



Flathead National Forest

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Media Release

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Public Invited to Forest Plan Revision Orientation Meeting

Learn How You Can Engage In the Process

KALISPELL, MONT. – The Flathead National Forest is embarking on a multi-year process to update its forest plan, the document that guides management of your public lands. The forest plan revision team invites the public to participate in the forest planning effort and will host an Orientation Meeting on Thursday, December 5, 2013, from 4:00 to 8:30 PM at the Red Lion Inn in Kalispell. The event will be facilitated by the Meridian Institute and will include an overview of planning; policy sideboards for the process; a review of previous forest plan elements that might be considered for incorporation into the new plan revision; an overview of the collaboration process and schedule; and an organizing session for each of the topical work groups that will be working over the next few months to provide input about the forest plan revision.

Please register at: <https://www.eventbrite.com/event/4730387717> by December 2, 2013 so appropriate arrangements can be made to accommodate everyone wishing to participate. Also, please share this invitation with others who may be interested in attending. For more information please visit the [FNF Plan Revision Stakeholder Engagement Website](#), the [Discover the Flathead Facebook Page](#), or the [FNF Plan Revision Website](#).

The forest plan provides direction for managing resources and activities such as recreation, fish and wildlife habitat, vegetation and timber production. The forest plan describes the strategic direction for management of forest resources for the next ten to fifteen years. The first phase of the process, the assessment phase, has begun and interested parties have been invited to contribute in the development of the assessment. The Forest has posted preliminary assessment information to its website as well as hosted field tours and an open house. The assessment is expected to be completed in December 2013. The trends and conditions identified in the assessment will help in identifying the need for plan components.

On April 9, 2012, the Forest Service finalized its land management planning rule (2012 Planning Rule), which provides broad programmatic direction to National Forests and National Grasslands for developing and implementing their land management plans. Under the 2012 Planning Rule, the assessment of ecological, social, and economic trends and conditions is the first stage of the planning process. The second stage is a development and decision process guided, in part, by the National Environment Policy Act and includes the preparation of a draft environmental impact statement and revised forest plan for public review and comment, and the preparation of the final environmental impact statement and revised forest plan. The third stage of the process is monitoring and feedback, which is ongoing over the life of the revised forest plans.

The Flathead National Forest encourages the public to participate and share their thoughts about desired conditions, standards and guidelines, land suitability determinations, management area designations, and plan monitoring. Collaboration in the development of the proposed action supports the development of relationships with key stakeholders throughout the plan development process and is an essential step to understanding current conditions, available data, and feedback needed to support a strategic, efficient planning process.

As public meetings, other opportunities for public engagement, and public review and comment opportunities are identified to assist with the development of the forest plan revision, public announcements will be made, notifications will be posted on the Forest's web site at the [FNF Plan Revision Website](#) and information will be sent out to the Forest's mailing list. You can join the email list by visiting the website and signing up at the bottom of the page. For additional details please contact Joe Krueger, Planning Team Leader, at (406)758-5243 or flatheadplanrevision@fs.fed.us.

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