

Purpose and Need

The Forest Plan guides all natural resource management activities and establishes management standards and guidelines for the Modoc National Forest. These activities and standards allow for the use and protection of Forest resources. In addition, they fulfill legislative requirements, respond to public issues and Forest Service concerns, and provide opportunities for the use of the Forest. Specifically, the Forest Plan:

- guides the management of the Forest for the next 10-15 years, and includes long-range goals and objectives for the Forest;
- describes resource management practices and levels of resource production and management;
- allocates land for the combination of management activities to which it is best suited by maximizing long-term net public benefits in an environmentally sound manner;
- establishes monitoring and evaluation requirements needed to ensure that management direction is implemented and its objectives met; and to trigger changes in that direction, if needed;
- yields resource inventory data necessary for Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resource Planning Act (RPA) assessments;
- provides information for the development of program and budget proposals;
- will be revised at least every 15 years, and will be reviewed every 5 years to determine need for more frequent revision.

Relationship of the Forest Plan to Other Plans

Preparation of the Forest Plan is required by the RPA of 1974, as amended by the National Forest Management Act of 1976 (NFMA). RPA requires the Forest Service to conduct an assessment of the nation's renewable resources and to develop a program of use. The assessment

determines the capability of all National Forest System lands to provide goods and services, as well as a forecast of demands for them.

NFMA requires the Forest Service to develop an integrated Land Management Plan for each National Forest. Each Forest Service Region distributes its share of national production targets to each of its Forests. The share each Forest receives is based on detailed information gathered at the Forest level.

Assessment of the Plan's environmental impacts is required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and is contained in an accompanying Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The EIS describes in detail the existing Forest environment and management, supply and demand factors, and the environmental effects of implementing the proposed Forest Plan or other reasonable alternatives that are presented therein. It also includes the data gathering, issue identification, and alternative formulation that constituted this planning process. The Plan summarizes demand and supply potential, amplifies the preferred alternative, and applies its management direction to each management area of the Forest. Both the EIS and Plan state the public issues and management concerns that guided formulation of the plan.

When approved, the Forest Plan will supersede most previous Forest resource management plans. All existing resource management plans were re-examined by the Forest's interdisciplinary planning team. Plans deemed consistent with, and still appropriate for, the Forest Plan are incorporated by reference. These include:

- Wild Horse Management Plan
- Modoc Sucker Recovery Action Plan
- Transportation Plan
- Deer Herd Plans - Warner Mountain, McCloud Flat (Glass Mountain), Interstate, Adin
- Three Sisters Bald Eagle Winter Roost Management Plan
- Mt. Dome Bald Eagle Winter Roost Management Plan
- Pronghorn Management Plan

Other plans are incorporated by reference and will be amended to be consistent with the Forest Plan after it is approved:

- Range Allotment Plans
- Triangle Lands Development & Management

After adoption of the Forest Plan, all other existing resource management plans will be superseded:

- Ranger District Multiple Use Plans:
 - Big Valley Ranger District
 - Devil's Garden Ranger District
 - Doublehead Ranger District
 - Warner Mountain Ranger District
- Medicine Lake Unit Land Management Plan
- Timber Management Plan & Five-Year Action Plan
- Land Adjustment Plan
- South Warner Wilderness Interim Management Plan
- Off-Highway Vehicle Plan
- Wetlands Development Plan 1979-84
- Geologic Special Interest Areas Interim Plan
- Fire Pre-Attack Plans
- Fisheries Habitat Management Plan
- Deer Herd Habitat Management Plan

The Big Valley Federal Sustained-Yield Unit (BVFSYU) policy statement (Appendix R) and allowable sale quantity is also incorporated by reference and amended. The BVFSYU was established under the authority of the Sustained Yield Forest Management Act of 1944, by a Declaration of the Chief of the Forest Service on January 27, 1950. The most recent policy statement concerning the BVFSYU prior to this Plan was approved by the Chief on August 24, 1979. The periodic review of the BVFSYU, required by the Forest Service Manual, was included as part of the current planning effort. The review includes examining the level of harvest within the Unit, operating policies, and the need for the Unit.

The Plan also requires preparation of various resource implementation plans to more specifically define management direction. These implementation plans are listed in Appendix A.

Forest managers can use all the information in the Plan and EIS as a basis for local project environmental analyses. This process of tiering to the broader documents and incorporating the Plan and EIS by reference permits concentration on issues specific to subsequent smaller projects. Similarly, the Forest Plan is tiered to the Pacific Southwest Regional guide, which is tiered to the national RPA program.

Plan Implementation Process

The Forest Plan and resource implementation plans will be carried out by the District Rangers and their staffs. The Modoc's four districts cover 22 Management Areas. The Plan is comprised of a set of goals and objectives for each Management Area, reflecting the capability and suitability of the land to support various activities. District Rangers' staffs will plan and conduct projects that conform with these goals and objectives. Projects will continue to be planned and evaluated through the interdisciplinary process. District and Forest staffs will conduct environmental analyses, and document them in appropriate environmental documents (such as Environmental Assessments), which will be tiered to the Forest Plan EIS.

Numerous existing contracts for timber sales, special uses, and grazing may not immediately comply with the Forest Plan. Duration of these contracts may be several months, such as salvage sales, or several years. Most operation and maintenance activities, new projects, projects in the first year of development, new special use proposals, and transfers of existing permits can be brought into compliance with the Forest Plan within the first year of implementation. Contractual obligations will continue as originally planned.

The Plan will be implemented at all levels of Forest management. Environmental Assessments for all Forest projects will be tiered to the EIS for this Plan.

Forest Plan Amendments, and Revisions

If the Forest Plan requires amending, the Forest Supervisor determines whether a proposed amendment would result in a significant change to the Plan. If the change is significant, the Forest Supervisor shall follow the same procedure required to develop and approve a Forest Plan. The Regional Forester approves significant amendments. If the change is not significant for the purposes of the planning process, the Forest Supervisor may approve and implement an amendment after the public is notified and NEPA procedures are completed.

Every five years the Forest Supervisor will determine whether conditions of the land or demands of the public have changed significantly. The Forest Plan will normally be revised every 10 years, or at least every 15 years. However, it may be revised whenever the Forest Supervisor determines that changing conditions or demands, including RPA policies, would have a significant effect on the Forest, or whenever monitoring results so require. Approval by the Chief is required to revise the Plan.