Forest Service

Fremont-Winema National Forest

1301 South G Street
Lakeview, OR 97630
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Route To:

Subject: Fremont Winema: Response to Reply Due Letter Dated February 27, 2014 "4-Year Transition to Plan Monitoring Program Requirements"

To: James M. Pena, Regional Forester

The Fremont Winema National Forest has completed the transition monitoring plan. The plan includes monitoring questions that address each of the eight items set out at 36 CFR 219.12(a)(5) and identifies associated indicators. The Forest has selected monitoring question that will provide useful information for adaptive management. See the attached for the final Fremont Winema transition monitoring plan.

The public review process resulted in two responses. One response provided information regarding the area around Lake of the Woods. The second response provided recommendations regarding recreation. Although neither was specifically relevant to the transition monitoring plan, the insights provided were shared with the appropriate resource specialists.

If you have any questions, contact Katie Blazer at 541- 947-6272 or kblazer@fs.fed.us.

Constance Cummins
CONSTANCE CUMMINS
Forest Supervisor

Attachment:

cc: Rick Newton, Reta Laford

Transition Monitoring Plan

Fremont Winema National Forest

5/9/2016

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Input to the Fremont Winema transition monitoring plan was provided by:

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Joe Washington	Forest Botanist/Invasives Program Manager
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Chuck Burley	Forest Recreation, Engineering Archeology, Lands and Minerals Staff Officer
John Kaiser	Archeologist
Dave Hosack	Recreation Program Manager
Catherine Callaghan	Realty Specialist
Sharon Dooley	Realty Specialist
Amanda Warner Thorpe	Roads and Transportation Engineer

Monitoring Element Table – Fremont Winema National Forest

Forest Plan Component	Monitoring Question	Monitoring Indicator
(i) The status of select watershed conditions.		
Objective - Functioning Watershed Condition Forest Management Direction: Fish and Wildlife (Winema Forest Plan (WFP) 4-6); Soil and Water (Watershed Management) (WFP 4-16, 4-17) INFISH and Northwest Forest Plan Riparian Reserve and Aquatic Conservation Strategy (ACS) standards	Are Standards and Guidelines (S&G) adequate for maintaining or improving watershed conditions? What is the status of the watersheds? Are watershed conditions functioning properly? Which watershed conditions are functioning properly and why? Which are functioning improperly and why? What are the trends in watershed conditions and function?	Watershed Condition Framework (WCF) analysis of key indicators at the 5th and 6th field watershed scales, updated every 5 years. Implementation of Watershed Restoration Action Plans in Priority Watersheds per WCF prioritization.
Standard – Water Quality - Best Management Practices are employed to protect water quality. Water Quality Best Management Practices (WFP 12-16) and National Core BMP direction (4/30/2012) Watershed Management 3. Protection of Water Quality, (Fremont Forest Plan (FFP) 88).	Have Best Management Practices (BMPs) been implemented and are they effective at managing water quality consistent with the Clean Water Act?	Stream temperature data, NorWest database, USFS National BMP Monitoring protocols and results, travel analysis/roads management; Implementation of the Upper Klamath Basin – Water Quality Restoration Plan (WQRP).

Forest Plan Component	Monitoring Question	Monitoring Indicator
(ii) The status of select ecological conditions including key characteristics of terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems.		
Range Management/Riparian Areas (FFP 76) Range 9-3 (WFP 4-63)	Are Standards and Guidelines adequate for maintaining or improving aquatic habitat (instream, lake, and riparian areas)?	1. core and integrated targets 2. habitat data (assessment of current condition) 3. management related impacts to aquatic systems
Aspen or hardwood Goal is to maintain or enhance habitat on the Forests	Is aspen habitat maintained or enhanced across the forest?	Acres of habitat restored.
Detrimental Soil Conditions, Soil Erosion and Organic Residues (WFP 12-5 – 12-8) Soils Management (FFP-80 – 85) Management Area 8 (WFP) – Riparian Areas (WFP 4-136 – 4-138); Management Area 8C – Moist and Wet Meadows (WFP 4-141 – 4-142); Management Area 8D – Moist and Wet Forested Riparian Areas (WFP 4-142 – 4-143). Management Area 15 (FFP) – Fish and Wildlife Habitat and Water Quality (FFP-199 – FFP-204)	Are Standards and Guidelines effective in meeting Forest goals for soil conditions, erosion, and nutrient cycling?	% of soils in disturbed condition. Monitoring of management activities such as timber harvest, road management, and recreation including site visits and transects.

Forest Plan Component	Monitoring Question	Monitoring Indicator
Fish and Aquatic Habitat (WFP 4-16 – 4-17); Riparian Ecosystems (WFP 12-9 – 12-15) Watershed Management (FFP-86) INFISH and Northwest Forest Plan Riparian Reserve and ACS standards Management Area 8A – Riparian Areas Adjacent to Class I, II, and III Streams (WFP 4-139 – 4-140) Management Area 15 – Fish and Wildlife Habitat and Water Quality (FFP-199 – FFP-204)	Are Standards and Guidelines adequate for maintaining or improving aquatic habitat (instream, lake, and riparian areas)?	Core and integrated targets; habitat parameters such as riffle to pool ratios, width to depth ratios, pebble counts, bank condition, large woody debris and other parameters collected during stream surveys.
Invasive Plant Species Management Maintain desired native plant communities to support plant biodiversity and associated forest uses including livestock grazing and wildlife habitat. (2005 Regional ROD amendment to the Forest Plans and Fremont-Winema National Forests Invasive Plant Treatment ROD/EIS 2011)	What is the trend of noxious weed species as well as invasive species	Amount and trend of acres infested with noxious weeds as well as acres of treatment, eradication, and control. Amount and trend of invasive plant infested acres and level of any control management.
Wetland (Riparian) communities Maintain high integrity of (riparian) wetland communities to maintain habitat for dependent and often unique plant and wildlife species. FFP - MA15, pp 199, 204 WFP MA8c , pp 4-16, 4-74,75 4-136, 137, 4-141, 142	What is the condition of wetland habitats, particularly with respect to ground water dependent ecosystems (GDEs, fens), springs, and seeps Is the plant composition of wetland communities being maintained in regards to the suite of unique indicator species	Amount of bare ground and other soil disturbances Changes in plant composition from historical range of variability for the habitat, or loss of unique wetland indicator species

Forest Plan Component	Monitoring Question	Monitoring Indicator
Research Natural Area Management Manage to maintain the naturally occurring physical and biological characteristics of the area with minimal human intervention. FFP p 95 WFP p 4-195	Is management consistent with LRMP direction? Have management plans been developed? Are the areas being used for any research or education?	Current management activities in RNAs Completed management plans Recent or ongoing research, educational activities, or baseline conditions applied to other management units
(iii) The status of focal species to assess the ecological conditions required under §219.9.		
Bald eagle (focal species – currently MIS for Fremont and Winema LRMP) Goal is to maintain populations and habitat on the forest. Wildlife FFP 4-108 to 4-109 WFP 4-47	Are bald eagle nests active and successfully reproducing? Are closures being implemented to protect high priority bald eagle sites? Is habitat being protected or managed to improve habitat and/or to reduce the risk of loss of habitat from disturbance?	Nesting surveys and nesting success rates. Implementation of closures to protect nesting eagles. Is bald eagle habitat being protected or managed to improve habitat and/or to reduce the risk of loss of habitat from disturbance
Snags and down wood (primary excavators/woodpeckers– focal species and MIS) Goal is to maintain adequate snag and down wood habitat for wildlife. Wildlife: FFP 4-103 to 4-106 WFP 4-50 to 4-52	What are the current snag densities and sizes on the forest by habitat type? How are the amount of burned acres affecting or contributing to foraging and nesting habitat?	DecAID snag and down wood analysis by 6th field watershed by habitat type Burned habitat – acres and locations

Forest Plan Component	Monitoring Question	Monitoring Indicator
Mule deer– (focal species and MIS for Fremont and Winema LRMP) Habitat that is of a concern is hiding cover and thermal cover. Road densities are important to deer. Wildlife FFP 4-109 to 4-111 WFP 4-49	What are the current hiding cover percentages in mule deer winter and summer range? What are road densities and how are they being managed to reduce impacts to deer? Are mule deer populations stable?	Hiding cover across the Forest and by 6th field watershed for mule deer summer and winter range. Open road density across the Forest and by 6th field watershed for mule summer and winter range. ODFW population trend data.
Spotted Owls – T&E species, NWFP key species Goal – Spotted owl recovery is a primary goal for the Winema National Forest. Wildlife WFP 4-47 to 4-48 and Northwest Forest Plan	What is the amount of nesting, roosting, and foraging (NRF) and dispersal habitat and how has it changed? Are barred owls invading spotted owl habitat and what are the trends? Are spotted owls nest active and successfully reproducing?	Amount and distribution of NRF and dispersal habitat and changes over time. Barred owl known sites based upon the South Central Oregon Demographic Study Nesting surveys and nesting success rates based upon the South Central Oregon Demographic Study
Oregon Spotted Frog – T&E species Goal – Oregon spotted frog recovery is a primary goal for the Winema NF. WFP 4-47	What is the trend in populations as indicated by egg masses?	Egg mass survey results

Forest Plan Component	Monitoring Question	Monitoring Indicator
(iv) The status of a select set of the ecological conditions required under §219.9 to contribute to the recovery of federally listed threatened and endangered species, conserve proposed and candidate species, and maintain a viable population of each species of conservation concern.		
Spotted Owls – T&E species, NWFP key species Goal – Spotted owl recovery is a primary goal for the Winema National Forest. Wildlife WFP 4-47 to 4-48 and Northwest Forest Plan	What is the amount of nesting, roosting, and foraging (NRF) and dispersal habitat and how has it changed? Are barred owls invading spotted owl habitat and what are the trends? Are spotted owls nest active and successfully reproducing?	Amount and distribution of NRF and dispersal habitat and changes over time. Barred owl known sites based upon the South Central Oregon Demographic Study Nesting surveys and nesting success rates based upon the South Central Oregon Demographic Study
Oregon Spotted Frog – T&E species Goal – Oregon spotted frog recovery is a primary goal for the Winema NF. WFP 4-47	What is the trend in populations as indicated by egg masses?	Egg mass survey results
Endangered, Threatened, or Sensitive Species (WFP 4-2 – 4-9) Endangered, Threatened, Sensitive Species (FFP-108 – 109)	Are Standards and Guidelines adequate for maintaining or improving T&E and Sensitive fish populations?	Population surveys for bull trout (Threatened), Redband Trout (R6 Sensitive Species), Modoc Sucker (Endangered), Warner Sucker (Threatened), Shortnose Sucker (Endangered), Lost River Sucker (Endangered).
Management Area 8A – Riparian Areas Adjacent to Class I, II, and III Streams (WFP 4-139 – 4-140) Management Area 15 – Fish and Wildlife Habitat and Water Quality (FFP-199 –-204)	Are Standards and Guidelines effective in maintaining or enhancing aquatic habitat complexity?	Trends in instream habitat conditions. Review of NEPA project BAs and BOs for treatment impacts.

Forest Plan Component	Monitoring Question	Monitoring Indicator
Pinus albicaulis (Whitebark pine) - (Sensitive species and Candidate species) FFP, Appendix 6, pp 75-76	What are whitebark pine population trends after recent outbreaks of mountain pine beetles, localized wildfires, and encroachment of other conifer species? Is whitebark pine regeneration sufficient to maintain populations? Are whitebark pine restoration/silviculture treatments needed, and are they effective, for maintaining or improving whitebark pine population viability? What is the status of habitat condition and threats for this species on the Forest?	Current stand conditions and population trends Percent of whitebark pine mortality and data on suspected causes Whitebark pine regeneration data from monitoring plots
Botrychium pumicola (pumice moonwort) (Sensitive species) FFP, Appendix 6, pp 75-76 WFP, pp 4-47	What are population trends, especially in monitored sites and sites that have received treatments of lodgepole pine thinning? What is the status of habitat condition and threats for this species on the Forest?	Numbers of pumice moonwort plants counted at selected monitoring plots Observations on general habitat condition and disturbances/threats from field site visits.
Other Sensitive Species, as well as Survey and Manage Species FFP, Appendix 6, pp 75-76 WFP, pp 4-6, 5-50 Northwest Forest Plan	What are population trends, habitat conditions, and threats to current population sites from grazing, timber harvest/restoration, invasive species, and other influences? Is mitigation implemented and effective for protecting and/or enhancing sensitive species, including direction outlined in any conservation strategies?	Numbers of plants counted during field visits at selected sites. Number and condition of plants in various phenological stages in grazing monitoring plots. Data from project implementation and monitoring reviews, including existing or potential threats to habitat conditions
Plant diversity Persistence of native and desired non-native plant species and communities WFP, p 5-52	What is the present distribution and trend of select plant communities and species richness? What is the association of community distribution with management practices and natural disturbance?	Decrease in plant community or individual species abundance and distribution

Forest Plan Component	Monitoring Question	Monitoring Indicator
(v) The status of visitor use, visitor satisfaction, and progress toward meeting recreation objectives.		
Monitoring Objectives, Methods, and Frequency: FFP, pp 214-215, Table 32 WFP, p 5-9	Are the current recreation settings and opportunities moving toward desired recreation settings and opportunities on the Fremont-Winema National Forest?	Recreation Settings and Opportunities, Visitor satisfaction for: (1) Developed Sites (2) Dispersed Sites (3) Off-Road Vehicles (4) Visual Quality (5) Trails (6) Wilderness Areas
Monitoring Objectives, Methods and Frequency: (FFP - MA 11, WFP – MA 5)	Are the Standards and Guidelines for maintaining the Outstanding Remarkable Values (ORVs) of designated Wild and Scenic Rivers being met?	Monitoring Data is collected to determine if the ORVs are being protected and enhanced, and to ensure the safety of visitors to the river corridor.
Special Uses: <u>Developed Recreation, Special Use Permit Areas</u> Opportunities for recreation are provided through special use authorizations. Management Area 13 Recreation Management Standards and Guidelines (FFP-189-195). Forest wide Standards for Special Land Use Management (FFP-94). Management Area 2 – Developed Recreation (WFP Standards and Guidelines Recreation (WFP 4-94 to 4-95). Management Area 2D, Developed Recreation, Special Use Permit Areas (WFP 4-99 to 4-100) Special Uses Standards and Guidelines (WFP 4-55 to 4-56)	Are people satisfied when using the forests through special use permits for concessionaire developed sites including winter sports areas, resorts, organizational camps, and family use sites including recreation residences? Are concession site (developed sites, winter sports, resorts, organizational camps) permit holders providing a quality experience to the public? Are public health and safety standards being met, and are natural and cultural resources being protected?	Annual results from concession sites' permit area inspections and monitoring. Compliance with permit terms and conditions and annual operating plans. Visitor satisfaction based on: 1. Results of National Visitor Use Monitoring 2. Forest personnel reporting Casual feedback from visitors regarding their experience 3. Casual feedback from visitors regarding their experience

Forest Plan Component	Monitoring Question	Monitoring Indicator
(vi) Measurable changes on the plan area related to climate change and other stressors that may be affecting the plan area.		
Range Management/Riparian Areas (FFP 76) Range 9-3 (WFP 4-63)	How is climate change impacting aquatic habitat conditions and fish distribution?	Trend, increase or decrease, in the upper extent of habitat for fish or changes in the distribution of species.
Climate change may be impacting the plan area in a variety of ways including but not limited to: • Extent, duration, and severity of disturbance events such as fire, insects and disease, • Changes in stream flow and temperature regimes and timing of flows • Changes in vegetation location, composition and structures.	What are the plan area vulnerabilities? What stressors are impacting the plan area? Are there trends in stressors and if so, how are they affecting the plan area? Are timing and amount of stream flows changing in select watersheds? Is stream temperature being affected?	Trend, increase or decrease, in the upper extent of habitat for fish or changes in the distribution of species. Changes in disturbance regimes such as insect and disease, wildfire impacts, etc. Changes in vegetation location, composition and structure. Changes in timing and amounts of stream flows and stream temperatures.
Forest Plan Component	**Monitoring Question**	**Monitoring Indicator**
(vii) Progress toward meeting the desired conditions and objectives in the plan, including for providing multiple use opportunities.		
Transportation System (Roads) – Goal - to plan, operate and maintain a safe and economical transportation system providing efficient access for the movement of people and materials involved in the use and protection of NFS lands.	Are road densities meeting forest-wide and allocation specific guidelines? How many miles of roads have been constructed? How many road miles have been closed? How many road miles have been decommissioned? What are the trends and what is affecting those trends?	Miles of open roads per by 6th field watershed (aka known as 12th field). Miles of roads closed per year Miles of roads decommissioned per year Miles of roads constructed per year Miles of roads maintained per year
Cultural Resource Goal – To provide for the protection, preservation, evaluation and interpretation of prehistoric and historic sites, buildings, objects and antiquities of Local, Regional and National significance. (WFP 4-3) (FFP 63)	Are significant (National Register eligible) historic properties being protected, maintained, stabilized, and repaired according to historic preservation standards?	Monitoring data/site condition assessments.

Forest Plan Component	Monitoring Question	Monitoring Indicator
Lands, Minerals, and Energy Goals and Objectives: Achieve a land ownership pattern that will best meet resource management needs and minimize administrative costs. (WFP 4-8) Adjustments will be made to the Fremont National Forest Landownership pattern that will enhance the objectives of this Forest Plan. Opportunities for improving the pattern are provided by land exchanges, purchases, and occasional donations. (FFP Appendix 3, pg. 35) Authorize special land uses that conform to land management objectives, that are compatible with resource objectives and environmental considerations, and that are in the public interest. (WFP 4-8) Consider Forest Service, other agency, and private sector needs for sites for special purposes, while minimizing adverse impacts upon the productive land base, aesthetics, and other environmental factors. (FFP 186)	Is the National Forest System land pattern meeting resource management needs and minimizing administrative costs? Do special use authorizations for energy, communication, water and other land uses; and mineral Plans of Operation comply with applicable laws and regulations to ensure environmental protection?	Boundary Management activities (boundary survey and maintenance) identify encroachments and cost share with private land owners minimizing shared boundary management administrative costs. Rights of way are acquired to access isolated National Forest parcels to meet resource management needs. Results from inspecting and monitoring special use authorizations and Plans of Operation.

Forest Plan Component	Monitoring Question	Monitoring Indicator
Encourage and facilitate the exploration, development, and production of mineral and energy resources in accordance with mining leasing laws and regulations and ensure that activities are conducted in an environmentally sound manner (WFP 4-9 and FWP 140) Lands, Minerals, and Energy Standards and Guidelines (WFP 4-54 to 4-58 and FFP 186) Forest wide standards for Special Land Uses, Minerals Management, and Land Ownership Adjustments (FFP 94 to 102)	See Monitoring Questions – pg. 11	See Monitoring Indicators – pg. 11
(viii) The effects of each management system to determine that they do not substantially and permanently impair the productivity of the land (16 U.S.C. 1604(g)(3)(C)).		
Fremont FP Standard and Guidelines: - Timber Management/Timber Harvest 5 Long-term site productivity (FFP 73) - Soils Management General 2 Long-term site productivity (FFP 80) & associated Fremont Plan Amendment No. 2 (1992) for Organic Residues Winema FP Goals and Objectives: - Protection 12 fire program, consistent with long-term site productivity (WFP 4-10) - Soil and Water 24 Long-term soil productivity (WFP 4-16) Standards and Guidelines: - Soil and Water 12-3, 12-5 to 12-8 Soil productivity, stability, erosion, and organic residues (WFP 4-73 to 4-74)	Are management activities being implemented so that they do not substantially and permanently impair the productive capacity of the land?	Extent of detrimental soil disturbance in an activity unit.