of "cottage industries" that utilize forest products above what would be classified as personal use but not so much as larger commercial entities.
- The Rule should require Plans to address strategic transportation planning needs and require decommissioning of roads not part of the system.
- The economic impact of forest plans on rural economies should be considered after ecological conditions and other legal requirements are satisfied.
- Ecosystem services, and the benefits they provide to rural communities, should be considered as a primary ecological component of forest plans, with the economic benefits being considered secondarily.
- Enhancement of rural economies must not come at the expense of ecological needs. If the agency elevates the need to enhance rural economies as a principle for forest management, it will likely result in decisions that provide the most jobs regardless of impacts to the environment -this makes no sense in an era of climate change and restoration need, where ecologically-based decision making will often also create rural green jobs.

What should the planning rule say about recreational access, and visitor facilities and services?

- The Planning Rule should require Forest Plans to establish activity areas, to specify types of activities that can be *implemented* in a geographic area.
- The Rule should require Plans to identify recreational uses and distinguish between human powered (e.g. bicycles), motorized and non-motorized (hiking).
- The Rule should require utilization or capacity studies to determine just how much recreational use the resources can sustain.
- The Planning Rule should require Forest Plans to address environmental education.

Is there anything else you would like to suggest about the forest planning rule?

- Much discussion on inventory of data – surface water and diversions, water rights, aquifer recharge zones, water volumes, climate change; forecasting climate change. Direction in the Plan should be based on science backed by data.

- The Rule should direct Forests to collect data from available sources (have it and use it rather than have it reside elsewhere). (Not sure if the expectation is for the FS to be a central repository of information.)
- The Rule should state that projects implemented under the FP should be directed to address a problem outlined or defined in the Plan. (Need for change between existing and DFCs)
- Planning documents should be produced and signed by multiple agencies/entities, not just the FS.
- The planning rule should require that all national forests operate under (1) Desired Conditions (i.e. environmental outcomes) that will result in recovery and conservation of native species, natural ecosystem functions, and resilience in the face of climate change, accompanied by (2) measureable Standards to accomplish those Desired Conditions with public and legal accountability. These should be adapted to regional sensitivities, vulnerabilities, and resilience
- Look at NFMA – all the language that is needed is there – don't reinvent the wheel – or add language that isn't included in the Regulations.

Region 4 Planning Rule Roundtable

Summary of Input: Payette National Forest; McCall, ID

General Discussion

What do you think a great planning rule would look like?

- Requirements for consistency, requirements for forest plans
- Make it simple, easy to implement, only what NFMA requires, and make it easier to revise or amend a forest plan
- Simplicity not at the expense of thoroughness
- Guidelines that are specific enough to be useful but that permit flexibility
- Guidelines should be at the landscape level and address ecosystems – what is appropriate for the area? Every rule/regulation should not apply across all forest types and ecosystems. Avoid strict requirements.
- Connect landscape management to the land it covers.
- The 1982 rule is redundant. Make new rule more reader friendly and edit it down. There is too much repetition in the current rule.
- Less prescriptive and more descriptive of goals or what the land should look like as opposed to specific ways to do it. Provide options on ways to achieve the goals.
- A rule should give more influence and control to Forest Service personnel over how to implement projects.
- Analysis should be at the landscape level and should take into account uses that are compatible – WUI areas are not compatible with some wildlife habitats.

What works now; what concepts would you like to continue into the next planning rule?

- Public involvement is important and should continue. This should stay a part of the process. National as well as local participation should continue and be required.

What doesn't work; what concepts would you like to leave behind?

- The Planning Rule should establish the table of contents for a Forest Plan, example: fire is a bigger issue in some areas. Climate change could be a line in the table of contents. The topics that should be addressed should be listed. If they are not relevant then that topic is skipped.
- The rule should allow more flexibility and should talk about best mgmt. practices.
- Include a way to hold Forest's accountable for actions.
- Forest Plans don't have to be consistent across the nation in how actions are implemented, but topics should be the same. If a topic does not apply then a forest can skip it. But what if

someone disagrees with that assessment? Public should have a say in what is emphasized and how that table of contents is created.

- NEPA is not being implemented as it was originally intended. It should not apply to every project. Forest Service interprets it more broadly than perhaps it should be. NEPA should be interpreted differently than it is currently.

Plan Content

What kind of information should be included in Forest Plans, and should they include standards and guidelines? If so what kind?

- Forests should share lessons learned and boiler plate language to help withstand legal challenges as well as best ways to analyze and adhere to the rules. Encourage consistent definitions of resources issues and terminology. Create a database for the development of forest plans-a menu of language and outlines. Make emergency changes to Forest Plans easier to accomplish. Adaptability is important.

How consistent should plans be across the country?

- The rule should give more flexibility to forests so they can take their local conditions and local/regional preferences into account. However, formats should be consistent. But sections should be included for all to look at. "Section 10 for example should always be wilderness.

Process Topics

What suggestions do you have from making forest planning faster, simpler, more straightforward and less expensive?

- Develop a more streamlined NEPA process, especially for natural disturbances like floods or fires. Forest Plans should be easier to amend. The NEPA process takes too long and is too expensive. Emphasis on landscape scale analysis encourages faster analysis - allow smaller projects to use that analysis.
- NEPA discloses effects and that is important, especially for fisheries for example. FS can avoid litigation through more collaboration and getting the public involved early and often during the NEPA process. Provides additional checks and balances early in the process so consensus can be reached.

When and how should plans be evaluated to see if they are working? What should trigger plan amendments?

- EMS is too burdensome and takes too much time. It is another layer of bureaucracy. Do not include EMS, but include the concept of looking at (auditing) long term effects. Use idea of key indicators to trigger a second look or need for a change. Can we agree on key indicators? MIS is a pain and blessing but it gets at this idea. More routine monitoring

reports to the public should be a requirement. Monitoring of plans - reports are working pretty well. Perhaps require more project level monitoring especially where there are problems. But this is good thing to keep-one year and five year monitoring reports. Add more public participation to monitoring activities and require comment from the public. Bring other regulatory agencies into advisory groups so they can work together and not duplicate efforts. Make this a national requirement. Encourage cooperation between agencies to establish metrics and monitoring targets.

- Large scale and dramatic changes on the landscape should trigger amendments – like fire. FS should be able to respond quickly - do environmental analysis and make changes if warranted. If conditions warrant then amendments should be allowed. Revise how significance (high to low) is evaluated for forest plan amendments – maybe more categories. Many may be easy to implement and warranted. Who decides what is significant? More flexibility for leadership to determine what is significant or not.

What is the best way to involve stakeholders in the planning process?

- Establish a range of opportunities for public participation at forest plan and project level.
- The RAC model is a good one to follow – it insures a balance of perspectives and consistent guidelines and common goals. Establish advisory groups for projects and plans. Groups that meet regularly with consistent memberships are more effective.
- The Secretary should designate members of Forest Plan advisory groups to avoid legal issues. Utilize FACA law to create these groups.
- These groups could help identify local significant issues, but they are not a panacea. We are still faced with NEPA requirements.
- Public participation requirements need to be specific. Facilitate the formation of advisory groups. Make a toolbox or provide help for groups who want to start collaborative efforts. Pull together lessons learned and resources for use by leadership and groups.
- Publicize forest proposals more widely, use all media outlets, public meetings, open houses, and have more meetings in the field and in small towns.
- Think about the timing of actions – summer/winter draws different people into an area. This would build trust in forest service processes. Meet with people who are directly affected. Hold forest service personnel accountable for outcomes so they can explain why certain actions are taken. Take comments on phone and during meetings.

How should the Forest Service collaborate with adjacent landowners, partners, and other agencies and governments in developing Forest Plans?

- Require forests to look beyond their own boundaries at the health of forests or landscape conditions that may add to greater ecosystem health or vigor. Landscape effects need to consider all ownerships in the area.
- Encourage more cooperation and broader consideration of trail networks to achieve connectivity and better access.

Substantive Topics

What, if any, climate change assumptions should be used when developing Forest Plans?

- Climate change will affect fire activity and has occurred in the past but Forest Service actions like suppression have not led to catastrophic fires. Recognize that climate change is cyclical.

How should the planning rule guide monitoring and protection of at-risk species of animals and plants and their habitats?

- Limiting human uses seems to be the de facto solution to every problem. Back off the assumption that humans need to be controlled or limited in their uses of the forest. Wilderness and primitive areas are wasted because they do not allow more human uses.

What should the planning rule say about how Forest Plans deal with providing goods and services that contribute to vibrant local, regional, and national economies?

- This is speaking to the human element – Forest Plan effects to communities.
- Many communities depend heavily on the national forest for economic health. Insure that the planning rule requires that forest plans adequately address economic effects and activities that effect local economies. Forest Plans need to provide the output component – natural resources provide livelihoods. Are there areas that can be set aside for outputs? Require more reporting on economic impacts and social impacts. Utilize and identify what natural resources exist on the forest and how they should be used in light of other needs.
- Species viability should not be more important than all other resource or management goals and should not apply to every acre of national forest. Economics should trump other resource concerns in some specific cases.
- Economic needs should be given priority in some cases. Economic benefits of decisions should be given equal weight in considerations.
- The Forest Service should contribute more to local economies. A commodity base could pay for all of the restoration work.

What should the planning rule say about recreational access, and visitor facilities and services?

- Mountain biking should be categorized as a non-motorized use. We are somewhere in between motorized and non-motorized – mechanized is a gray area. It varies by forest. Need consistency in how mountain biking is evaluated from forest to forest. Wilderness act was written before mountain bikes. The concept of three categories doesn't always fit. Roadless and recommended wilderness & study areas highlight this issue. They become de facto wilderness. Mountain biking should be a non-motorized use and allowed in these areas.
- Backcountry designations should be consistent – there are many categories in “primitive” uses. Mountain biking should be compatible with this designation. Maintain Recreation

Opportunity Spectrum analysis and give it more attention – make it easier to update and account for new uses like mountain biking in forest plans. Bring the planning rule up to date with new recreational uses.

- The Forest Service should clarify definitions for recreation planning. Eliminate confusing labels such as wheeled vehicle, trail vehicle and mechanized vehicle. Simplify the discussion.
- Consider trail tourism and recreation benefits to counties and local communities. Study economic impact to opening or closing trails. Include best available science and more detailed studies of ecological and social impacts of recreation.

Is there anything else you would like to suggest about the forest planning rule?

- Fire – add a three stage process for evaluating the role of fire on the forests – where RX fire is used, where wildfire is allowed to play its natural role, and areas that are suppression zones.
- All forests should be required to develop fire management plans that require these considerations and that involve the public in creating these zones. Climate change would come into the conversation. Make these requirements more stringent and set the framework in the planning rule for consistency in the plans. Force the forests to look at fire more strategically and to use science and research in making decisions. Allow plans to be amended more easily as a result of fire effects – or other natural disturbances.
- Revised plans should be grandfathered in but easier to amend to comply with specific requirements like climate change. Standard language should be shared.
- Forests should be able to work with the public in determining where logging will occur.
- More emphasis should be placed on the preservation of historic structures and places.
- This applies especially to mining history.
- More research in wilderness regarding wildlife and fish – Does more protection mean improved habitat, variability, and viability?
- Planning rule should recognize RS 2477 as valid.
- Common Themes:
 - Human needs
 - Flexibility
 - Local emphasis
 - Bring rule into 21st century
 - Local economies, effects to rural economics
 - Forest Service should be more active or re-emphasize its role as a leader in research for best management practices, esp. silviculture
 - The consequences of decisions are felt more by local residents so the immediate and local effects should be considered to be more significant. Comments by locals should be more significant.

Region 4 Planning Rule Roundtable

Summary of Input: Salmon-Challis National Forest; Salmon, ID

General Discussion

What do you think a great planning rule would look like?

- Incorporate site-specific local knowledge
- Be concise, with well defined terminology not open for legal discussion
- Be so simple and straight forward that the “meat” is on the local level
- Be goal oriented - Hamilton
- Adaptable
- Address nationally determined resource concerns with local applicability
- Be compatible with other rules; integrated with each other so they can work together
- Address community wildfire protection
- Incorporate collaboration developed on the local level (not prescribed)
- Address restoration and conservation first to enhance the resilience of ecosystems

What works now; what concepts would you like to continue into the next planning rule?

- Wide variety of public input
- Linkage of project planning to the Forest Plan
- The ability to amend Plans
- The idea of having to go through the NEPA and Environmental Impact process is important
- Management Indicator Species concept

What doesn't work?

- The current rule doesn't emphasize sustainable communities or sustainable use as a generality (tying community health with Forest health)
- The created expectation of specified commodity output v. ecosystem function
- Currently systems are not in place to create a realistic budget for plan implementation and revision
- Management Indicator Species concept
- Flexibility when a plan is written to have the ability to respond rapidly to a change in environment

Summary of Input for Plan Content

What kind of information should be included in Forest Plans, and should they include standards and guidelines? If so what kind?

- All federally mandated laws should be followed under any Plan
- Retain the enforceable viability standards from the 1982 NFMA regulations
- Resilience rather than specific management indicator species
- Area specific management
- Clear definitions and terminology (updated and current)
- Inventory of communities (from local sources) that are dependent on the Forest Plan
- Assess justification for changes of current Plans
- Emphasize Standards

Process Topics

What suggestions do you have for making forest planning faster, simpler, more straightforward and less expensive?

- Use a local collaborative group
- Look at existing collaborative groups that are working and have been working
- Use templates from other successful plans
- Use electronic and media outlets for distribution
- Limit the avenues of litigation

When and how should plans be evaluated to see if they are working?

- Funded monitoring and reporting
- Monitor capability and suitability

What should trigger plan amendments?

- Unforeseen changes in environmental baseline Local decision making...
- Not the East telling the West what to do

What is the best way to involve stakeholders in the planning process?

- Support for comment number 18-253 page 41
- Develop a level of trust 18-132
- Mechanism to address scientific uncertainty

How should the Forest Service collaborate with adjacent landowners, partners, and other agencies and governments in developing Forest Plans?

- The All Lands approach should not be part of this Planning Rule
- Set up an Intermediary to increase collaboration
- Consider cumulative effects

How can the next planning rule foster restoration of NFS lands?

- Define “restoration” or use a different word
 - All of NFS lands do not need restoration
 - Standards and Guidelines
 - Ecological goals/desired outcomes/thorough GIS data
 - “Resilience” instead of “restoration” Ecosystem balance - Hamilton
-

Substantive Topics

What, if any, climate change assumptions should be used when developing Forest Plans?

- Should not be in the Planning Rule
- There should be an opportunity to use the Forest as mitigation for climate
- This is a political issue and should not be part of planning
- Be aware that the Forest cycles might change because of the climate
- Plans should be much more about adaptation rather than mitigation

How should the Forest Service take into account water availability, and water quality factors, that are outside of Forest Service control?

- Recognize and comply with State Law and federally reserved water rights and rights-of-ways across Forest Service
- Aquatic conservation analysis to prioritize conservation efforts

How should the planning rule guide monitoring and protection of at-risk species of animals and plants and their habitats?

- Carry forward the language from the 1982 Planning Rule

What should the planning rule say about how Forest Plans deal with providing goods and services that contribute to vibrant local, regional, and national economies?

- A balance of all services and goods, not just commodities
- Emphasize that ecological needs should come first
- Ecological needs need to be balanced with human needs
- The 1982 Rule doesn’t address the needs of the Forest dependent communities in regard to the provision of goods or services
- Coordination and collaboration for local community involvement

What should the planning rule say about recreational access, and visitor facilities and services?

- Differentiate between motorized and non-motorized
- Carry forward the language from the 1982 Planning Rule
- There needs to be a differentiation between ecologic impacts and social impacts
- The Forest Service has the responsibility to manage for recreation

Is there anything else you would like to suggest about the forest planning rule?

- Mining provides essential raw materials and needs to be acknowledged as a legitimate but not sustainable activity on the National Forests
- Wildlife and recreation have economic values
- Coordination and collaboration for local community involvement
- Please update the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) Users Guide to address present usage and acknowledge mountain biking as an appropriate use on public lands and the Plans should be updated to include that
- Encourage GREEN jobs
- Encourage continued use of these round table groups
- Continue to evaluate the 1982 Rule...is it really broken?

Region 4 Planning Rule Roundtable

Summary of Input; Sawtooth National Forest; Twin Falls, ID

General Discussion

What do you think a great planning rule would look like?

- National level planning rule would have to be very broad and flexible so that the local forests could have leeway to make it fit/work for their specific conditions. Keep as general as possible, try to reduce the amount of litigation so that resources can make it to the ground. One opinion is that the public lands need to be managed for the people, not from the people, while protecting resources for future generations. Management needs to be able to adjust and change for the long term dynamics. There must be provisions for implementation of forest plans, including budgetary support.
- Protecting the highest quality land i.e. land that qualifies as wilderness, reconnect landscapes for wildlife corridors ie. fragmented Everglade area, engage local communities in restoration efforts, sustaining conservation efforts over time - we need to be careful on the actions/activities that we allow to take place on public lands, try to minimize negative effects, institute restoration,

What works now; what concepts would you like to continue into the next planning rule?

- Continue to seek the maximum input from the public and those efforts should be continued.
- Roadless efforts held townhall meetings and were effective in informing and involving the local communities – this concept is being applied to this process, keep this portion.

What doesn't work; what concepts would you like to leave behind?

- The question was asked about managing areas as "wilderness" – is that determined by the planning rule? And proposed wilderness should not be managed as such until official designation is completed because it becomes "del facto" wilderness. Less green gates.
- Stricter standards should be set for wildlife and habitat protection, rather than leave them behind, make those stronger; standards for off road vehicle/motorized vehicles. Off road vehicle use should be developed at the forest and district level.

Plan Content

What kind of information should be included in Forest Plans, and should they include standards and guidelines? If so what kind?

- Standards should be set locally and guidelines come from the national level, so there is room for flexibility.
- Yes, forest plans should include standards and guideline but those must be enforced and enforceable. Put standards in that make users more responsible for their actions.

How consistent should plans be across the country?

- Forest plans should be flexible enough for local management to reflect the diversity of land types, species, precipitation levels, elevation, type of use, etc.
- The broad goals should be consistent on a national level; however, more flexibility should be put into plans based on the diversity and health of the forest.

Process Topics

What suggestions do you have from making forest planning faster, simpler, more straightforward and less expensive?

- One opinion is that since more EA's have been able to be used, rather than EIS, the process has been somewhat streamlined.
- Don't lose face-to-face communication, continue to use the Internet as a means to share information but recognize there are limits
- We must look the plans as long term, ongoing resource health blueprints. Evaluate through ongoing monitoring efforts. Plan triggers include public input, negative impacts/effects on the resources.

When and how should plans be evaluated to see if they are working? What should trigger plan amendments?

- If this question refers to forest plans, then suggestions include monitoring to determine unacceptable change.
- Constructive and informed communication in a timely manner.

What is the best way to involve stakeholders in the planning process?

- One opinion is that the FS has improved their efforts to involve the public. Comments must be solicited after draft documents are published. Streamlining the process is desirable but not at the cost of removing the stakeholder's ability to comment. Include the FS logo as an eye catcher in articles in the newspaper – it would also be beneficial to describe what the meeting is about. Also use the radio, PSA's, and Internet.
- Make every effort to provide public notice (newspaper, radio, PSA's, website)

How should the Forest Service collaborate with adjacent landowners, partners, and other agencies and governments in developing Forest Plans?

- It is very important that user groups be involved, it is currently being done on the SNF and should continue.
- The FS would need to work collaboratively and cooperatively with stakeholders to try for a resolution.

How can the next planning rule foster restoration of NFS lands?

- The question is asked how far is restoration going to go? To what stage should land be restored to? There needs to be a better definition of restoration. Target sustainable conditions that also provide for multiple use and support resource industry.
- Make restoration efforts a higher priority, minimize the need for restoration efforts in the first place

Substantive Topics

What, if any, climate change assumptions should be used when developing Forest Plans?

- One opinion is no assumptions on climate change should be used. Another opinion is that climate change and the rate of change should be considered.
- We need to accept the reality of climate change and plan accordingly both short term and long term.

How should the planning rule guide monitoring and protection of at-risk species of animals and plants and their habitats?

- One opinion is that the planning rule should in no way require more stringent requirements than other regulating agencies. Another opinion is that the FS has an obligation to maintain habitat as it relates to endangered animal and plants species.
- Protect to the full extent possible as a higher priority than it is currently. Identify species needs and habitat conditions and limit negative effects. Consider the impacts of our actions.

What should the planning rule say about how Forest Plans deal with providing goods and services that contribute to vibrant local, regional, and national economies?

- One opinion is that Forest plans should take into account local economies and should be designed to stimulate the economies. Another opinion is that the Forest plans should primarily focus on the resource concerns and conditions and maintain a healthy forest, as well as have some consideration for the local economy.
- There needs to be a balance between economic benefits and ecosystem considerations. Also a feeling that habitat considerations should be a higher priority. MUSY was and still is a good principle for managing the forest.

What should the planning rule say about recreational access, and visitor facilities and services?

- One opinion is that the forest should be managed for multiple use, it is public land and as such, it should be managed for maximum access by a reasonable number of users. Keep the public lands for the public. Don't commercialize visitor facilities and services – keep more in line with primitive (dispersed) camping. Another opinion is that public lands cannot be overrun with people and undo human influence.
- Recreational access should be evaluated based on the land type, species, habitat, etc. More fragile areas may require limited access while other areas may be sustainable for heavier use.

Is there anything else you would like to suggest about the forest planning rule?

- Best management plans/practices should be adopted on a local basis. The planning rule cannot be too restrictive in order to allow local forests to make the decisions that are best for their areas. Address science without emotion. The plan should be achievable and realistic.
- To the rule revision team: Good Luck! Consider the future generations and protect the resources that we have. One opinion is “man is not necessarily the enemy of the forest with his works, or his ways, or his presence.”

Region 4 Planning Rule Roundtable

Summary of Input: Uintah-Wasatch-Cache National Forest; Salt Lake City, UT

General Discussion

What do you think a great planning rule would look like?

- Policy should think about people at their best
- We need more and better management
- Forests are Dynamic and plans need to allow for flexibility.
- Things need to be simpler.

What doesn't work; what concepts would you like to leave behind?

- Appeals process
 - Coordination with the roadless rule, and limitations on access
 - Lack of a recipe to address current challenges such as climate change
 - Rigidity. Currently plans aren't designed to flex to take into account new science or to deal with a rapidly changing environment.
-

Plan Content

What kind of information should be included in Forest Plans, and should they include standards and guidelines? If so what kind?

- The Rule should not look like the tax code! The more onerous it is, the more it will impede science-based management.
- The Rule should require Plans to be clear and outcome-oriented.
- The Rule should foster accountability by requiring Plans to conduct monitoring and include triggers for management actions based on monitoring results. Some said the monitoring should be conducted by a neutral/independent party and/or by a multi-party group.
- Forest Plans should include an analysis of usage levels and patterns and forest carrying capacity.
- Forest Plans and projects should have checklists to ensure consistency with the Rule and Plan, respectively.
- Participants said the Rule should require Forest Plans to have standards and guidelines; however, there were different points of view about what items should be standard in all

Forest Plans and which should be decided locally. For example, some said the Rule should include grazing standards, such as stubble height, while others noted that grazing may not be relevant in some parts of the country. In addition, one person said that if Plans continued to be updated only every 15 years, they would be less inclined to require standards and guidelines in Plans because they would become outdated.

- Fixed Standards
 - Interpret the rules the same
 - Plans make concrete decisions
 - Consistency across the country
 - Standards are outcome-based
 - More detail at the regional level
 - Accountability
- Guidelines
 - Forests are regional
 - Regional differences and accessibility
- Difference: Should national level run the forests or should Utah?
- Not too many standards: then there should be guidelines
- Identify ecosystem services to enforce
 - Water
 - Resiliency
 - Climate Change
 - Ecosystem disruption
 - Activity associated with resiliency
 - New stressors
- Top-Level Issues: Rule should require that these are addressed (in plans and measurements).
 - Local Economies; If this is supported, is it a death knell for forests?
- Measure what is happening
- MONITOR competing uses
- Ask: Do forests have the capacity to adapt to national standards?
- There should be national standards of outcome in:
 - Resiliency
 - Lands connectivity
 - Water Supply
 - Water Quality
 - Local Economies
 - Recreation (all types)
 - Biodiversity
 - Climate Changes
 - Stressors
 - Restoration

- Measure and change at thresholds
- When do you change? Who sets the threshold? Who studies?
- Forests should engage with all science (agencies, academia, citizens)
- Use objective and repeatable results, set standards for good science
- Develop Partnerships
- There is a need for a new recipe to accommodate issues like climate change
- The rule should require each plan to include a description of the biomes that are encompassed by the Forest.
- The rule should require plans to call out different kinds of recreation, e.g., biking in particular.
- Yes, and there was a specific request for a standard/guideline dealing with biking.
- There should be a standard/guide addressing a preference for utilizing student services in all forests.

How consistent should plans be across the country?

- The Planning Rule should provide standards of outcome that are consistent across the country. These would include things like resiliency, watershed health, sustainable forests, and species diversity. Specific actions and plans would be developed at the local to meet these standards of outcome.
- Validity of access
- Need regional views at the landscape level
- There needs to be tiered levels of rules, those that apply nationally, regionally, and locally, getting more specific Nationwide consistency
 - Major factors and consistent standards
 - Criteria for measurement needs to be consistent
 - Separate measurements from natural variability
 - Enough data to identify trends
 - Don't hamstring science
 - "Best Science"
 - Maybe like CAA, other acts
 - Moving target
 - Should be holistic
 - National Outcome standards, local Specifics

Process Topics

What suggestions do you have from making forest planning faster, simpler, more straightforward and less expensive?

- Sector planning, where plans are done only by sector as opposed to in the whole, would allow for smaller and simpler planning processes. The various sectors would be monitored, and those sectors with the most need for revision would be prioritized.
 - Look at sector that is most out-of-date and that most needs addressing
 - Sector-specific plans within greater forest plans
 - Evaluate sectors by set criteria
 - There are triggers for revision
 - Inter-relationships? Sector plans should do a cross-cutting analysis to examine inter-relationships
 - There are a variety of stressors that affect what we are concerned about
 - Natural: bark beetle, invasives
 - Man-Made: Coal, recreation, etc.
 - Could also look at plans in terms of a resource, such as water.
- You can't remove all stressors, but it is important to look at the cumulative effects of all stressors.
- Look at one issue that is cross-cutting, focus only on that.
- How to prioritize? base on impact/consequences
- There is also a timeline, sector plans must be revised within a certain timeframe, out-of-date
- Monitoring: New technology
 - Agree on major issues/criteria and monitor
 - invest more in analyzing data
 - Reduce long-term costs
 - Better, more localized projections with increased data
 - Share data
- Timeline
 - Longer timeframe for major plans
 - Set criteria for monitoring and thresholds
 - Revised maybe every 25 years
 - Monitoring of sectors
 - At threshold level, change starts
 - There could also be a petition process to start sector analysis (ala APA petitions), based on evidence, when citizens think FS is out-of-sync with best management practices
- FS Should talk to and share data with BLM, other agencies, and should invite private landowners to the table.
- Open collaboration should occur subject to NEPA
- Protect the document from legal challenges.
 - Define objections and appeals
 - More input will protect documents from legal challenges

When and how should plans be evaluated to see if they are working? What should trigger plan amendments?

- Several participants highlighted the importance of regional/interagency planning (e.g. coordination with State Wildlife Management agencies, etc.).
- Several participants supported requiring Forest Plan updates more frequently than every 15 years. Some suggested requiring updates every 5 years. One participant suggested requiring Plans to have triggers for amending the Plan when monitoring indicates it is needed.
- There should be thresholds for monitored conditions. When these thresholds are met it should an amendment or a revision of the forest plan.
- Do not compromise care and quality by trying to speed up and/or simplify the planning process too much.
- Revisit plans regularly and adjust to accommodate changing conditions and to address problems that have arisen.
- Retain the ability to trigger plan revisions/amendments in the face of problems – without a pre-determined solution in mind.

What is the best way to involve stakeholders in the planning process?

- The Forest Service needs to ask people to engage as stewards of their Forests, through education about the importance of Forest Resources.
- Education should teach people the Best way to act in the forests
- These roundtables are a step in the right direction: collaboration can make things cheaper and faster in the long term.
- We often don't meet with those we disagree with
- Engage people from cities and towns who don't live nearby
- Go to communities and ask them what their priorities are.
- Engage stakeholders as educators
- "Brass-Roots"
 - Grassroots and economic interests
 - Case-by-case basis
 - Could you mandate some process?
- There should be a central site with ground rules to register opinions (blog, website) and it needs to be monitored.

How should the Forest Service collaborate with adjacent landowners, partners, and other agencies and governments in developing Forest Plans?

- Equally concerned with what BLM is doing
- Bring in the political players.

How can the next planning rule foster restoration of NFS lands?

- Participants recommended using terms such as “resilience” and “forest health”, rather than “restoration”, because restoration implies returning to a specific endpoint, and the goal should be a self-perpetuating/sustainable cycle that may have multiple states.
- The focus should be on “processes and functions that support the ability of the land to renew itself following disturbance.”
- The Rule should require Plans to document the natural range of variability, including processes and structures, rather than the historic range of variability, which is more of a snapshot.
- The Rule should allow natural processes in addition to more active treatment.
- The Rule should require Plans and projects to differentiate between restoration treatments and timber production.
- Connectivity
- Ensure healthy forests
 - Restore resilience is number one
 - What are stressors and how do you reduce them?
 - Evaluate cumulative effects of user groups
- Restoration of forests is the main emphasis: If we don’t take care of it, it won’t be there for anything.
- Build self-sustaining forests
 - Economic interests can help
 - Determine economic activity by eco-system status and needs
 - Use economics and market incentives to achieve healthy forests
- Ecological sustainability is the foundation upon which everything else will be built; it is what allows everything else to exist.
- Adaptive management
 - Use economic incentives for land management
 - Restore processes within multiple use
 - Monitoring is key
- Monitoring
 - Forests are dynamic
 - See what works and use that
 - Should be incorporated in projects
 - Mandated
 - Drives toward adaptive management
 - Include private forests and other agencies, use as tools for success
- There is a broad spectrum of science
 - Use best science
 - Studies are better than projections
 - Predictive science is not a basis for management
- Restoration needs to be incorporated into plans, along with a requirement to address/restore where there are negative impacts.

- Specify a role for young people in restoration work.

Substantive Topics

What, if any, climate change assumptions should be used when developing Forest Plans?

- The goal should be achieving resilient ecosystems. This is the best way to respond to climate change.
- The Rule should require use of peer-reviewed science. Some said, when there is a majority view, there should be a requirement to use it.
- Some said the Rule should require Plans to remove stressors as the first step in addressing the impacts of climate change.
- The Rule should acknowledge and allow for shifts in habitat/species ranges.
- The Rule should require Plans to identify the most important wildlife corridors and take steps to protect them on a landscape scale.
- The Rule should require that Plans be spatially explicit.
- Some said the Rule should require Plans to have measurable goals, citizen/participatory monitoring, and triggers for when to remove stressors on the system.
- The Rule should require the use of adaptive management of climate change impacts (e.g. Plans should test hypotheses and take action based on learning). Some said rigorous, independent monitoring is key to this, while others said that the key is implementing effective ways to learn and feeding what is learned back to management.
- One participant said the Rule should NOT require Plans to use the forest for carbon sequestration, because this could result in unintended outcomes such as cutting of old growth trees.
- Climate data should be used to better predict models. This could better provide resolution at the local level.
- It is changing
- There will be new stressors
- There needs to be a flexibility to address this at a local/regional level
- Increase modeling resolution at local level
- Action needed before it shows up in modeling
- Coordination is needed between forest regions
- Monitoring data needs to be incorporated into models
- Goal to increase the resilience of the ecosystem
- Enable forests to handle change
- Diverse, resilient, connected lands and forests
- The rule needs to include a framework for how forests account for changing habitats, etc.
- There should be an emphasis on resilient forests.

- The rule should NOT prohibit activities like mining and coal extraction for climate purposes. If mining or other activities have negative impacts that contribute to climate change, look for ways to decrease green house gas emissions from those activities rather than simply banning them.
- There shouldn't be a need to fight about whether climate change is real or not, or human caused or not. Rather look at how to address problems whatever their cause.
- Make sure that climate change considerations do not come at the expense of overly jeopardizing jobs.
- The rule should require plans to explicitly deal with climate change assumptions, and link to other stressors such as urban growth that may also have impacts, preferably in a watershed context.
- Use modeling to help anticipate climate change impacts.

How should the Forest Service take into account water availability, and water quality factors, that are outside of Forest Service control?

- Several participants said the Rule should require Plans to coordinate with local, adjacent jurisdictions on water issues.
- One participant said the Rule should require Plans to have direction that the first response to water quality degradation is to remove the causes of the impairment, whether or not the degradation was caused by the Forest Service.
- One participant said the Rule should NOT encourage managing for water yield. Instead, the Rule should encourage an integrated approach to watershed health that includes consideration of ecological, social, and economic factors.
- One participant said the Rule should identify maintaining water quality as a priority above developing/expanding more recreational facilities (e.g. ski resorts should not be given priority over water quality).
- Coordinate with water resource managers in other jurisdictions (other federal agencies, states, and local agencies) to ensure that Forest plans are in synch with other management.

How should the planning rule guide monitoring and protection of at-risk species of animals and plants and their habitats?

- One participant said the Rule should require Plans to address species viability, including both individual and indicator species.
- Several participants said that the current methods for protecting at-risk species (e.g. management indicator species, focal species) need work, but they did not have an alternative to suggest.
- Monitoring shows changes in animal behaviors
 - Important to do on unit basis
 - Indicator species as monitoring unit
 - Change human action if it helps and is fair.
- Maintain native species viability

- Expand wilderness
- Habitat connectivity is important. Forests should look at habitat on a regional scale, e.g., by participating in State wildlife plans. Look for opportunities to collaborate with other entities (such as The Nature Conservancy for example) in completing wildlife corridors.
- Monitoring protocols should consider wide-ranging/migratory species whose patterns of movement are likely to change (e.g., as a result of climate change)
- When cataloguing “species of concern”, forests should be directed to include species listed by States and other jurisdictions.
- There should be an emphasis on reducing stressors that are negatively impacting at risk species (the ones that serve as “canaries in a coal mine”).
- Include a requirement for monitoring to detect problems with at risk species, and the flexibility and capacity to make management changes as necessary to address problems.

What should the planning rule say about how Forest Plans deal with providing goods and services that contribute to vibrant local, regional, and national economies?

- Economic incentives could be used to foster good land management techniques (like logging in beetle-kill areas).
- Historical uses of the forests are tied to local culture
- Should they be weighted more?
 - How far back do you go?
 - National lands – all Americans do have a stake
 - It is not the same world as historically – we need to be more careful
 - We need to use science
- Make sure multiple use is reflected in the rule.
- The rule should require plans to start from the foundation of protecting ecological resources for the long term (or at least until the next revision cycle). And then, building upon that foundation, look at how to provide for multiple use, access etc.
- Include a requirement that plans quantify the financial benefits of recreation, the economic impacts of closing trails, and the value of ecosystem services derived from forests, etc.
- Youth are integral to considering how forests can contribute to vibrant local economies.
- Each forest should be required to evaluate what/how they can contribute to national strategic needs (e.g., energy).

What should the planning rule say about recreational access, and visitor facilities and services?

- Some said the Rule should require Plans to evaluate/address multiple uses, rather than prioritizing any one use over the other.
- Some participants said the Rule should require Plans to assess the carrying capacity of the Forest for human activity/recreation.
- One person said that the Rule should require Plans to close the forest to cross-country motorized travel (as is currently required), and identify specific areas within the forest that are open to cross-country motorized travel.

- The Rule should make decisions about travel management within the scope of a Plan revision.
- Access is important because it fosters support for forest system lands.
- The Rule should support sustainable recreation.
- The Rule should require Plans to take climate change into account with regard to decisions about ski area expansions/management.
- Roads: What are the effects of new roads?
- At what point is a new road needed?
- Need standards to be able to say “yes or no”
- Controlled recreation use areas are good.
 - Look at carrying capacity
 - Limit recreation that doesn’t support resiliency
 - Control with market incentives
- There needs to be an emphasis on multiple-use
- Some places should not be used at all
- Provide balance between use and protection. Some areas should be protected/off limits to certain kinds of recreation and use.
- The rule should specify that plans consider all sorts of recreational activities, including ones that might not be currently even contemplated.
- The rule should in no way create incentives for further privatization of concessions – the concern is that private concessionaires may charge fees that result in reduced access for those who cannot afford the fees.
- It was noted that trends towards higher fees (whether by concessionaires or the Forest Service) may in some cases be the result of budget realities. One solution may be more and better use of volunteers.
- Require coordination with communities on trailheads, facilities, etc.
- Require carrying capacity analysis for the purposes of appropriately limiting access so as to prevent over-use or damage to resources (e.g., like issuing rafting permits for popular rivers)
- Use the expertise that exists within the Forest Service in making access and closure decisions.
- The Recreational Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) needs to be revised to include mountain biking

Is there anything else you would like to suggest about the forest planning rule?

- What are the priorities in a national forest?
 - Eco-system
 - Restoration
 - Resilience
 - Water: Number one in the West! Healthy forests are better producers of water.
 - Connectivity of landscapes
 - Clean Air

- Social Connectedness: Stewardship of lands
 - Holistic approach to managing forests
 - Traditional uses are brought within these limits
 - Education is going to be a major component in the rule roll-out.
 - Specify the use of best science.
 - Build in resiliency as an essential goal.