



Northwest Forest Plan Amendment Update

Why an amendment?

Implemented in 1994, the Northwest Forest Plan (NWFP) covers 24.5 million acres of federally managed lands in northwestern California, western Oregon, and Washington. The NWFP aims to protect threatened and endangered species while also contributing to social and economic sustainability in the region. Nearly 30 years later, the landscape has experienced significant social, economic, and ecological changes. Amending the NWFP will provide an updated management framework that incorporates current science and conditions.

Initial phase – Notice of Intent

The Forest Service initiated the amendment process with a [Notice of Intent \(NOI\)](#), published in the Federal Register on December 18, 2023. The NOI outlined five topics that will be considered during the amendment process including:

- Improve fire resistance and resilience
- Better adapt ecosystems to climate change
- Better protect mature and old growth ecosystems
- Incorporate indigenous knowledge to achieve forest management goals and to meet our trust responsibilities
- Better support and protect communities located proximate to National Forest System lands

We received over 9,000 comments in response to the NOI. Over the next few weeks, the NWFP team will review the submitted comments to refine the proposed action, identify preliminary issues, and explore possible alternatives and their environmental effects.

Process and Engagement Steps in Developing and Implementing an Amendment

Identify Need to Change

- Federal Advisory Committee (FAC) Input

Develop Proposed Amendment

- Consider previously received public comment and recommendations from the FAC

Consider Environmental Effects

- Publish Draft Environmental Impact Statement for public review

Publish Draft Amendment

- Consider public comments on draft

Publish Final Plan

- Objection opportunity

Approve and Implement

- Public review of Biennial Monitoring Evaluation

Coordination and Consultation with Tribes



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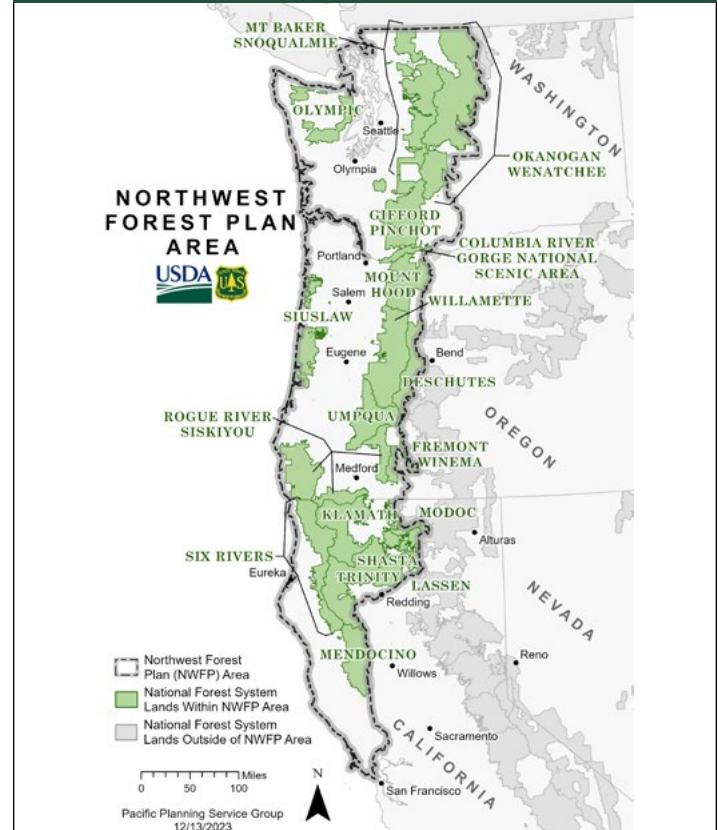
Gathering Voices

Federal Advisory Committee

To inform the amendment, the Secretary of Agriculture established a Federal Advisory Committee (FAC) to bring diverse perspectives representing the experiences of communities, experts, tribes, and other interested parties across the Northwest Forest Plan landscape. Since first meeting in September 2023, the FAC has worked in subcommittees to focus on tribal inclusion, climate adaptation, improved fire resilience, sustainable communities, and old growth conservation. The subcommittees developed ideas for the full FAC to discuss and create potential recommendations to the Forest Service.

The next FAC meeting will occur April 16-18 in Weaverville, CA. More information about the NWFP FAC, including how to submit comments and recordings of prior meetings, can be found at the following link: www.fs.usda.gov/goto/r6/nwfpfac.

Northwest Forest Plan Area



Tribal Inclusion

Tribes have a unique and important role in this process as sovereign governments that have stewarded these lands since time immemorial. The 2012 Planning Rule and Executive Order 13175 Consultation and Coordination with Tribal Governments provide direction for increased meaningful tribal inclusion and co-stewardship in cooperative land management and for consultation on a government-to-government basis. One focus of this effort is to have better tribal inclusion throughout the NWFP amendment process. We

held two virtual tribal forums on September 26th and November 29th of 2023 and have two in-person meetings scheduled:

- An in-person tribal forum was held March 13-14 in Snoqualmie, WA, and was hosted by the Snoqualmie Tribe.
- A second in-person tribal forum, focused on the National Old Growth Amendment effort as well as NWFP, will occur the week of April 29th and is hosted by the Karuk Tribe in California.



We welcome your participation and input!
Sign up for future updates at tinyurl.com/bdecza2d





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Endangered Species Act Consultation

We are required to consult with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) on the amendment's potential effects towards federally listed species and their critical habitat. Agencies are entering a consultation agreement to foster cooperation and integrate consultation considerations early into the NEPA process. The team has identified over 100 federally-listed species that will need to be addressed for the amendment.



Northern Spotted Owl. Photo of an owl perched on a tree in the Six Rivers National Forest. USDA Forest Service photo.

Engage With Us

A goal of public involvement is to identify opportunities to contribute to mutual objectives, resolve or reduce conflicts, and achieve mutually agreeable outcomes on the land and in our communities. Public involvement has already been a key part of efforts to implement and update the Northwest Forest Plan and opportunities will continue to be available. While seeking to increase public involvement, the 2012 Planning Rule also emphasizes meaningful engagement with populations historically absent from the planning process including youth and under-served communities.

We hosted four public webinars in January and a virtual open house in February! If you missed them, you can watch them on our [NWFP website: Region 6- Planning](#). We're planning for in-person public meetings this summer when we plan to release the draft environmental impact statement on the proposed amendment.

For more information, visit
www.fs.usda.gov/goto/r6/nwfp



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