

**Forest Service Manual
National Headquarters - Washington Office
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**Forest Service Manual 1300 – Management
Chapter 1390 - Knowledge Sharing and Conservation**

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Responsible Staff:

Explanation of changes: Following is an explanation of the changes throughout the directive by section.

1390.1: Adds new authority to include 36 CFR Chapter XII, Subchapter B – Records Management.

1390.2: Revises language to clarify objectives. Adds language to support Forest Service Strategic Plan and centralized repository.

1390.3: Revises language to include globally.

1390.4: Revises list of responsible parties to align with current organizational chart and updates roles for ORMS Director, Knowledge Management Officer. Added language on KM Practitioner reporting structure.

1390.5: Revises definition section.

1390.6: Revises paragraph.

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This chapter sets forth the policies and program guidance for the implementation of Knowledge Sharing and Conservation (KSC) and Knowledge Management (KM) in the Forest Service. KSC drives the strategic use of information and knowledge resulting in the Forest Service's performance excellence.

Knowledge sharing and conservation are areas of great concern to the Forest Service due to the high number of retirement eligible employees and the "brain drain" resulting from retirements. Added to increasing retirements are many change activities including new hires, new systems, new areas of emphasis and so forth that are impacting our ability to manage our century's worth of experience and know-how. We need to be able to bridge these challenges.

1390.1 - Authority

Clinger-Cohen Act of 1996 (Public Law 104-106). This legislation establishes processes for selecting, managing, and evaluating information technology investments in Federal agencies to ensure: a positive return on investment; observable improvements in mission performance; acceptable cost and risk within reasonable time frames; and improved productivity, efficiency, and effectiveness of Federal programs through the acquisition and use of information technology resources. The Clinger-Cohen Act also establishes the position of Chief Information Officer (CIO) in Federal agencies.

Code of Federal Regulations, 36 CFR Chapter XII, Subchapter B - Records Management. This subchapter contains regulations affecting Federal agencies and their records management programs.

Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA) (Public Law 94-579). This Act requires the Forest Service to nurture the health, productivity, and diversity of public lands through multiple use management and sustained yield. Inherent in these mandates are the knowledge and skills of those charged with the stewardship of public lands, and the quality, extent, and availability of information and data upon which their judgments, decisions, and actions are based.

Federal Records Act of 1950, as amended, (44 U.S.C. 29, 31, and 33). This legislation requires heads of agencies to make and preserve records containing adequate and proper documentation of the organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, and essential transactions of the Agency.

Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) (5 U.S.C. 552). This Act ensures that people have access to the records of the Executive Branch of the U.S. Government and requires the Government to justify its need for not releasing any records. The FOIA also sets standards for determining which records must be made available to a requester and which records can be withheld. The Act also provides administrative and judicial remedies for those denied access to records.

Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) of 1993 (5 USC 306). This law holds Federal agencies accountable for achieving program results by measuring program performance against program goals and requires agencies to publicly report their progress. GPRA improves Federal program effectiveness and public accountability by focusing upon results, service quality, and customer satisfaction. In addition, GPRA requires agencies to develop strategic plans and report performance measures and outcomes.

Information Technology Management Reform Act of 1996. See Clinger-Cohen Act.

National Forest Management Act (NFMA) of 1976 (Public Law 94-588). This legislation reorganized, expanded and otherwise amended the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974, which called for the management of renewable resources on national forest lands. The National Forest Management Act requires the Secretary of Agriculture to assess forest lands, develop a management program based on multiple-use, sustained-yield principles, and implement a resource management plan for each unit of the National Forest System. This Act guarantees the public full opportunity to participate in National Forest land and resource planning. Additionally, it recognizes the importance of scientific research and cooperation with State and local governments and private landowners in the management of the Nation's Forest Resources. It is the primary statute governing the administration of National Forests.

Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-130. Circular A-130 provides uniform government-wide information resources management policies as required by the Paperwork Reduction Acts of 1980 and 1995. Among other provisions, Circular A-130 requires systematic attention to the management and preservation of documents that protect the Federal government's historical record and guard the legal and financial rights of the government and the public.

Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Sec. 408(b). This legislation imposes strict requirements for any electronic and information technology developed, maintained, procured, or used by Federal agencies.

1390.2 - Objectives

To support the Forest Service Strategic Goal to "Apply Knowledge Globally" the objectives of the Knowledge Sharing and Conservation (KSC) program are:

1. Provide Forest Service officials with easy-to-use tools to successfully implement KSC program objectives and policies contained herein.
2. Identify the Forest Service's mission-critical knowledge wherever it resides, and make it available for shared use.

3. Ensure a safe, consistent and continuously updated centralized repository for agency knowledge.
4. Cultivate and share methods that minimize the loss of mission-critical knowledge through knowledge transfer of key work processes, best practices, decisions, and actions documented for easy access when and where needed.
5. Create and foster an environment that encourages and enables knowledge creation, sharing, learning, and stewardship through Communities of Practice and other social networks that enable the Forest Service to successfully function as a knowledge management organization.
6. Focus on knowledge through discovering, acquiring, conserving, retaining and reusing both the knowledge that the Agency has collected as well as tacit, or experiential, knowledge.
7. Ensure the Forest Service makes full use of its collective knowledge, experience and abilities.

1390.21 - Knowledge Sharing and Conservation Vision

In carrying out the KSC objectives, policy, and responsibilities, Forest Service employees shall direct their efforts to achieving the following Agency KSC vision of:

Guiding the Forest Service into a future of knowledge management that enables discovery, acquisition, conservation and sharing of agency knowledge; leading the Forest Service to be recognized nationally and internationally as a leader in knowledge sharing and conservation.

1390.3 - Policy

It is Forest Service policy to:

1. Identify sources of mission-critical knowledge and leverage its use through documentation, expert-to-novice transfer, and easy access when and where needed.
2. Create and preserve records of unique functions, policies, decisions, and best practices, as well as lessons learned, because of their informational value for current and future generations both internal and external to the Forest Service.
3. Encourage and enable knowledge creation, sharing, learning, and stewardship through formal and informal networks of employees with a common sense of purpose.

1390.4 - Responsibility

1. The Chief, Deputy Chiefs, Associate Deputy Chiefs, Area Director, IITF Director, Chief Financial Officer, Chief of Staff, Regional Foresters, and Station Directors, are responsible for the development, preservation, and strategic use of the Forest Service's information and knowledge resources in all Forest Service programs, pursuant to the authorities and policies discussed in this direction. These responsibilities are exercised through the members of the Executive Leadership Team and other designated Forest Service officials.
2. The Washington Office Directors, Deputy Chiefs, Associate Deputy Chiefs, Area Director, IITF Director, Regional Foresters, and Station Directors are ultimately accountable for acquiring, developing, and retaining the intellectual capital necessary to accomplish program mandates within their respective organizational jurisdictions. They are responsible for:
 - a. Managing corporate knowledge in ways that add value to the Forest Service mission by fostering an environment that encourages and enables knowledge creation, sharing, learning, networking, and stewardship;
 - b. Effectively articulating the Forest Service's key messages, priorities, policies, best practices, and desired performance outcomes to all employees;
 - c. Minimizing the loss of mission-critical knowledge by identifying the "know-how" and "know-why" that lives inside employees' minds, and capturing and organizing it for shared use;
 - d. Creating and safeguarding records according to FSH 6209.11, Records Management Handbook; that contain documentation of the essential transactions of the Forest Service, and maintaining up-to-date and legally sufficient directives (FSM 1114) for guided actions and sound decision making;
 - e. Valuing and recognizing employees for their knowledge, expertise, and significant contributions to the Forest Service's mission-critical knowledge base;
 - f. Improving natural resource decisionmaking through the use of reliable information and applications; and
 - g. Improving global natural resource stewardship through Forest Service knowledge-based forest products and services.
3. The Director of the Office of Regulatory Management Services (ORMS) is delegated overall responsibility for establishing unified knowledge sharing and conservation/knowledge management practices, processes, and tools for discovering,

acquiring, preserving, organizing, and providing mission-critical corporate knowledge and serves as lead advisor to the Deputy Chief for Business Operations.

4. The Knowledge Management Officer (KMO) serves as subject matter expert and lead advisor on all matters pertaining to knowledge sharing and conservation, including the identification of goals, strategies, tools, measurements, targets, and management.

5. The Forest Service Chief Information Officer is responsible for coordinating policies and guidance pertaining to the design, operation, and maintenance of automated knowledge sharing and conservation systems pursuant to applicable regulations, standards, and policies.

6. The KMO will identify mission critical knowledge domains and recommend strategies that maximize knowledge sharing and minimize the loss of corporate knowledge in partnership with the designated KM practitioners. The KMO reviews, develops, and evaluates the overall knowledge sharing and knowledge conservation effort and helps establish standards and procedures, and helps coordinate the development and operation of Communities of Practice (CoP). These responsibilities are accomplished by:

- a. Developing and updating policies and guidance for the design, development, management, integration, and use of knowledge management tools and systems, information sharing and dissemination, and the general oversight of the knowledge sharing and conservation program;
- b. Monitoring and evaluating knowledge sharing and conservation processes and recommending needed changes to appropriate officials;
- c. Coordinating and aligning knowledge management policies and issues that affect other Forest Service programs; and
- d. Working collaboratively with key management officials and other leaders to create an environment of trust and empowerment that is supportive of knowledge sharing and conservation. The focus is on building a collaborative work environment, infrastructure, resources, and skills to encourage knowledge stewardship.

The KM practitioners report to their home organizations.

7. All employees are responsible for:

- a. Developing, refreshing, and sharing their knowledge and skills through research, coursework, and professional networks such as Communities of Practice;
- b. Creating, organizing, and safeguarding records so that critical information can be easily found and shared with others when and where needed; and

- c. Documenting decision rationale, actions taken, lessons learned, and best practices as part of a shared legacy for current and future generations.

1390.5 - Definitions

Chief Information Officer (CIO). The Washington Office Director of the Chief Information Office has been designated as the Agency's Chief Information Officer (CIO). The Department's CIO has delegated to the Forest Service CIO the authority and responsibility to oversee the procurement, installation, management, support, and updating of the corporate information technology (IT) architecture.

Community of Practice (COP). A community of practice is a formal or informal network or association of professionals who share common concerns, issues, problems, mandates, or sense of purpose. It is also a group of professionals informally bound to one another through exposure to a common class of problems, common pursuit of solutions, and thereby themselves embodying a store of knowledge.

Knowledge Management (KM). The Forest Service defines KM as "a business strategy that creates methods and tools to enable relevant knowledge to be easily created, preserved, and shared for better informed decisions, guided actions, and desirable outcomes." There are literally hundreds of other definitions for Knowledge Management. A few key definitions include: a conscious strategy for getting the right knowledge to the right people at the right time, helping people share, and helping people put information into action to improve organizational performance; a discipline dedicated to a more deliberate means of people creating and sharing knowledge and understanding in a social context - to make the right decisions and take the right actions. KM involves organizational culture, processes, technology and other tools, and communication to achieve the best performance results.

Knowledge Management Officer (KMO). The individual assigned to manage and coordinate the creation, sharing, and preservation of knowledge within an organization. This person is typically a high-level manager in the organization who has the influence required to design, implement and manage knowledge programs.

Knowledge Sharing and Conservation (KSC). The program assigned responsibility for coordination and oversight of knowledge management in the Forest Service. KSC connects people to people; people to tools, practices, processes and products; and people to critical agency knowledge. It enables knowledge sharing through networks, connections, websites, and other technical and verbal communication processes. It bridges generations of employees. It sets the stage for continual creation of new knowledge, as well as best practices and lessons learned, through sharing, feedback, and information exchange back into the organization. It can provide balance to the agency's diverse organizational structures and challenges, such as: matrix management, enterprise organizations, decentralized organizations, and coordination across agency boundaries. By supporting empowerment and responsibility at the individual level, KSC

focuses on understanding the knowledge needs of the organization and the sharing and conservation of the knowledge. Organizational learning contributes to knowledge management as it is the process of innovating, integrating, interpretation and transfer of the collected knowledge. Organizational learning is influenced by organizational memory, the accumulation of historical knowledge.

1390.6 - Knowledge Sharing and Conservation Principles

To realize the Agency's KSC mission and vision for knowledge management, Forest Service employees shall seek to apply and exemplify the KSC program guiding principles set out in exhibit 01 in their professional conduct and in carrying out their assigned responsibilities.

1390.6 - Exhibit 01

Eight Knowledge Sharing and Conservation Principles

- Knowledge Sharing connects people to people; people to tools, practices, processes, and strategies; and people to critical Agency knowledge.
- Knowledge Sharing captures a wide range of learning from explicit to tacit (which is written down and can be put into a database which is experiential, insightful, and intuitive).
- Knowledge Sharing is mentoring and networking, sharing insight, wisdom, and experiences.
- Forest Service policies, practices, programs, and stories are shared and conserved as the Agency's knowledge base.
- Enduring Forest Service legacy is conserved through the sharing of documents, databases, procedures, and the use of collaborative tools.
- Knowledge Sharing and Conservation bridges employee generations, and connects different perspectives.
- Knowledge Sharing approaches are situation dependent and context sensitive.
- With knowledge comes responsibility.