

# White Mountain National Forest



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Forest  
Service

Eastern  
Region



## Final Environmental Impact Statement

for the Land and Resource Management Plan



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## Final Environmental Impact Statement

September 2005

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## **Abstract**

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This Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) documents analysis of four alternatives for management of the White Mountain National Forest. The Forest developed the alternatives with input from the public and other federal and state agencies. All alternatives respond to development of new information and changes in conditions since the 1986 Forest Plan was released. All alternatives also meet the objectives of all applicable federal laws, regulations, and policies. The FEIS displays the programmatic-level environmental effects of implementing each alternative. Alternative 2 in the FEIS is identified in both the FEIS and the Record of Decision as the “Selected Alternative.”

The Selected Alternative is the basis for the revised Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan) that accompanies the FEIS. The revised Forest Plan will guide all resource management activities on the White Mountain National Forest. The rationale for choosing Alternative 2 as the Selected Alternative is described in the Record of Decision for this FEIS.

# Preface

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In 2004, the White Mountain National Forest released for public review and comment a Draft Environmental Impact Statement. That document described four possible ways to manage the Forest that would address issues and concerns identified in the Forest Plan revision process. It analyzed the effects of each of those management options on human and natural resources, and was the basis for determining what changes would be made to the current Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan). The DEIS was accompanied by a Proposed Forest Plan, developed from the Preferred Alternative chosen by the Regional Forester.

This Final Environmental Impact Statement is the product of interagency, employee, and public comment on the draft, and, where changes have been made, reviews and updates the effects analyses. It is divided into two separate volumes. The first, this one, has five chapters and is the body of the document. The second volume includes pertinent appendices.

## Chapter 1

Chapter 1 describes the purpose and the need for Plan revision, states the proposed action — to revise the current Forest Plan — and explains the reasons for the revision. It also summarizes the issues that are addressed in the FEIS, describes other analyses that influenced the revision, and explains the decisions that were made through the revision effort.

## Chapter 2

Chapter 2 presents the four alternatives — the management options that are analyzed in the FEIS — and identifies the Selected Alternative, which is the basis for the Revised Forest Plan. It also describes the process used to develop the alternatives and those alternatives that were considered but dropped from further analysis. Chapter 2 includes a summary of the environmental effects of implementing each alternative, and a comparison of projected outcomes by alternative.

## Chapter 3

Chapter 3 describes the existing physical, biological, and social resources of the Forest that may be affected by the alternatives presented in Chapter 2. It also discusses the effects that the alternatives may have on those resources. The analysis of environmental effects provides the basis for the comparison of alternatives that appears at the end of Chapter 2.

Chapter 3 is organized by resource, and each resource section contains all the parts described in this preface. In most resource sections, heading styles match what is shown in this preface. These headings are designed to make it easier to find information in each section.

### *Introduction*

This is a brief description of the section, explaining what resources it covers and its connection to other resources. Usually there is no heading for the introduction, it simply starts after the section title.

### *Affected Environment*

The affected environment describes the current condition of the resource, focusing on aspects related to the issues. This discussion also includes information on pertinent regulations and existing management direction, other factors that influence the resource — such as historic disturbance or public demand, and recent and expected trends. It describes the current condition of the resource on the White Mountain National Forest and across the analysis area, if that area extends beyond the Forest. The analysis area is the geographic area in which effects to the resource are analyzed, and should be defined in each resource section.

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#### Subtopics

The affected environment may be divided into multiple subtopics to make it easier to understand the information presented.

### *Environmental Effects*

This portion of each resource section describes the expected or potential effects that the alternatives presented in Chapter 2 may have on the resource. These effects may be similar across the alternatives, or may vary among alternatives.

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#### Effects Common to All Alternatives

The effects from aspects of the alternatives that are the same or similar enough to one and other that effects to the resource would not differ.

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#### Alternative X

The effects to the resource from an individual alternative, emphasizing the effects that would differ among the alternatives. Most resource sections display effects from each of the four alternatives.

Whether they are common to all alternatives or unique to each alternative, there are three types of effects: direct, indirect, and cumulative.

#### **Direct and Indirect Effects**

Direct effects occur at the same time and place as the action. Indirect effects occur later in time or are spatially removed from the action. Although a forest plan would guide management for 10 to 15 years, direct and indirect effects are discussed for 20 years of implementation to ensure that all effects through completion of the next mandated revision are addressed. Direct and indirect effects often overlap, and are frequently discussed together.

#### **Cumulative Effects**

Cumulative effects are the incremental impacts of an action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions implemented by the Forest Service or other landowners in the analysis area. Cumulative effects can result from individually minor, but collectively significant, actions that take place over time. For most resources, the cumulative effects discussion covers a 50 year period.

## Chapter 4

Chapter 4 lists the people involved in the preparation of the FEIS and describes their qualifications and role in the revision effort.

## Chapter 5

This chapter lists the agencies, organizations, and individuals that provided input to the revision process, and those who asked to receive a copy of the FEIS.

## Other Sections and Appendices

In addition to the five chapters, Volume 1 of the FEIS includes a Glossary of acronyms and terms used in the FEIS. Where possible, terms defined in the glossary are highlighted the first time they appear in the text of the document by underlining (and in blue in the electronic versions). In the GeoBook, mouse clicking on such a word will bring up its definition in a separate window.

Another section, Literature Cited, provides a list of the information sources referenced in the FEIS.

Volume 2 includes ten appendices to the FEIS. They provide additional information to support Chapters 1-3.

**Note:**

The Forest Service uses the most current and complete data available. GIS data and product accuracy may vary. They may be: developed from sources of differing accuracy, accurate only at certain scales, based on modeling or interpretation, incomplete while being created or revised, etc. Using GIS products for purposes other than those for which they were created may yield inaccurate or misleading results. The Forest Service reserves the right to correct, update, modify, or replace, GIS products without notification.

Note also that, generally, numbers used have been rounded, and this may yield some inconsistencies.

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