



**File Code:** 1940  
**Date:** May 9, 2016

Dear Interested Citizen,

The 2012 Planning Rule (36 CFR 219) requires the Mt. Hood National Forest (the Forest) to establish a land management plan monitoring program that is consistent with the new Planning Rule's monitoring requirements. We have reviewed our existing Mt. Hood Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan) monitoring program (found on pages 5-1 to 5-75) to determine what modifications are needed to conform to the new monitoring requirements. We would like to take this opportunity to share with you our new Forest Plan monitoring program (see attachment).

As defined by the Planning Rule, monitoring is continuous and provides feedback for the planning cycle by testing relevant assumptions, tracking relevant conditions over time, and measuring management effectiveness (36 CFR 219.12). The Planning Rule requires the Forest's new monitoring program to contain one or more monitoring questions and associated indicators to address the following:

- (i) The status of select watershed conditions.
- (ii) The status of select ecological conditions including key characteristics of terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems.
- (iii) The status of focal species to assess the ecological conditions required under §219.9.
- (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.
- (v) The status of visitor use, visitor satisfaction, and progress toward meeting recreation objectives.
- (vi) Measureable changes on the plan area related to climate change and other stressors that may be affecting the plan area.
- (vii) Progress toward meeting the desired conditions and objectives in the plan, including for providing multiple use opportunities.
- (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)).

A draft Forest Plan monitoring program was shared with the public on July 6, 2015. In response, we received two letters, which prompted some changes to be made to the monitoring program. The final Forest Plan monitoring program and responses to the comments received on the draft monitoring program are attached to this letter. This information is also posted on our Forest website: <http://www.fs.usda.gov/main/mthood/landmanagement/planning>.

These changes to the Forest Plan monitoring program were made using an administrative change under the 2012 Planning Rule (36 CFR 219). An administrative change (36 CFR 219.13(c)) is any change to a plan that is not a plan amendment or plan revision. Administrative changes



include corrections of clerical errors to any part of the plan, conformance of the plan to new statutory or regulatory requirements, or changes to other content in the plan, including the monitoring program (§ 219.7(f)(iii)).

Now that the Forest has established a program that is consistent with the 2012 Planning Rule's monitoring requirements, we will develop a biennial monitoring evaluation report to answer the monitoring questions included in the new program. The report will document whether a change to the Forest Plan or change to the monitoring program is warranted based on new information or whether there is no need for change at that time as required by the Planning Rule (36 CFR 219.5).

Thank for your interest in the Forest Plan monitoring program. If you have further questions about this monitoring program, please contact Michelle Lombardo at 503-668-1796 or [mlombardo@fs.fed.us](mailto:mlombardo@fs.fed.us).

Sincerely,



LISA A. NORTHROP  
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Enclosures

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