



FACT SHEET

Nantahala and Pisgah National Forests Plan Revision

Overview

The U.S. Forest Service will revise the Nantahala and Pisgah National Forests Land and Resource Management Plan (the Plan) beginning in November 2012. The process is expected to take three to four years to complete. When revision is completed, the Plan will guide management of the Nantahala and Pisgah National Forests for approximately 15 years. The Forest Service published the original Plan in 1987. A significant amended was published in 1994, and smaller amendments occurred in subsequent years.

Each national forest and grassland is governed by a management plan in accordance with the National Forest Management Act. These plans set management, protection and use goals and guidelines.

Revision of the Plan will occur in three phases:

1. **Assessment** – During this phase, the Forest Service will collect and compile data and other information on the current state of the Nantahala and Pisgah National Forests. The assessment phase will focus on what changes are needed to the management plan for the two national forests. Numerous public meetings will take place to receive input from stakeholders during this period.
2. **Planning Period** – During this phase, the Forest Service will analyze the data collected; determine the management practices needed to accomplish the desired goals and the effects those management practices may have on the land; draft the revised Plan; receive and respond to public comment; and release the final Plan.
3. **Monitoring** – The monitoring phase begins after the final Plan is released and continues throughout the Plan period. During this phase, the Forest Service monitors the progress of Plan implementation to make sure goals are achieved.

Timeline for Plan Revision:

- Assessment (Phase 1) – November 2012 - Fall 2013
- Planning Period (Phase 2) – Fall 2013 - 2015/Early 2016
- Monitoring Phase (Phase 3) – Early 2016 and Beyond

Information on the current Plan (before revision) is posted online at:

<http://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/nfsnc/landmanagement/planning>, click on “Nantahala and Pisgah National Forests.”

New Planning Rule

A new Planning Rule, finalized by the Forest Service in May 2012, will guide the process for revising the Nantahala-Pisgah National Forests Plan. This means that the Plan will be among the first forest plans nationwide to be revised under the new rule. The new Planning Rule replaced the 1982 rule.

The new Planning Rule includes:

- Mandatory components to restore and maintain forests and grasslands.

- Requirements to provide habitat for plant and animal diversity and species conservation. The requirements are intended to keep common native species common, contribute to the recovery of threatened and endangered species, conserve proposed and candidate species, and protect species of conservation concern.
- Requirements to maintain or restore watersheds, water resources, water quality including clean drinking water, and the ecological integrity of riparian areas.
- Requirements for multiple uses, including outdoor recreation, range, timber, watershed, wildlife and fish.
- Requirements to provide opportunities for sustainable recreation, and to take into account opportunities to connect people with nature.
- Requirements for the use of the best available scientific information to inform the planning process and documentation of how science was used in the plan.
- A more efficient and adaptive process for land management planning, allowing the Forest Service to respond to changing conditions.
- Opportunities for public involvement and collaboration throughout all stages of the planning process. The final rule provides opportunities for Tribal consultation and coordination with state and local governments and other federal agencies, and includes requirements for outreach to traditionally underrepresented communities.

More information about the new Planning Rule is available online at:

<http://www.fs.usda.gov/main/planningrule/home>.

Collaboration

Collaboration is the keystone for revising the Plan. Public input and collaboration throughout the revision process will help ensure that the Plan meets the needs of the wide variety of stakeholders who enjoy the Nantahala and Pisgah National Forests each year. The public will have numerous opportunities to collaborate with the Forest Service and provide input to the Plan.

Comments or Questions:

Comments or questions about the Plan revision or process can be sent by email to:

NCplanrevision@fs.fed.us

Hard copies of comments can be mailed to:

National Forests in North Carolina, Nantahala-Pisgah Plan Revision, 160 Zillicoa St. Suite A, Asheville, NC 28801.

Current subscribers of Nantahala or Pisgah National Forest mail or email lists will automatically receive updates regarding Plan revision.

For More Information

For more information about Plan revision, visit www.fs.usda.gov/goto/nfsnc/nprevision.

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