

# Finger Lakes National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan

**Administrative Change 3  
May 19, 2026**

## **Changes to Forest Plan: Chapter 4, Monitoring and Evaluation**

This administrative change is specific to the Finger Lakes National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan) dated April 2006. Administrative changes as defined at 36 CFR 219.13(c) in the 2012 Planning Rule, are not plan amendments or revisions, do not require the preparation of a document under Forest Service National Forest Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) procedures, and may be made at any time following public notice (219.1(c)(6)).

Administrative changes include the following:

1. Corrections of clerical errors to any part of the plan,
2. Changes to ensure conformance with new statutory or regulatory requirements, and
3. Changes to other content in the plan (217.7(f))

The changes to the Finger Lakes National Forest Monitoring Program (Forest Plan, Chapter 4) subject to this administrative change falls under “other content in the plan”.

### **Background**

The 2012 Planning Rule requires every National Forest’s monitoring plan to address eight resource monitoring elements with at least one or more monitoring questions and associated indicators (36 CFR 219.12(a)(5)). The eight monitoring elements or topics are:

1. The status of select watershed conditions.
2. The status of select ecological conditions including key characteristics of terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems.
3. The status of focal species to assess ecological conditions under § 219.9.
4. The status of a select set of 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.
5. The status of visitor use, visitor satisfaction, and progress toward meeting recreation objectives.
6. Measureable changes on the plan area related to climate change and other stressors that may be affecting the plan area.
7. Progress toward meeting the desired conditions and objectives in the plan, including for providing multiple use opportunities.
8. The effects of each management system to determine that they do not substantially and permanently impair the productivity of the land per the National Forest Management Act (16 U.S.C. 1604(g)(3)(C)).

Ten questions and their measurement indicators were selected to address the eight monitoring elements required by the Planning Rule in early 2016. The selected monitoring questions and associated indicators

were specifically incorporated into the Finger Lakes National Forest Monitoring Plan (Forest Plan, Chapter 4, Section 4.1.4) as documented in the Forest Plan Administrative Change 2 dated May 6, 2016.

#### **Changes to the Forest Plan, Chapter 4**

The existing ten questions were reviewed by an interdisciplinary team of resource specialists in early 2025 to determine whether any changes were needed to provide more meaningful, feasible, cost effective, and scientifically sound monitoring questions to address the required elements. Based on their recommendations, proposed changes to the monitoring questions and measurement indicators were completed in June 2025 and distributed for public notification, review, and input. Final monitoring question changes resulted in a new set of ten questions addressing the eight required elements. Other existing monitoring questions were retained or modified, or new questions developed to supplement the required monitoring questions to identify potential improvements to the Forest Plan or refine management activities pending budget and staffing capacity.

Specific changes to the Forest Plan, Chapter 4 include:

- Revised Sections 4.1.1 to 4.1.3 to reflect minor wording changes for improved readability.
- Revised Section 4.1.4 to clarify the intent of the Monitoring Plan.
- Revised Section 4.1.5 to reflect the new required monitoring questions.
- Revised Section 4.1.6 to clarify the purpose of the other monitoring questions as detailed in the Monitoring Guide.
- Revised Section 4.1.7 to clarify the purpose of biennial monitoring and evaluation reports and removing redundancy with Section 4.1.1.

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Date

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