



USDA Forest Service National Forest System Talking Points

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Purpose: Provide Monitoring and Evaluation Team talking points.

Summary: This paper provides MET team members with talking points related to the project's purpose, suggests questions Line Officers could help with now, and seeks to encourage ongoing engagement.

Key Messages:

Your participation matters: The process for developing the framework and priorities is open.

- ✎ Core and Extended team participants will engage internal and external stakeholders throughout the process to ensure that agency-wide concerns are understood and addressed.
- ✎ Line Officer participation will ensure that the eventual monitoring objectives respond to the needs of Responsible Officials.
- ✎ Managers and key stakeholders are asked to validate the five themes of the framework: (1) biological diversity, (2) land health, (3) soil, air, and water resources, (4) social, and (5) economic.
- ✎ Regional Offices worked with National Forests and Grasslands and identified key issues organized under the five themes of the proposed LMP framework for monitoring and evaluating progress towards achieving both standard and unique desired conditions.

You'll save effort: For those issues that are common to the NFS, Forest and Grassland personnel can save resources and time by having a consistent set of desired conditions, related monitoring questions, and indicators of performance pertinent to respective Land Management Plans.

- ✎ When developing a monitoring plan, each LMP effort will have the best ideas from throughout the agency available in a generic framework suitable for organizing and guiding both NFS common and unique local M&E needs.
- ✎ Having a standard M&E framework will save money and personnel resources and allow greater attention to identifying unique local needs.

You can trust the content and that you'll be supported by both WO and key constituents: The proposed framework includes an initial set of priority issues with associated desired condition statements tuned to meet the 2005 Planning Rule, reviewed for science validity and consistency, and pilot-tested in real Forest and Grassland planning efforts.

- ✎ The 2005 Planning Rule (36 CFR 219) and associated directives are anchoring this effort. No element that is inconsistent with the Rule or Directives will end up in the eventual framework.
- ✎ Resource specialists are participating in developing and reviewing the framework to ensure that it will have scientific and technical validity.
- ✎ The 5 themes of the framework have been used successfully by the FS and many partners, which facilitates shared learning experiences.
- ✎ The five themes are comprehensive in that they address the important aspects of ecological, economic, and social systems.
- ✎ The WO and Regional Office's are committed to supporting use of the framework.

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You can adjust the sub themes in the framework: Managers will have the flexibility needed to respond to stakeholder concerns and local circumstances.

- ✎ The M&E strategy protects the discretion of Responsible Officials to address local concerns because that discretion is the foundation of adaptive management.
- ✎ Line Officer participation will ensure that M&E priorities are focused on the most important, vital few issues germane to respective planning areas.

You'll have the data you need: The strategy will address the need to provide field offices with data supporting the monitoring questions.

- ✎ The eventual strategy will reflect both available information resources and data gaps that an operational framework will need to address.
- ✎ EMC management will actively look for information gaps and then make those the basis for setting information asset and technology investment priorities.