

**Forest Service Manual
National Headquarters - Washington Office
Washington, DC**

**Forest Service Manual 1600 – Information Services
Chapter 1660 - Digital Services**

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Approved by: Tina Terrell, Associate Deputy Chief, NFS

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Responsible Staff:

Posting Instructions: Amendments are numbered consecutively by title and calendar year. Post by document; remove the entire document and replace it with this amendment. Retain this transmittal as the first page(s) of this document. The last amendment to this title was 1600-2020-2 to FSM 1630.

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

1660.04e: Changes caption from “Regional Foresters, Station Directors, Area Directors, Institute Directors, Forest and Grassland Supervisors, District Rangers and Washington Office Staff Directors” to “Regional Foresters, Station Directors, Area Director, Institute Director, National Technology & Development Program Director, Geospatial Technology & Applications Center Director, Forest Supervisors, Grassland Supervisors, Prairie Supervisors, District Rangers, and Washington Office Staff Directors” with no change to direction.

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1660.01 - Authority

1. Web Site Development and Maintenance, Departmental Regulation 3430–001 (DR 3430–001). This Departmental Regulation provides direction on the development and maintenance of internet websites.
2. Press Operations, Departmental Regulation 1440–002 (DR 1440–002). This Department Regulation provides detailed policy guidance for production and dissemination of current information materials, principally news releases, backgrounders, media advisories, and similar information for working with news media representatives.
3. Control and Protection of "Sensitive Security Information", Departmental Regulation 3440–002 (DR 3440–002). This Departmental Regulation provides policy guidance on the control and protection of "Sensitive Security Information."
4. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Departmental Regulation 1495-001, "New Media Roles, Responsibilities and Authorities, 1495-001, May 23, 2011. This policy establishes the requirements for the implementation of new media technologies within the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). Unless otherwise specified, this directive applies to all USDA agencies, employees, contractors, interns, and partners utilizing new media technologies for official USDA purposes.
5. U.S. Department of Agriculture, "Digital Style Guide," January 2013. This guide establishes standards and guidelines by which staff shall adhere to as it pertains to digital standards and applications.

1660.02 - Objectives

1. Ensure that the publicly accessible Forest Service (Agency) web presence effectively supports the Forest Service mission.
2. Provide an Agency-wide policy that governs the use of approved social networking and social media accounts, content, and interactions.
3. Achieve effective and accessible communications and interactions for all customers.
4. Maintain a consistent design as reflected in the Agency's Website Style Guide.
5. Ensure efficiency and accountability in the delivery of information and services through a web presence that is easy to navigate, understand, and access.
6. Meet or exceed federally mandated security and accessibility requirements.

1660.03 - Policy

1660.03a - Support of Mission

All information and services created and disseminated via digital media by the Forest Service must have a clearly defined purpose that communicates the strategic goals and priorities of the Agency. This policy applies to all employees, including Enterprise Program Staff, contractors, and all other personnel authorized to act on behalf of the Agency for official purposes. The policy sets out the requirements, responsibilities, processes, procedures, and use of digital media for the Agency.

1660.03b - Social Media Content

1. The Forest Service social media presence managed by Agency employees must adhere to the standardized design established in the Forest Service *Social Media Best Practices* issued by the Director, Office of Communication, Washington Office.
2. Content used on any social media platform(s) must be in accordance with appropriate Federal, Department and Agency guidelines.
3. Information published from Forest Service social media accounts must be created by Forest Service employees, or those contracted by the Forest Service to operate on the Agency's behalf. Content from non-government sources shared on social media must fall within the scope of joint communication projects.
4. All Forest Service social media content must be cleared by Forest Service public affairs staff prior to public release.
5. According to FSM 1640, signed release forms must be obtained from the source of information or content which the Agency does not own prior to the publishing of all photos and video on the web.
6. Sensitive, confidential, or private information intended solely for internal use may not be placed on the public websites.
7. Requests for the creation of Forest Service social media accounts must be approved through the Director, Office of Communication, Washington Office.
8. All Forest Service social media content shall be written using clear, concise and plain language. See Federal Plain Language Guidelines (www.plainlanguage.gov).
9. All digital media accounts, including social media accounts, approved by the Director, Office of Communication, Washington Office, must be registered on the U.S. Digital Registry (<https://www.digitalgov.gov>).

10. Public Affairs Officers managing the social media accounts need to ensure that all posts meet Section 508 accessibility requirements. See Section 508 Social Media Guidelines (<https://www.section508.gov/create/video-social>).

1660.03c - Website Content and Design

1. The Forest Service web presence managed by Agency employees must maintain the standardized design based on the Agency Website Style Guide(s).

Link: <http://fsweb.wo.fs.fed.us/style-guide/>

- a. New designs and/or redesigns for the Forest Service Intranet (FSWeb) and public-facing websites must be approved by the Office of Communication as mockups, early in the design phase of a project, prior to any web development work.
- b. Every office, program, or unit must review, in partnership with the Office of Communication, Washington Office, all final web-based products prior to requesting the CIO to officially launch a public-facing website.
- c. The CIO shall not launch any Forest Service public-facing website without Office of Communication concurrence.
- d. Office of Communication will provide design related guidance in the form of a style guide and/or other visual representation(s).

2. Content on the Forest Service website must be organized around categories or topics that are meaningful, easy to locate, and accessible to Forest Service audiences. All required content and links must be provided in accordance with relevant Federal guidance (Freedom of Information Act, Disclaimers, Plain Language, Privacy Policy, Information Quality, and so forth). See OMB Policies located at: <https://www.digitalgov.gov/resources>

3. Information published on Forest Service websites must be created by Federal employees. Forest Service employees must receive written authorization to use information generated by a non-Federal source. Web pages that contain information pursuant to the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. § 552) are exempt from this restriction.

- a. Information already on the web should not be replicated from its source. However, the notion of repurposing content throughout the Agency is an acceptable practice. In doing this, content is still only stored in a single common repository, but may be presented in multiple areas within the Agency's web presence.
- b. Public-facing web content must be cleared by Forest Service public affairs or communication staff for public release.

c. Official relationships, such as agreements developed under FSM 1580, Grants, Cooperative Agreements, and Other Agreements,” Memorandums of Understanding, cooperative agreements, or interagency agreements, may be used to provide authorization to publish content from official partner agencies and organizations.

d. According to Forest Service standard practice, signed release forms must be obtained from the source prior to publishing non-Federal photos and video on the web.

e. Sensitive, confidential, or private information intended for internal use only must not be placed on public websites.

4. All Forest Service websites shall only use fs.usda.gov domains unless the Chief explicitly determines another domain is necessary for the proper performance of an Agency function (FSM 1667).

5. All Forest Service websites shall be written using clear, concise and consistent language. See Federal Plain Language Guidelines (www.plainlanguage.gov).

6. Information should be published using methods that make it easy to find, access, share, distribute, re-purpose, and structure content. Additionally all published information should be tagged with standard metadata.

1660.03d - Digital Media with Partners

Websites developed collaboratively with partners must be considered a Federal information technology system if Forest Service has contributed the majority share of cooperation (as determined by the responsible Line Officer) and the agency is responsible for the majority of content. All Federal information technology systems must adhere to agency and USDA information technology standards and requirements including a valid authority to operate. Social media accounts must similarly be federally maintained if the Forest Service has done most of the cooperation.

Use formal cooperative arrangements (FSM 1580 & FSH 1509.11) to help clarify and document roles and responsibilities among both Federal and non-Federal cooperators and grantees when website development or social media use is a result of an agreement. Social media agreements or contracts shall be first approved by the Director, Office of Communication, Washington Office.

1660.03e - Removal of Content from Forest Service Digital Media Platforms

1. All content more than a year old must be reviewed, updated or be removed as needed from Forest Service websites.

2. Content on social media platforms that contain factual errors will be removed immediately by the appropriate account administrator. Requests to remove other content must be approved by the Director, Office of Communication, Washington Office.

1660.04 - Responsibility

1660.04a - Director, Office of Communication, Washington Office

The Director, Office of Communication, Washington Office has the authority and responsibility to review and approve Agency digital tools and technology that support communication needs and to maintain the content on the Forest Service's publicly accessible website. The Director is responsible for:

1. Designating a National Social Media Manager to maintain the day-to-day operation and guidance of the Agency's social networking and social media policy and programs;
2. Designating the Forest Service National Web Manager to coordinate with appropriate staff offices and field units to maintain Agency web systems;
3. Establishing Agency guidance that adheres to Department of Agriculture policies and other applicable laws, policies and procedures for the official and appropriate use of social networking and social media to enhance communication, collaboration and information exchange in support of the Forest Service mission;
4. Establishing guidance for the management, coordination, and regulation of social media accounts that will work to maintain quality control and appropriate use of Agency social networking and social media tools;
5. Overseeing policy and guidance to ensure the credibility of Forest Service information released through the publicly accessible website;
6. Coordinating Agency content by facilitating collaboration among program areas, and designating content area leads through the National Web Manager;
7. Assigning contributors for major content categories for the Agency's web presence;
8. Carrying out general responsibilities for maintaining information on the web;
9. Coordinating with appropriate Deputy and staff areas to define business requirements and providing training, as necessary, for the efficient operation of Forest Service web services;
10. Reporting on Forest Service internet activity to U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), the General Services Administration (GSA) and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), with the assistance of the Chief Information Officer (CIO), as required; and
11. Coordinating with appropriate staff areas for budgeting and planning for web operations.

1660.04b - Chief Information Officer, Washington Office

The Chief Information Officer (CIO) is responsible for managing the Forest Service digital media infrastructure. The CIO is responsible for:

1. Maintaining information technology (IT) infrastructure in accordance with Federal and Department guidelines and standards for operation of Forest Service web systems and oversees the outsourcing of these activities and services;
2. Facilitating technical decisions on web publishing and social media technology for both hardware and software with Agency business areas;
3. Configuring, maintaining, and optimizing the Agency's web search capabilities;
4. Providing standards and guidance for Agency web technology;
5. Providing web-app developer access, support and oversight; and
6. In coordination with Office of Communication, reviewing requests for new domains, subdomains and top-level directories.

1660.04c - National Social Media Manager

The Forest Service National Social Media Manager (Public Affairs/Social Media Specialist), Office of Communication, Washington Office, is responsible for maintaining the day-to-day operation of the Agency's social media program, including:

1. Developing and leading a social media strategy that supports the Agency mission, and expands engagement with internal and external audiences;
2. Developing and maintaining a directory of Agency social media accounts approved by the Director, Office of Communication, Washington Office;
3. Providing training and guidance on the authorized use and best practices of social media platforms for the Washington Office, Regions, Stations, and Areas; and
4. Ensuring ongoing compliance with applicable laws, policies and procedures for the Agency's official use of social networking and social media platforms.

1660.04d - National Web Manager, Office of Communication, Washington Office

The Forest Service National Web Manager is responsible for:

1. Coordinating with appropriate staff offices and field units to maintain Agency web systems;

2. Assigning contributors for major content categories for the Agency's national headquarters websites;
3. Providing policy guidance for Forest Service web operations in compliance with government-wide statutes, rules, and policy statements;
4. Establishing standards for the periodic review of web content on the Forest Service publicly accessible website by contributors and notifying Agency content contributors for follow-up action;
5. Conducting and/or overseeing content reviews of Agency's websites and notify appropriate Agency staff for action;
6. Acting as the national headquarters liaison to interagency organizations, USDA, regions and research stations, content contributors, and CIO;
7. Providing Information Architecture (IA), policy and design guidance for Agency websites;
8. Communicating policy, guidance, and national web direction to all unit Web Managers;
9. Adapting and maintaining a process for improving Agency website information architecture, website design, and Agency policy;
10. Reviewing Agency partner's websites regarding the use of the Forest Service Insignia (FS shield);
11. Reviewing joint website proposals with outside partners in coordination with CIO;
12. In consultation and coordination with the Forest Service Office of Civil Rights, setting requirements for website multilingual language support; and
13. In collaboration with CIO, providing business concurrence on requests for new domains, subdomains, and top-level directories.

1660.04e - Regional Foresters, Station Directors, Area Director, Institute Director, National Technology & Development Program Director, Geospatial & Technology Applications Center Director, Forest and Grassland Supervisors, District Rangers and Washington Office Staff Directors

Consistent with other leadership responsibilities for public and internal communication, Line Officers of Forest Service organizational units are responsible for:

1. Designating and supporting unit content contributors;

2. Authorizing and building an interdisciplinary team—including recreation, Geographic Information System, fire, and natural resources—on districts and forests to strategically provide content for Agency websites and social media;
3. Providing the necessary resources to support Forest Service web and social media programs; and
4. Ensuring compliance with Federal, USDA and Forest Service web and social media policies.

1660.04f - Region, Station, Area, Institute and Laboratory Web Managers

In cooperation with Public Affairs Officers, all Region, Station, Area, Institute and Laboratory Web Managers are responsible for:

1. Identifying appropriate information to post on the internal and external Forest Service websites;
2. Understanding customer needs for the purpose of identifying a target audiences;
3. Using a range of qualitative and quantitative research methods to better serve people's goals, needs, and behaviors for web-based products and services;
4. Reviewing regional websites and ensuring content approval has been completed (including copyright/photo release etc.);
5. Examining content for Section 508 compliance by reviewing region, station or Area sites;
6. Establishing expiration dates for content;
7. Providing contact information for questions about web content and/or respond to feedback about websites;
8. Providing guidance and training to the unit webmasters/content contributors for the appropriate operation of websites;
9. Ensuring accuracy and reliability of content released to the web;
10. Providing consultation and support for web publishing processes;
11. Ensuring uniformity, consistency and reliability of content; and
12. Providing training to contributors in the creation and maintenance of web information.

1660.04g - Unit Public Affairs Officers (PAOs) and Web Publishing Managers

Consistent with responsibilities for public information, the Unit Public Affairs Officer(s) and/or Unit Web Publishing Manager(s) shall review the appropriate unit website and is responsible for:

1. Proactively identifying and coordinating web products and services with web managers and subject matter experts;
2. Integrating web products and services with other communication products;
3. Assisting with the sharing of web-based content and services to their intended audience, while staying aligned with Agency style guide requirements;
4. Ensuring the accuracy and timeliness of public information, either by direct review, or by coordinating the content review by subject matter specialists;
5. Conducting an annual review of content published on both external and internal websites;
6. Ensuring accessibility of information as required by Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act, as amended. This should not be interpreted to mean that Unit Public Affairs Officers or Web Publishing Managers are responsible to make all web content Section 508 accessible. Rather, every employee has the responsibility for making their own digital content that they create, accessible;
7. Ensuring web content has been reviewed and approved and permissions have been obtained prior to publishing non-Federal content; and
8. Ensuring compliance with the Privacy Act in regards to sensitive, or otherwise private information.

1660.04h - Unit Social Media Lead (Public Affairs/Social Media Specialist)

Consistent with responsibilities for public information, the Social Media Lead, who is appointed by Regional Directors, Offices of Communication, shall review and approve the appropriate social media content and is responsible for:

1. Ensuring respective social media accounts comply with Agency policy and procedures for appropriate use of social networking and social media;
2. Developing relevant social media content and post to approved social media accounts; and
3. Regularly participating in the Agency Social Media Best Practices group.

1660.04i - Unit Webmasters/Web Managers

Unit Webmasters/Web Managers, in cooperation with Public Affairs Officers or Publishing Managers, Freedom of Information Act/Privacy Act coordinators, records management professionals, or other positions designated by the appropriate Line Officer are responsible for:

1. Identifying appropriate information to be posted on the web;
2. Identifying a target audience for information;
3. Reviewing the content for sensitivity and distribution/release controls;
4. Ensuring compliance with the Privacy Act in regards to sensitive, or otherwise private information;
5. Ensuring web information and services meet the strategic goals of the Agency;
6. Hyperlinking to existing web information on approved, government or partner websites rather than re-creating or duplicating content;
7. Ensuring accessibility of information as required by Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act, as amended. This should not be interpreted to mean that Unit Webmasters/Web Managers are responsible to make all web content Section 508 accessible. Rather, every employee has the responsibility for making their own digital content Section 508 accessible;
8. Ensuring that external links comply with FSM 1661.5;
9. Ensuring that appropriate records management principles are applied. Retain records according to records retention requirements found in FSH 6209.11, chapter 40, File Designations and Disposition;
10. Identifying web content ownership;
11. As appropriate, providing contact information for questions about web page content;
12. Ensuring web content has been reviewed and approved and permissions have been obtained prior to publishing non-Federal content;
13. Advising Line Officers to designate and authorize individual contributors within their units, as necessary, to contribute or maintain web content on the unit's site; and
14. Providing training to contributors in the creation and maintenance of web information.

1660.04j - Unit Staff (Program Area Managers)

Unit staff (web content creators, publishers, editors, and approvers) have responsibility for facilitating web manager consultation for the delivery of appropriate web content.

1660.04k - Contributors

Contributors have the responsibility for:

1. Contributing approved text, documents, data or multimedia;
2. Publishing information in ways that make it easy to find, access, share, distribute, and re-purpose;
3. Structuring content and tagging with standard metadata;
4. Conducting periodic reviews of content to keep it current, accurate, and reliable; and
5. Attending unit training or familiarizing themselves with Federal, Department, and Forest Service referenced in FSM 1660.01.

1660.04l - All Employees

Personal use of social media platforms outside of an employee's official capacity are subject to First Amendment protections. For official duties, employees must ensure that their social media activities comply with the [Standards of Conduct](#) and other applicable laws, regulations and policies.

It is the responsibility of each employee to ensure the lines between their personal and professional lives are distinct, including ensuring that:

1. Content created on personal social media platforms should not claim nor appear to be officially representing the Agency;
2. Agency email accounts are not used for personal social media accounts; and
3. Every employee, in their official capacity, has the responsibility for ensuring Section 508 accessibility when creating digital content.

1660.05 - Definitions

Contributor. The contributor is granted access to add or edit information referred to as web content within a unit's site. Contributors collaborate with subject matter experts, public affairs, publishers, and editors to ensure the information is accurate, current, and complete, and maintained over time.

Digital Media. A general term used to define social networks and websites.

External Web. This is the Forest Service's public website. This includes all publicly available web information, services and applications residing under any Forest Service managed domain. The external web is meant for the public seeking information or services.

Internal Web. This is the Forest Service's intranet. Information on the intranet is available for use within the Agency network. Such information may not be shared outside of the Agency without authorization. It is also called the FSWeb.

Website. Any web-based product that's accessible through a web browser; this includes web pages, web applications and web content management systems.

1661 - Web Site Content

1661.1 - Clearance Procedures for Content Published on the Forest Service Website

The Forest Service websites shall conform to current Forest Service policies and procedures. See FSM 1630, 1640, and 1650.

1661.2 - Changes to Existing Web Content

The Unit Web Manager from the originating office may perform permanent removal of materials from the Forest Service website relevant to their unit or program. Any contributor, employee, party, or person that believes that web content should be removed must contact the originating office.

1. Grammatical and typographical changes. The contributor may make editorial changes that do not alter the original meaning of the text without substantive review.
2. Minor Factual Changes. The contributor may make minor factual changes, such as updating telephone numbers or program statistics without substantive review.
3. Removal of Material on the Forest Service public website. The unit web manager from the originating office should remove content from the Forest Service Website relevant to their unit or program if it is outdated, in conflict with established policy or procedures, or found to be in error.
4. Archived Materials. All materials, including those which are removed from the Forest Service website, are handled according to Forest Service records management policy. Retain records according to records retention requirements found in FSH 6209.11, chapter 40, File Designations and Disposition.

1661.3 - Publishing on Websites

The posting of information on the Forest Service public website should be based on meeting the Forest Service's responsibility to inform the public. Satisfying the need of one specific individual or a small group of individuals may not necessarily constitute a requirement of having information available on the web. All content published on the Forest Service website must be approved by a public affairs office.

1661.4 - Copyrighted Material

Copyrighted material may be posted only when allowed by copyright laws and may be posted only if the web content relate to the unit's stated website mission. Copyrighted material must be accompanied by copyright information and statement of permission of use. Consult with the Office of the General Counsel before using any copyrighted material (Direction on publishing and copyrights is found in FSM 1631.5.).

1661.5 - Hyperlinks to External Web Sites

Forest Service units must consider USDA standards and establish objective and supportable criteria for the selection and maintenance of links to external web pages based on:

1. Official Relationship. Only use external links to nongovernmental or private sector information when there is a formal relationship between the Department or a Forest Service program and the program of the private sector organization;
2. Non-endorsement. Do not establish links to any nongovernmental or private organization without a formal relationship;
3. Support of the Mission. Consider linking to Federal, tribal, State, county, local government, or community websites before considering a nongovernment or commercial site. Include a statement explaining how the link supports Forest Service web presence goals and objectives or the unit's mission with links to nongovernment web resources. Review external links periodically to ensure their continued suitability;
4. Link Verification. Prior to inclusion of the link, verify the accuracy of the outside URL address;
5. Link Content Review. Conduct regular content reviews of the external page and secondary pages to ensure that inappropriate materials are not being linked from the Forest Service website; and
6. Exit Link Disclaimer. When external links are used, include a disclaimer that the Forest Service does not endorse the product or organization at the destination, nor does the Forest Service exercise any responsibility over the content at the destination.

Approved text for the disclaimer is:

External Links:

You are leaving the Forest Service website and entering an external or third-party site.

The Forest Service provides links to other websites to provide additional information that may be useful or interesting, and is being provided in a manner consistent with the intended purpose of the content you are viewing on the website. The Forest Service is providing these links for your reference. Once you access another site through a link that we provide, you are subject to the copyright and licensing restrictions of the new site.

It is the sole responsibility of you, the user of this site, to carefully examine the content of the site and all linked pages for privacy, copyright and licensing restrictions and to secure all necessary permissions if applicable.

1661.6 - Information Inappropriate for Digital Media

Information that is considered inappropriate shall not be posted on any Agency websites or social media platforms. Employees shall consider potential consequences of placing or posting information on the web or social media platforms before making it publicly accessible. Post only information to publicly accessible websites and social media that is of value to the public and that does not require additional protection. Consult the contributor whenever there is a doubt about publishing the content.

Examples of information considered inappropriate:

1. Information labeled "For Official Use Only" or information NARA has designated as "Controlled Unclassified Information" (CUI);
2. Personally Identifiable Information (PII);
3. Non-work related information about employees;
4. Employee travel information;
5. Financial disclosure reports not cleared for public release;
6. Union representation rights and duties;
7. Medical records; and
8. Contract proposals and other procurement source selection information considered to be protected from public release.

1662 - Accessibility/Section 508 Requirements

Web accessibility refers to the inclusive practice of removing barriers that prevent interaction with, or access to websites, by people with disabilities. When sites are correctly designed, developed, edited, and maintained, all users have equal access to information and functionality.

Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, requires Federal agencies to make Information and Communication Technology (ICT) accessible to people with disabilities. The law applies to all Federal agencies when they develop, procure, maintain, or use electronic and information technology. Agencies must provide employees and members of the public with disabilities access to information that is comparable to access available to others.

Forest Service websites shall meet accessibility requirements as required by law, regulations, and other policies. For assistance, guidance, and training on meeting website accessibility requirements, contact the Forest Service Section 508 Coordinator and/or visit the Forest Service Accessibility website (<https://www.fs.fed.us/recreation/programs/accessibility>).

When posting on social media platforms, videos need to comply with Section 508 compliance requirements.

1663 - Commercial Endorsement

Avoid endorsing any commercial entity. See DR1410-001, Section 12 (https://www.ocio.usda.gov/sites/default/files/docs/2012/DR1410-001_0.pdf).

1663.1 - Graphics or Logos

Graphics or logos from companies or services may appear on the Forest Service website and social media platforms when an official relationship is in place, such as a memorandum of understanding, contract, or cooperative agreement. When these graphics or logos are used, only the organization's official graphics may be used. Examples of organizations whose logos may be used by the Forest Service:

1. Adobe Acrobat or other free PDF viewers;
2. Vendors that provide online map-based services under a Forest Service contract;
3. Government organizations (Tribal, County, State, and Federal);
4. Partner organizations (e.g., Ad Council, Arbor Day Foundation, National Forest Foundation, or any other organization or university with which an official relationship exists); and
5. Social media platforms for which the USDA or Forest Service has accepted the Terms of Service and created an official account.

See FSM 1666, Use of Forest Service Insignia on Web Sites and [USDA Visual Standards](#) for additional guidelines on the use of logos.

1663.2 - Browser Recommendations and Plug-ins

Websites must not require or encourage users to choose any specific commercial browser software.

1663.3 - Contractors

Statements crediting or giving copyright to contractors that create web applications, products, or services and/or links to contractor websites are prohibited.

1664 - Additional Forest Service Web Site Requirements

1664.1 - Nondiscrimination

A link to the standard USDA nondiscrimination disclaimer statement shall be included on all Forest Service websites, typically in the footer area site. See USDA Policy located at: <https://www.usda.gov/non-discrimination-statement>

1664.2 - Privacy Notice

A link to the USDA Privacy Policy shall be included on all Forest Service websites, typically in the footer area a site. See OMB Policies for Federal Agency Public websites.

1665 - Information

1665.1 - Quality of Information

Include a link to the Forest Service Quality of Information website on all Forest Service websites, typically in the footer area. The Quality of Information guidelines provide the public with information on how to request correction of information disseminated by the Forest Service and who to contact.

1665.2 - Collection of Information

In certain instances, it is necessary and appropriate to collect information from website visitors. When doing so, employees must comply with the requirements of Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA) (44 U.S.C. § 3501 *et seq.*). Consult with the Agency's Paperwork Reduction Act Officer for further information on compliance with the Act.

1665.21 - Automated Collection of Information on Publicly Accessible Web Sites

1. Prohibition Against Use of Persistent Cookies. In accordance with Forest Service, USDA, and Office of Management and Budget policy, the use of persistent cookies on Forest Service

websites is prohibited unless specifically approved by the Forest Service Cyber Security team. See OMB, M-10-22 (<https://digital.gov/resources/m-10-22-guidance-for-online-use-of-web-measurement-and-customization-technologies/>).

2. Other Automated Means of Collecting Information. Except for system log files/site usage data, the use of other technologies to collect personally identifiable information requires the same approvals as described regarding cookies.

1665.3 - Print Publications

Only publish official, approved publications on Forest Service websites. See FSM 1630 for publication clearance policy.

1665.4 - Publishing Incomplete Web Pages

Do not create links to web pages with incomplete content that include notices such as “Under Construction” or “Coming soon.” The development of new web pages, such as orphan pages or pages that have not been linked, is an acceptable approach to building out content on new web pages.

1666 - Use of Forest Service Insignia on Web Sites

The official Forest Service Insignia may be used on any Forest Service website that has a domain suffix of ‘.us’ or ‘.gov’ and according to Agency design standards. See FSM 1603.4, Agency Logo Requirements. The use of the insignia is allowed when the Forest Service develops a digital product hosted by a third party service provider that is under contract.

The Office of Communication must review and approve all requests to use the Forest Service Insignia on all other public-facing, external websites that do not belong to the Forest Service. The requesting unit shall show proof that a formal relationship exists based on the terms outlined in a FSM 1580 agreement, such as a Memorandum of Understanding, cooperative agreements, or interagency agreements. If there is no agreement, the Office of Communication will deny the request to use Forest Service Insignia on the website.

The Office of Communication review process is as follows:

1. Project/program managers should submit a copy of the signed (FSM 1580) agreement and a screenshot example of how the insignia will be used to the Office of Communication. The agreement must acknowledge the anticipated use(s) of Forest Service Insignia in the statement of work. However, the agreement language may not grant permission, either explicitly or implicitly, for the use of the insignia. Additionally, the agreement must contain the Use of Forest Service Insignia provision located in FSH 1509.11, chapter 90.
2. If approved, the Office of Communication will provide the cooperator with a letter describing how the cooperator may use the Forest Service Insignia on the external

website. The cooperator's use of the Forest Service's Insignia is only approved to the extent that it is described in the letter. The Director of Office of Communication will issue the letter based on delegated authority residing with the Forest Service Chief.

1667 - Web Domains used by the Forest Service

All Forest Service websites shall only use fs.usda.gov domains unless the Chief explicitly determines another domain is necessary for the proper performance of an Agency function.

Any public-facing requests for new domains, subdomains and/or top-level directories must be approved by the CIO and Office of Communication.

1. All public-facing website domains, subdomains and/or top-level directories must be approved by the Office of Communication, early in the design phase of a project, prior to any web development work; web development by either the CIO, contractors, full-time employees or Enterprise Team acting on behalf of an office, program area or unit.
2. The CIO coordinates the implementation of approved .gov domains, subdomains within fs.usda.gov and/or top-level directories for websites.