

## **2012 Forest Planning Elements / Opportunities for Collaborative Engagement**

**Assessments:** Documents that identify and evaluate existing information on select topics relevant to the land management planning process, plan area, and broader landscape. Information typically describes current conditions and trends in the ecological, social, and economic environments.

**Land Management Plan or "Forest Plan":** A strategic document that provides a framework for integrated resource management and for guiding projects and activity decisionmaking on a national forest.

### **Forest Plan Components or Requirements:**

**Desired conditions:** A description of specific social, economic, and/or ecological characteristics toward which management of the land and resources should be directed. Must be described in terms that are specific enough to allow progress toward their achievement to be determined, but do not include completion dates.

**Objectives:** A concise, measurable, and time-specific statement of a desired rate of progress toward a desired condition or conditions. Objectives should be based on reasonably foreseeable budgets.

**Standards:** A mandatory constraint on project and activity decisionmaking established to help achieve or maintain desired conditions, to avoid or mitigate undesirable effects, or to meet applicable legal requirements.

**Guidelines:** A constraint on project and activity decisionmaking that allows for departure from its terms, so long as the purpose of the guideline is met. Guidelines are established to help achieve or maintain a desired condition or conditions, to avoid or mitigate undesirable effects, or to meet applicable legal requirements.

**Suitability of lands:** Identification of specific lands as suitable or not suitable for various multiple uses or activities based on the compatibility of those uses with the desired conditions applicable to those lands. The suitability of lands need not be identified for every use or activity. Suitability identifications should consider historic uses and issues that have arisen in the planning process. Every plan must identify those lands that are not suitable for timber production.

**Goals (Optional plan component):** Broad statements of intent, other than desired conditions, usually related to process or interaction with the public. Goals are expressed in broad, general terms, but do not include completion dates.

**Watershed(s) that are a priority for maintenance or restoration:** Identification of priority watersheds for focused effort on integrated restoration of watershed conditions.

**Distinctive roles and contributions within the broader landscape:** Descriptions of key attributes and associated benefits and outcomes (uses, values, products, and services) that NFS lands are uniquely poised to provide (ecosystem services); are important and relevant at the local, regional and, or, national level; and contribute toward social, economic and ecological sustainability.

**Designated area(s):** An area or feature identified and managed to maintain its unique special character or purpose. Some categories of designated areas may be designated only by statute and some categories may be established administratively in the land management planning process or by other administrative processes of the Federal executive branch. Examples of statutorily designated areas are national heritage areas, national recreational areas, national scenic trails, wild and scenic rivers, wilderness areas, and wilderness study areas. Examples of administratively designated areas are experimental forests, research natural areas, scenic byways, botanical areas, and significant caves.

**Management areas:** A land area identified within the planning area that has the same set of applicable plan components.

**Geographic areas:** A spatially contiguous land area identified within the planning area. A geographic area may overlap with a management area.

**Plan components for protection of designated wilderness and wild and scenic rivers**

**Multiple Resource Integration:**

- ..... Ecological Sustainability and Diversity of Plant and Animal Communities
- ..... Plan Components for Ecosystem Integrity and Ecosystem Diversity
- ..... Landscape Design Considerations and Natural Range of Variation
- ..... Soils and Soil Productivity; Air Quality
- ..... Water Quality and Water Resources, and Riparian Areas
- ..... Species-Specific Plan Components for At-Risk Species, Threatened and Endangered Species, Proposed and Candidate Species, Species of Conservation Concern
- ..... Ecosystem Services, Social and Economic Sustainability and Multiple Use
- ..... Land Status, Ownership, Use, Access and Linkage of Open Space with Other Ownerships
- ..... Sustainable Recreation Resources and Opportunities to Connect People with Nature
- ..... Infrastructure, Roads and Trails
- ..... Scenery, Aesthetic Values, Viewsheds, and Geologic Features
- ..... Cultural and Historic Resources and Areas of Tribal Importance

- ..... T  
imber, Rangelands, Forage and Grazing
- .....  
Minerals and Energy

***Monitoring Program:*** A systematic process of collecting information to evaluate the effects of actions or changes in conditions; applies questions and indicators to track changes and measure progress toward achieving or maintaining desired conditions.

***Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Alternatives or Effects Analyses***

## El Yunque Collaboration Workshop

### Segment Two:

#### **Revision of the El Yunque National Forest's Land Management Plan -- *the Focus of Our Public Participation and Collaboration***

##### **Purpose of the Segment**

- This segment is a first step in managing process expectations. Participants will learn about the nature of the project that the Forest Service is asking them to participate and collaborate on.
- A simple characterization of the plan revision process and plan content will be presented.
- The schedule or phases will show that this is a long process, 3-5 years, so we want stakeholders to be involved in the areas they are most interested in.
- The presentation will describe how a strategic forest plan differs from a site-specific project plan or other actions to resolve current, urgent issues (which the forest will address through other means).
- The key plan components and some basic perspective on how they may relate to issues or topics the forest and stakeholders have already identified (e.g., stakeholders may see that new controls on recreation use of the El Yunque may correspond to “standards and guidelines”);
- This segment will help set the stage for the next segment on the “Levels of Public Participation” where we ask the participants to start thinking about how intensively they want to be engaged in the various phases and components of the plan revision effort.
- *Refer to 2-page insert on Plan Elements / Collaboration Opportunities*

##### **Key points:**

- Forest plans are intended to make strategic or broad-scale decisions about **how we want the forest to look, function, and be managed**. They do not authorize specific projects or activities on-the-ground. Rather, they provide a framework for integrated resource management and for guiding project and activity decisionmaking.
- Effective public participation and collaboration will require stakeholders to understand the basic parts and phases of a forest plan, and be able to select the initial parts they are primarily interested in working on. These elements represent participation or collaboration **opportunities** for stakeholder engagement, mutual learning, and shared problem solving.
- Plan elements will be the subject of the upcoming segments that will address organizing and planning for collaborative actions, or developing a “public participation strategy.”