

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION



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Purpose of the Forest Plan

The Manti-LaSal National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan) guides all natural resource management activities and establishes management Standards and Guidelines for the Manti-LaSal National Forest. It describes resource management practices, levels of resource production and management, and the availability and suitability of lands for resource management.

The Forest Plan embodies the provisions of the National Forest Management Act (NFMA), the Regulations, and other guiding documents. The General Direction and Standards and Guidelines are a statement of the Forest Plan's Management Requirements; however, the project outputs, services, and rates of implementation are dependent on the annual budgeting process.

Relationship of the Forest Plan to Other Documents

Development of the Forest Plan takes place within the framework of Forest Service Regional and National planning. The relationship among the different planning levels is shown as follows:

Congressional Acts

National level

Forest Service planning through the
Renewable Resource Assessment and Program (RPA)

Regional planning level through the
Regional Guide for the Intermountain Region

Forest level planning through the
Manti-LaSal National Forest
Land and Resource Management Plan

The RPA Program sets the National direction and output levels for the National Forest System lands. It is based on suitability and comparability information from each Forest Service Region.

Each Forest Service Region Distributes its share of national production targets to each of its Forests. The share each National Forest receives is based on detailed information gathered at the Forest level.

The Forest Plan validates or provides a basis for changing production levels assigned by the Intermountain Region. Activities and projects are planned and implemented by the Forest to carry out the direction developed in the Forest Plan. Information from all the National Forests in the Intermountain Region was used in developing the Intermountain Regional Guide.

This Forest Plan is the selected alternative of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and is based on the various considerations which have been addressed in the EIS. The planning process and the analysis procedure which were used in developing this Forest Plan, as well as the other alternatives that were considered, are described or referenced in the EIS. Activities and projects will be tied to the accompanying EIS as provided for in 40 CFR 1502.20. The local project environmental analysis will use the data and evaluations in the Forest Plan and EIS as its basis.

Analyses of environmental consequences of local projects are done in conformance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 and implementing regulations (40 CFR 1500-1508).

Resource management direction contained in the Forest Service Manual and Handbooks provides Direction, Standards, and Guidelines for the implementation of this Forest Plan.

Organization of the Forest Plan Document

This Forest Plan establishes the long-term direction for managing the Manti-LaSal National Forest. It also serves to inform prospective users, as well as other interested publics, that any occupancy or use of the National Forest System lands must be consistent with the management requirements listed in Chapter III of the Forest Plan.

The Forest Plan consists of this document, Management Unit Maps, and the accompanying Record of Decision. Maps illustrating the location of Management Units is in an envelope inside the back cover of this document. The Forest Plan contains the overall management direction and describes the activities necessary to achieve the desired future condition of the Forest. The Management Unit Maps indicate specific areas of the Forest where activities are scheduled.

This chapter of the Forest Plan (Chapter I) describes the organization of the document and the location of the Forest.

Chapter II describes the present condition of the land and resources, how they are expected to change with the implementation of the Forest Plan, and identifies research needs. Research needs will be analyzed by the Intermountain Region and, when appropriate, will be recommended for inclusion in the next update of the Forest Service Research Program.

Chapter III contains Management Requirements and is divided into three sections. Section one explains how the Forest Plan is to be implemented. Section two specifies the goals and objectives for managing the National Forest System lands and resources. This section also contains Forest-wide Direction which details overall Management Requirements that must be maintained during implementation of the Forest Plan. Section three includes Management Requirements detailing General Direction, Standards, and Guidelines for specific land areas of the Forest called Management Units. The Management Requirements listed in Forest-wide Direction apply to all National Forest System lands unless specifically amended or superseded by Management Unit Requirements. Individual Management Units are identified on the Management Unit Maps located inside the back cover of this Forest Plan.

Chapter IV provides implementation direction, lists and describes the activities and techniques used to monitor the effects of implementing the direction in the Forest Plan, and provides instructions for revisions or amendments. Following chapter IV is an index and the appendixes. A glossary to aid in interpreting the Forest Plan is included in the appendixes.

The predicted environmental consequences of the Forest Plan and the various alternatives are disclosed in the accompanying final Environmental Impact Statement. The Forest Plan and the Environmental Impact Statement are companion documents in the decision process. The Environmental Impact Statement describes the alternatives considered in arriving at the Forest Plan and discloses the environmental consequences of implementing the Forest Plan and the alternatives considered. Once the decision is made to adopt this Forest Plan, it can stand alone.

The Environmental Impact Statement prepared for the Forest Plan and/or the Forest Plan itself will be used in tiering (40 CFR 1502.20 and 1508.28) for future Environmental Assessment and Environmental Impact Statements. Tiering means that environmental documents prepared for projects implementing the Forest Plan can incorporate the decision of the Environmental Impact Statement and the Forest Plan by reference rather than repeating information. Environmental documents prepared for individual projects associated with implementing this Forest Plan can, therefore, be site-specific only.

Location of the Forest

The area covered by this Forest Plan is the Manti-LaSal and a portion of the Uinta National Forests, known as the Manti-LaSal National Forest. The Forest is an administrative unit of the Intermountain Region of the Forest Service, United States Department of Agriculture. Its 1,414,153 acres of National Forest System land are in Central and Southeastern Utah and Western Colorado. (See Figure I-1 and Chapter II, Table II-1.)

FIGURE I-1



