

Small Group Notes on Bioregional Assessment Topic Chapters

Sierra Cascades Dialog #9 Jan 25, 2013

Note: The following is a summary of facilitator notes from small group discussions. The notes are organized by Topic Paper / Chapter. Only chapters for which small discussions took place and in which notes recorded are included.

Assessment Topic Paper Chapters with Authors

Chapter 1 – Terrestrial and Aquatic Ecosystems and Watersheds – JoAnn Fites-Kaufman

Chapter 2 – Air, Soil, Riparian Areas, and Water Resources – Jeff TenPas (soil), Trent Procter (air), Dave Weixelman (riparian)

Chapter 3 – System Drivers and Stressors (historical range of variation) – Hugh Safford

Chapter 4 – Carbon Stocks – Bruce Goines

Chapter 5 – At-Risk Species – Patti Krueger

Chapter 6 – Social, Cultural, and Economic Conditions – Sonja Lin

Chapter 7 – Benefits to People – Mark Metcalfe

Chapter 8 – Assessing Multiple Uses – Anne Yost (range), Greg Schroer (fish and wildlife), Andrei Rykoff (timber), Barry Hill (watershed)

Chapter 9 – Recreation, Access and Scenic Character – Trini Juarez

Chapter 10 – Assessing Renewable and Nonrenewable Energy and Mineral Resources – Keaton Norquist

Chapter 12 – Areas of Tribal Importance – Bob Goodwin

Chapter 13 – Assessing Cultural Resources and Uses – Ron Pugh

Chapter 14 – Assessing Land Status and Ownership, Use, and Access Patters – Ron Pugh

Chapter 15 – Designated Areas – Judy Tapia and Beth Boyst

Questions Framed for each Discussion Group

1. What else should be addressed?
2. What studies or citations are helpful?
3. What is unclear/needs clarification?
4. What information should be prioritized?

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Chapter 2: Air, Soil, Riparian Areas, and Water Resources

Studies / Citations

Participant noted new research on affects of nitrogen deposits on soil and how it encourages invasive species growth

- FS staff said good question, it hasn't come up and wrote it down
- There has been some discussion about nitrogen being advantageous for trees but there could be other plants
- From soil perspective increased nitrogen not necessarily bad – is productivity desirable? Good for some species not others and what does that mean for climate change.

Issues & Feedback

- Different issues with forest level vs. bio-regional level assessment
 - Carbon stocks – not local issue but a national one
 - Lack of knowledge at local level about carbon stocks
 - Quality of dialogue depends on knowledge
 - Even internal education is needed (FS staff)
 - Wildlife and at risk threaten species – there are different scales and these issues need to be discussed at regional level but concerns from locals are specific to their areas.
- VTC or Skype should be used by FS staff more to communicate with others
 - Have webinars for staff, partner agencies and public
 - Hold conference calls more frequently between staff
- People are having hard time understanding that FS staff are at information inventory stage, just gathering info, no actions yet
 - What expectations do we have on public at this stage?
 - Need to be clear what stage we are in
- There is a challenge to keep scientists engaged in entire process, beginning to end
 - Need interagency folks from ARB, EPA, FWS, etc.
 - Not enough staff or funding available for agencies to work together
 - Need formal agreements [MOUs] with agencies which requires staff at other agencies to complete that process – not enough funding
- Air, water, soil group not directed to look at climate but air quality (AQ) and climate affect one another
- Modeling important in predicting effects of population on ozone levels. FS staff have good relationships with ARB staff and ARB considers FS staff info
- Fall is worst time of year for AQ because of wood stove burning and winter weather
 - Ozone also depends on temp and summer wildfires – no good AQ time
 - May be bigger concerns for phosphorous from ash

- AQ – Should get carbon credit for reducing pile burning
 - Assess pile burning where you can't put equipment
 - Get away from pile burning – can we get stuff out of forest to bio mass
 - What's expense of carbon – can forest mass go to biomass?
 - No biomass subsidy
 - What's kilowatt expense and what subsidy
 - Only the areas that need to be burned should be, the rest should be utilized for energy (fire dependent species)
 - Where are biomass plants, what's cost to transport?
 - Willingness to provide subsidies is issue

- Fuel vs. Fire impacts: thinning, burning, under burning, repeated entry...what's the long term landscape of using mechanized equipment versus fire?
 - Has to be mechanized almost because fire can get out of control – no tolerance for risk

- Stacked roads are also a soil issue – after big floods stacked roads can buckle

- Roads – Concern from one participant that roads are a chronic source of sediment
 - Every storm there is tons of sediment from forest projects; legacy roads, temporary roads, etc. (participant)
 - FS Staff noted that there is a lack of data about annual sediment yield and roads are not always the major factor – this is difficult and expensive data to collect
 - Does FS have resources to use lidar to detect roads?
 - No, you'd be surprised how much is picked up while air born

- Roads – Standards and guidelines should have assessment of roads vs. temp roads
 - Need a better inventory – gap in info of what are roads, temp roads, skid trails – show existing roads
 - Range monitoring is the key – it's vegetative only
 - Include bank trampling monitoring – not enough funding to monitor
 - Put cost of monitoring on person getting permit, limited capacity to argue against fee

- Participant from CALFIRE, would like access to data – FRAP perspective
 - Wild land fire, protecting communities, prescribed burns
 - The amount of data collected and where it is located is phenomenal (a lot but where is it all?)
 - Can get access, need to know where it is, find right people/database
 - No geospatial data in FACTS sometimes
 - Potential in satellite activity that we're not taking advantage of

Prioritized

Integration between climate, AQ, soil, land use, forest management practices, water, etc.

- They all affect one another
- This group is important – basic resources are air, soil, water – important to integrate with everything
- Web of very complex relationships that even includes socioeconomic, peoples perceptions
- Need to diagram interactions of these topic areas

Chapter 3: System Drivers and Stressors

- Make sure to emphasize, expand on, the linkages and interactions and synergies between all of the different drivers/stressors
- Need to integrate/synthesize across the 15 topics/chapters – everything is too separate and the assessment needs to transcend these topics
- Add visual aids – can we map the drivers/stressors out together across the range at various scales to help visualize
- This chapter needs to be put in a ‘who cares?’ framework – throwing this stuff out there doesn’t matter if people don’t assign values to these drivers/stressors, where is the framework?
- How do you deal with thresholds where a driver turns to a stressor?
- Focus on different scales, different scenarios, local, regional, possible future trends
- The way we are asking for feedback (specifically these huge documents, the yellow sheets of paper, the wiki) is excluding too many people, we are targeting stakeholders at a level that many are either unwilling or unable to access
 - We need multiple ways to solicit input to be more effective
 - We need more visuals to help explain the concepts
- Some of the things addressed in other chapters of the assessment need to also be included/addressed in the drivers/stressors chapter
 - Specifically population growth and migration MUST be included in this section
- For Natural Range of Variation – can you include things like erosion, air quality, water quality?
- There should be a section on road impacts and erosion in the drivers/stressors chapter
- In the Climate Change Section – you need to include discussion of Pacific Decadal Oscillations (PDO) when talking about climate, vulnerability, past & future conditions
 - Conditions are likely to change dramatically when the PDO flips again in near future
- Fire Section:
 - What about ‘no fire’ as a ‘stressor’?
- Fire is a driver, lack of fire is a stressor
 - Out of season prescribed burning should be discussed specifically as a particular driver
 - Not just identity of driver (ie ‘fire’) that is important, but seasonality, characteristics too
 - Don’t just talk about high severity fire, need to focus on taking advantage of low severity fire
- It may not be that more fires are high severity, its just that we put EVERYTHING out that we can, which means everything that’s not high severity, so only those high severity burn
- Water development should be included/addressed in this chapter – this is a major driver/stressor
- Getting water to people especially, but all kinds of water issues
- Social Change section:
 - Look at land use change in particular
 - Interface of timber markets and climate change
- For the Social Ecological Change section – suggest taking a range of forecasts/scenarios
 - This part of the chapter seems to be a recitation of what happened at a former Sierra Business Roundtable, it is not focusing on all the important populations, how they differ, and the different directions they may be going
 - Need to take more opinions/values into account, look at a range of possible changes to a range of values

- Social and/or Economic Change Section: NEED a section on 'organizational/institutional capacity' changes, meaning both funding and experts, administrative/agency workforce and funding issues and changes over time

Chapter 4: Carbon Stocks

Literature that should be considered or added into the working paper in Wiki:

1. Tom Bonnicksen's data needs to be added into the literature review.
2. The 1979 Delano Study regarding measured pollutants.
3. Malcolm North's 2012 southern Sierra paper, which addressed forest thinning and its relation to wildfires. Incorporate his Carbon Management Principles into Ch 4.
4. Placer County protocols of alternative disposal methods for biomass.
5. Hugh Stafford's information on fire dangers and carbon cycles.
6. Lippke paper from the Nicolas Institute.
7. Synch up Hughes' Drivers and Stressors (draft analysis from 12/12/2012) into the BioRegional Assessment.

Feedback

- Changes in disease, fires, climate all translate into stressors on the ecosystem.
- There is sufficient data and information for each forest to do its own cycle assessment. Questions regarding why there seems to be redundancy in research when the info has already been collected.
- Product substitution needs to be considered on a larger scale, eg: wood v. cement.
- Biomass has not been handled successfully. Contracts have been agreed to and due to the market/price to do business they have closed. Not economically viable to some.
- The numbers are there to adequately evaluate the cost benefit of biomass, eg: cost to move off land, tree diameter, processing, etc.
- Need to coordinate with Air Quality Emissions on all disposal scenarios.
- This Plan should be for 10-15 years. Otherwise, it's too far sighted and not able to adjust to trends, circumstances that come up.
- Wildfires are controlling the landscape. What are the provisions in the plan to account for this?
- More consideration needs to be made for the huge impact of insect and their role in tree mortality.
- Who will account for the conflicting recommendations in reports? eg: water purity rights v. grazing rights? Chapters that seem in conflict, who has priority?
- Review how AB32 and CEQA are in line/diverge. What are the implications and requirements in complying with both?
- How are we considering the carbon footprint of our offices in this case study? What about facility upgrades? Our buildings are old, not efficient. Is there consideration for this? Regardless of whether it's feasible, it should be addressed as a factor, otherwise others will bring it up.

Chapter 5: At-Risk Species

The Regional Office (RO) Biologist started the discussion with describing the regions methodology behind lists of Species of Conservation Concern. The emphasis was on what was missing in the data and/or what needed to be changed?

The notes are organized with comments from all three rounds of discussion aggregated under headings.

Forest Service Mission/Vision/Purpose

- Has the Forest Service sight of its vision and/or goal? He is unclear on the purpose of the forest service and wondering what should they really be doing? Is the Forest Service to be managed like the Park Service? (forest service employee)

Forest Planning

- Will the decision space the forests have diminish from decisions made from completed plans?
- How will previous decisions made in the forest planning process effect other forests?
- How do forests integrate previous decisions made on other forests as the forest planning process moves to the northern forests?
- How does the list translate to forest standards and guidelines?
- In all three groups there were discussions and confusion around which decisions are made at project level, forest level and regional level.
- Questions around which species would the forest be choosing off of the list. And if not on the list could they choose it as an at risk species on the forest?
- Where was the flexibility to respond to regional and local differences in climate, topography, soils, at-risk species and forest conditions?

Standards & Guidelines (S&Gs)

- Can forest come up with own S&Gs to handle species at forest level?
- If answer is Yes, why? The hope of the biologist is that the bioregional assessment and subsequent planning process would come up with a consistent conservation strategy for wide ranging habitats. If each forest can come up with their own S&Gs for species, how can they determine viability or persistence?

Vegetation Management

There was an agreement on and discussion that this is a problem with vegetation management in the bioregional assessment.

Issues at Forest Level

- How to address species with narrow ranges of habitat?
- How to manage for known declining species not on the list (i.e., migratory song birds)?
- This spurred a conversation about plan level versus project level scope of analysis. Emphasis was placed on the difference between the two levels and how to do it...

Areas of Concern

- The concern around analysis at what level is will there be species that drop off the radar due to the confusion from the different lists and levels of analysis.
- The Regional Biologist noted another area of concern in the lists is plants. She noted that this list is not cast in stone and will be evolving. Encouraged everyone to look at list and ad to list via Wiki website.
- A number of people said that the list was extremely lacking in species at risk.

- How do we move from an acre approach to a landscape scale analyses approach?

Monitoring/Surveying

- Who will be determining criteria for which species is monitored?
- Is this going to increase the amount of species surveying they would have to do?
- Are we surveying for species or habitat?
- What surveying is going to happen at the regional level?
- Is this going to change what species and which species the regional level will do?

Assumptions/Criteria

- Who is choosing what is on the list?
- What are the assumptions the RO used in determining the at-risk species on list?
- We need these documented clearly.
- Are species of local concern on list?
- Didn't define important species on forest.
- How do we work with Bioassessment with species at risk?

Old Versus New Planning Rule

- How does this list relate to old lists such as the Regional Forester's Sensitive Species?
- How does this list relate to old lists of at risk species?
- Viability vs capability of persistence: where does forest check for viability of species?
- Where do we analysis cumulative effects?

New Information

How is the region going to incorporate the new listings (i.e., fish and wildlife)?

Chapter 6: Social, Cultural and Economic Conditions

Overview

- Chapter has been broken down into two parts: the first section is an overview, sets context for the bio-region with some links to how it will impact forest management. The second section incorporates trends and key issues.
- Intention is to look at sub-regions of the bioregion and differences within the bioregion
- Has found that county-sub divisions can provide a closer fit to bioregions
- Would like to find more information on health in these areas
- Hard to find economic data for county sub divisions. Easier to find for the entire county.

Citation

SEE p. 51 in article titled *Jobs, Economic Development and Sustainable Development*

- Written by Dr. Glenda Humiston, State Director, USDA Rural Development
- Section beginning: "Recreation & tourism are vital to most rural communities"
- Much information provided in this article has been overlooked

Comments/Recommendation/Questions

- CA State OHP has provided grants to FS for reforestation. This could be included in economic income
- No information from ski resorts- this could be included by sub region, including what kind of visitor-ship and economic impact they have in the area. [Recommended to look at RPA assessment available from ski resort]
- Look at horseback usage
- What are "recreational special uses"? This is used but not defined in the document.
- Are you identifying constituents who aren't using the forests and ways that they may be able to access them?
 - Sonja: Working with Inyo to highlight unique characteristics of forests
 - She will give this data to Inyo and they can offer her more direction.
 - Deb Whitall: FS is working on reaching out to underserved populations that don't visit forests.
- Larger look at forests- heavily used by people in other areas like Silicon Valley. Should look at where visitors are coming from.
- Have you looked at the migration movement from urban to rural? If people are moving somewhere with low employment and decreased economies, what is their incentive to move there? There is a wellbeing factor that people gain by being in the outdoors.
- How have land management decisions impacted local economies? This is mentioned but should be included much more in depth.
- What are the ecological benefits of environmental restoration?
 - This is not in benefits to people chapter, needs to be
 - Chapter 6 information needs to be shared with Chapter 9 so that one can inform the other.

- What about environmental justice and sustenance living? Are we making forests inaccessible to populations who rely on these resources (firewood, game)?
 - Need to let people know where they are allowed to cut and where they aren't- there has been confusion in the past as changes have been made to forest plans.
- How will we catch topics that aren't covered in any one of these chapters?
 - Decision to bring up questions on wiki.
 - To send notes on wiki to the chapter authors directly.
- Patricia Winter: Looking at construction, alcoholism, many issues connected to wellbeing in a report that she has. She will send to Sonja.
- Paragraph below Fig. 7: Sounds like it is connected and also is not connected. This needs clarification. "At one scale it impacts and at another it doesn't" makes more sense to people at the table.

Bishop

- What are the social and economic impacts of "digital 395" (internet backbone)?
- What is the impact of marijuana cultivation on recreation and other uses?
- Water resources sourced from the forest needs to be highlighted and linked to other chapters in the overview.
- Need additional clarification on "amenity migration."
- How are demographic shifts (e.g., population) different on the east side?
- What are the differences in unemployment versus under-employment and multi-employment?
- What are the affects to communities and counties of the June Lake Ski Area (address in the forest-level assessment)?
- Need to clarify the "area of influence" and associated sub-units (i.e., CCD's and counties aren't specific enough – what about gateway communities?)
- Need to tie permitting (i.e., outfitter guides, ski areas, and other special uses) to economic conditions.
- Need to touch on the historic value of structures and link to other chapters where this is discussed more fully.
- Need to discuss the value of Mono Lake Scenic Area – in the forest-level assessment.

Chapter 7: Benefits to People

WHAT INFORMATION SHOULD BE PRIORITIZED?

- Supply and condition of the forest, as well as use and scale are important as it supports ecosystem services.
- Have wildlife areas in the map as structural but not for services. Include areas that are not actively managed.

WHAT IS UNCLEAR OR NEEDS CLARIFICATION?

- There was a discussion about **integration strategies**. There are questions of how the Forest Service will leverage the information in the assessment, how will it rank services, and how many forest acreages will be part of the assessment?
- Address the question of location, where the resources are located.
- There was a suggestion to include ecological integrity and bio diversity such as ecosystem services in the assessment. Also include 1) Cultural Heritage Issues 2) Best Use as overlay on map 3) Overlay of recreation uses.
- There were questions of how to track waste and energy flow, water footprint, and to include it as part of a water study. Ideally to track the water footprint in the forests, or carbon footprints to track service extraction.
- There was a request to clarify the term “timber.” There was a question of how to overlay the different key areas to refine the timber areas and thus find ecosystem service areas.
- There was a question of how to have economic definitions that mesh with ecosystem services, and how to evaluate the process to find supplemental funding to support ecosystem services. The group suggested that identifying direct economic benefits, such as quality of life, sense of place, biodiversity is hard to establish a value in terms of ecosystem service benefits. Also, how to measure the sustainability of those benefits. One option is to educate the public about the monetary value of conservation of resources, but that require the economic valuation of the resource. There was a suggestion to identify the social value of a particular resource to put a value on the ecological integrity. There also needs to be a common metric to compare all components to determine the values. One comment was that there must be economic or “market” interest in the resources to determine the value of the resources. One comment was that people do not put a dollar value on ecosystem services. There was a suggestion to use population migration to track economics of the environmental services, and to look at people’s choices to assess the ecosystems values.
- The group asked for the definition of “broader landscape”, as it is not specifically defined in the draft document. There was a suggestion to identify as level of use. Another question was about what to measure compared to what to manage.
- Hydro, power, and geothermal were identified as opportunities for development in the National Forest. There was a question of how wind power will factor into the assessments, thus there is a need to identify potential wind development sites in the assessment.
- Another question was the data source underlying the maps, and there was a suggestion to clearly state the source in the final assessment.

Chapter 8: Assessing Multiple Uses

- There needs to be a definition for sediment in the science synthesis document.
- Consider measuring “hummocks” in rangeland monitoring scheme. They are a valuable indicator. Bank Trample, also if it is not already done.
- There is a request to include/consider the cumulative effects of harvesting INCLUDING activities on private lands.
- There was acknowledgment that reduced timber harvests affect funding for rural schools. But money from timber harvest returns to a general fund and stewardship contract money can be retained on the that forest and used on restoration.? (Correct?) There is concern that with the Rural School Program up for renewal, the loss of it may steer communities away from supporting stewardship contracts.
- There was a question about how the wildlife species were chosen. Why no fish?
- It was suggested that future biomass facilities start with a MOU with their county govt. Others have had increased success using this tool.
- Mobile biomass units may help reduce hauling costs but PG&E charges to tap into their lines are prohibitive. Could PG&E adjust to accommodate?
- When considering water’s contribution to the economy, power production should be factored in on top of water quantity.
- Social costs of importation of forest products could be explored.
- The F.S. needs to consider their obligation to sustaining needed infrastructure like mills.
- Land use effects from roads and fires should be separated out.

Chapter 9: Recreation, Access and Scenic Character

Process Questions

During the sessions, participants identified questions they had about the process of what we are doing together, not just the content of the chapter. These process questions were track on a separate sheet of paper.

- What type of feedback is wanted from the public? Opinions? Anecdotes? Information leading to data.
- Not just peer-reviewed.
- Grey papers and things like county reports are okay.
- Put the feedback from this session on Wiki to make it available to everyone and allow for correction from those that gave the feedback. Who will determine what a valid contribution to Wiki is?
- This is the first time this has been done—asking for feedback sooner in the process.
- How will the information from the public be prioritized? It's evolving.
- Subject matter experts looking for input and sources, not the old comment-style feedback.
- The type of feedback the public gives will be affected by the public's understanding of how it will be used.
- How will this assessment inform forest-level assessments?

Feedback

- Deferred maintenance: how is it calculated and are the figure derived from anything?
- How is economic sustainability value?
 - Planning without money
 - How was the number calculated?
 - Can't have trails if don't have \$
- It mentions hiking trails as a valued resource
 - Doesn't mention other types of trails
 - Doesn't acknowledge CA OHV \$
 - Visitor use monitoring
 - Clarify values: mentions values of hiking, but not same for motorized
 - Recognize economic value
 - Mention/calculate
- No mention of hunting or fishing
- No mention of adopt-a-trail
 - More mention of volunteerism and donation/volunteer value
- Discussion of recreation is too compartmentalized
 - Some people are in multiple categories
- Try and capture the whole
 - It discusses cost but not benefit
 - Example: cost of maintenance of trail, but no mention of benefits to all and contributions to community
 - Even if don't have all the details, just acknowledge; fairness, parity

- Feels like not addressing wilderness (Subject Matter experts point out that's another chapter, but there needs to be overlap, hard to see where one ends and other chapter begins, should reference the other chapter from here to clarify)
- Acknowledge the aging California population
 - How that affects use
- How much of the land is open to recreation? Give context. How much open to specific types of recreation? Need more specific data
- Need more related to infrastructure, rather than resource conditions
 - Is visitor use data in there, forest specific?
 - Any change forest level/region in terms of recreation for public to understand
 - Anecdotal data of usage increase looking for data to show; trend info/ needs help identifying data source
- Planning seems driven by marginal uses
 - Planning heavily impacted by groups that use it less
- Caution use of equipment sales to show use.
 - Increased sales does not equal use. People use old equipment. People who buy new equipment not necessarily using it.
- On scenic character, missing discussion of exemplary setting.
 - Ex. Hiking on a trail through clear-cut versus hiking through beautiful exemplary beautiful setting
 - Shift from VMS to SMS, what that means (visual management system)
- Deal with experiences that you are the sole provider for; identify those
 - Wilderness
 - Long distance
- More on horseback riding
 - Its growing 10% a year
 - The population is aging, white, former hikers now riders
- Data on compliance
- Participation %, driving for pleasure, define
 - Define use/types
- Should mention mushrooming as a use
- Can a seasonal breakdown be added?
- When are surveys done? Winter as well? Include the survey for context in the appendix
- When designing an area, is there historical record of that? Are the land surveys kept?
 - For example, if building a new campsite, but don't want to impact a nearby burial site, is that information kept so that years later when want to expand the campsite, still have the original survey and reasons for design?
- Need more data on usage trends; make this report more useful for planning
- Make it assessment
- Contextualize the data more; put it in perspective
 - If discussing these classifications, add data to show bigger picture
- Report includes irrelevant data in the in the interpretive section
- What's the demand? What is the population we are trying to serve?
- Add maps to visualize the data quickly
- Clarify how much to drill down on the data; what's the forest level?
- This can be big picture visual of bioregion, comparing the forests. Include thematic maps.

Chapter 10: Assessing Renewable and Non-Renewable Energy & Mineral Resources

- Priorities should be 1) identifying the supply or sustainability of resource; 2) what is the legislative constraints/suitability assessment; 3) what are the historical references – what and where something was done and can it be done again. But – does the USFS have the expertise to identify the suitability and economic feasibility of the prospective renewable energy sites?
- Re. Biomass – the last line stating ‘...little interest has been shown...’ – not sure this is true, it needs clarification. Biomass can be addressed in several sections – there needs to be a reference in each chapter that shows where the other biomass sections are. In other words, how will you reference subjects that can be found in multiple chapters?
- Wind farms are exclusive uses (nothing else will use the area); maybe the focus needs to be more on biomass.
- The way that the USFS considers the visual assessment/impacts from wind turbines is out dated. The BLM has a process/documents that addressed this in a better way.
- Is fracking going to be allowed on USFS lands?
- There is no mention of FERC – where is this addressed?
- It has been suggested that PG&E will be or has already given the USFS some land that they no longer use. Are there water rights associated with these parcels and are there conflicts with who has the rights to the water?
- Has dredging been addressed? Are there any conflicts with state laws?
- The Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan can help inform some of the missing information.
- Use the WIKI site to start the conversation on scope and scale.

Chapter 11: Infrastructure

- How will you address and deal with decommissioned roads? Will they be restored? How does this revision affect the travel management plan?
- Infrastructure is not just roads but many of the items addressed in chapter 10 (wind turbines, dams, etc.) Maybe they need to be combined?

Chapter 12: Areas of Tribal Importance

Comments

- Plan is onerous, constantly changing. I think it will be challenging to incorporate collaborative comments.
- I have gone through three rounds of planning and they all end the same way. We've always had public input. There is no perfect planning process.
- Not a practical application of the science presented
- Doesn't make sense to have specific site objectives, things change.

Questions

- How will the bioregional assessment affect forests that aren't included in the early assessment?
- How will this mesh with all individual forest plans?
- Will this replace smaller plans?
- How will the 15 topic areas be effectively integrated and synthesized in the plan?
- Are sensitive species of conservation a concern?

Feedback

- Misinformation in synthesis: Decreased deer population since 1950 is actually related to ending native fires and not what is stated in the synthesis ["bring population to a sustainable size"].
- Citations and studies are lacking historical and archaeological implications.
- Everyone needs to look at what everyone else is writing to insert traditional knowledge into these places. To invite others or social sciences to review certain sections.
- FS can use non-peer reviewed literature, which illuminates other historical records that could otherwise be included. I.e. microfiche that haven't been documented in peer reviewed material

Chapter 15: Designated Areas

- Indicators need to be added to the assessment. How will indicators be determined (e.g. RNAs)?
- What will the trend information address and how is that determined for wilderness? The response is that the indicator will be wilderness character and the trend will be related to that indicator.
- How will new designations be considered and added? Response – other chapters will determine the need for example, if recreation showed that there was a need for another scenic byway or national trail, the forest could recommend that. New designations will arise out of needs determined through the assessment process.
- There was a discussion about how to deal with roadless areas. “Wilderness is great and should be maximized.” Some felt that roadless areas go beyond that which was inventoried and is anywhere on the forest that meets the roadless criteria.
- The question was raised as to the process for recommending new wilderness. Christina Boston responded.
- The question was raised as to what process will be used to assess suitability of other designated areas.
- Are there opportunities for new types of designations? It was unknown at the table exactly what the regulations are for new types of designations. There may be opportunities to use a “management areas” concept such as a special management area with certain set of standards and guides to meet the same purpose that a designation would serve. There is some flexibility to have solutions to issues or problems. The table participants wanted to know how to make suggestion on additional needs for designated areas. They were directed to the wiki (where the needs would need to be substantiated by science) or the input sheets.
- Looking at the LTBMU, wilderness and wild and scenic rivers potential for suitability can be part of the Plan Revision process.
- The process is guided by the FS Handbook which supports that wilderness and wild and scenic rivers can be part of the plan.
- Review previous analysis to look at new circumstances. Reexamine these in light of changed conditions. Also make sure original inventory was inclusive of everything.
- We can address citizen proposed areas in the plan revision.
- Central Issues related to the PCT are:
 - Private land owner’s property access across the PCT.
 - Enforcement (reduce mountain bikers on the trail).
 - Approval of routes (new routes that cut across the PCT)
- The table discussed the differences between RNAs and SIAs.
- Highways are dividing corridors.
- What are the conditions for wilderness study in the area of the assessment?
- How will river plans be incorporated into the plan process?
- Inventoried Roadless Areas (IRAs) should be in the Forest Level Assessment and Topic Paper. Was IRAs part of the Planning Rule?

- The Forest should recognize the integrity of IRAs and coordinate management of these areas across FS and BLM (wilderness study area) (particularly mentioned the Inyo). This ties into the all lands approach.
- Designated areas are a constraint on the Forest Plan.
- A self-proclaimed “vent” by the speaker: the FS has a moral obligation to protect legislatively introduced wilderness (even when the legislation didn’t pass) such as Shuteye Butte and to manage this land as wilderness so that the opportunity will persist to get the wilderness through Congress. There also needs to be an interface and coordination with National Parks in wilderness management.
- There should be more designated trail heads.

Miscellaneous Comments/Discussion

Questions & Feedback

- How feasible is it to have three plans completed simultaneously?
- Will there be three separate EISs?
- Do **perennial wet meadows** ever become range ready?
- Does anything that grows a tree become timber?
- How is “**suitability**” framed?
- What happens in decision making when **ecology and economics** are at odds (e.g. salvage logging)?
- The table had a discussion on how to have **socioeconomic forest values** which can help support county government (particularly those counties where the forest makes up the majority of the land base) without damaging the ecological values.
- Be very clear about how **Travel Management Decision** intersects with Forest Plan Revision. The Travel Management Plan may need to be reconciled with the post revision direction.

Public Involvement & Collaboration

- Concerns that the Sequoia will have **on-site meetings only**, which precluded participation from national and non-local interested parties. The Sierra’s webinars will allow participation of a broad stakeholder base. There was support of the Sierra’s model.
- Some folks at the table thought that since the Forests are a national resource, there should be **national participation** while others thought that the most highly influenced stakeholder groups are those that are more **local** and utilize the forests. The challenge is how the forest goes to both of those audiences and appropriately weighs the input. This was thought to be a difficult balance as without local support (e.g. volunteerism) the forests can’t do the job. Another challenge in this arena is that national organizations may be in conflict with the local branch on issues. A participant thought that if there is no socioeconomic connection or benefit to the local community that is lasting then there will be no local community support.
- A concern was raised about the **collaboration process**. Collaboration is happening over such a short period of time that there will not be the opportunity necessary to build trust which is a necessary component of collaboration.