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Forest Service Manual 1900 – Planning

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

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 1900-2007-1 to FSM 1900_zero_code.

1904.21: This is a technical amendment to correct the Station Directors and Area Director responsibilities.

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Title FSM 1900 provides the foundation for all planning in the Forest Service and addresses long-term and short-term strategic, tactical, and project planning to ensure integration and coordination at all levels and within all organizational units. Specific planning activities discussed in chapters under this title are as follows:

1. FSM 1910 - National Resource Planning. Sets forth requirements and procedures for conducting an assessment of the Nation's renewable resources and using that data as the foundation for developing the Forest Service Strategic Plan as required by the Government Performance and Results Act.
2. FSM 1920 - Land Management Planning. Provides for integrated resource planning through development, amendment, and, as appropriate, revision of land management plans, hereinafter referred to as plans.
3. FSM 1930 - Program Development and Budgeting. Provides for preparation of short-term program proposals; development of budgets; communication of targets, funds, employment ceilings; and direction for the national, regional, station, Area, Institute, and local levels.
4. FSM 1950 - Environmental Policy and Procedures. Prescribes the assessment and decisionmaking processes required by the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 and the statements and reports necessary to document project planning.
5. FSM 1960 - Policy Analysis. Provides for a systematic analysis of current and emerging issues as a basis for recommending policy changes.
6. FSM 1970 - Economic and Social Analysis. Provides for economic and social analysis of programs, resource plans, and projects.

1901 - Authority

1901.1 - Laws

The following laws set forth the requirements for Forest Service planning:

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 (16 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.). This act sets forth requirements to consider the environmental impact of proposed actions; identify adverse environmental effects which cannot be avoided; consider alternatives to the proposed action; consider the relationship between local short-term uses and long-term productivity; and identify any irreversible and irretrievable commitments of resources (FSM 1950).

The Forest and Rangelands Renewable Resources Planning Act (RPA) of 1974 (16 U.S.C. 1601 et seq.). This act directs the Secretary of Agriculture to periodically assess the national situation of the forest and rangeland resources. This assessment is called the Forest and Rangelands Renewable Resources Planning Act (RPA) assessment. See FSM 1906 and FSM 1910 for detailed requirements.

The National Forest Management Act (NFMA) of 1976 (16 U.S.C. 1600 et seq.). This act amends the Renewable Resource Planning Act (RPA) and sets forth the requirements for plans (for the National Forest System). See FSM 1920 for specific requirements.

Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Research Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 1641 et seq.). This act directs the Secretary of Agriculture to include, as appropriate, research activities when managing forest and rangeland resources.

Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 2101 et seq.). This act provides authority for financial, technical, and related assistance to states for forest resource planning.

Agriculture and Food Act of 1981 (7 U.S.C. 4201 et seq.; 16 U.S.C. 590, 3401 et seq.). Title XVI of this act requires joint planning of forestry research among the Forest Service; Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service; and the Nation's 61 forestry schools.

The Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) of 1993 (5 U.S.C. 306). This act provides for the development of agency long-term strategic plans, annual performance plans, and annual performance reports. The Forest Service Strategic Plan (Strategic Plan) provides the national framework for all agency operations and activities. The Strategic Plan uses information from the periodic Renewable Resource Planning Act (RPA) assessment of the Nation's forest and range resources.

1901.2 - Regulations

1. Title 36, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 219, Subpart A. This regulation provides direction on land management planning procedures on National Forest System lands.
2. Title 40, Code of Federal Regulations, Sections 1500 through 1508.28. This regulation directs the Forest Service to apply environmental analysis to environmentally significant decision points during National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) activities.

1902 - Objective

The objective of planning is to provide broad guidance and information for program, project, and activity decisionmaking.

1903 - Policy

Forest Service planning is an integrated process composed of discrete parts (the Strategic Plan, land management plans, project, and activity plans) joined to form a rational, logical management approach.

1. Planning should be done in a reasonable manner, at reasonable costs, and in a reasonable amount of time. Planning provides a sound and rational framework for managing National Forest System lands, for conducting Research and Development, and for working with the many state partners and cooperators who help deliver the Forest Service mission.
2. Analysis should be appropriate to the decision being made and the risks associated with that decision.
3. Terms used in planning and evaluation shall conform to prescribed definitions found in FSM 1905.

1904 - Responsibility

1904.1 - Line Officers

Line officers are responsible for managing and controlling any planning process that leads to decisions concerning National Forest System lands or programs for which they are the responsible officials.

1904.2 - Station Directors, Area Director, International Institute of Tropical Forestry Director

1904.21 - Station Directors and Area Director

During the land management planning process, the Station Directors and Area Director may cooperate with the responsible official in the development of data, inventory processes, and monitoring protocols, and to assist in the use of best available science, the identification of lands unsuitable for timber production, and for other scientific expertise.

The Station Directors are responsible for reviewing and concurring with that part of a plan applicable to any experimental forest within the plan area (36 CFR 219.2(b)(3)).

1904.22 - International Institute of Tropical Forestry Director

The Director of the International Institute of Tropical Forestry is responsible for reviewing and concurring with the land management plan for the El Yunque National Forest.

1905 - Definitions

The integrated relationships among the various levels and components of planning require uniform definitions and consistent application of the terms and concepts defined in this section. If it is necessary to explain any of the following terms in a planning document, use the following definitions verbatim.

Activity. A measure, course of action, or treatment that is undertaken to directly or indirectly produce, enhance, or maintain a desired resource management condition or objective.

Adaptive Management. An approach to natural resource management where actions are designed and executed and effects are monitored for the purpose of learning and adjusting future management actions, which improves the efficiency and responsiveness of management (36 CFR 219.16).

Alternative. One of several policies, plans, or projects proposed for decisionmaking.

Alternative Dispute Resolution. Any procedure other than litigation used to resolve issues in controversy, including but not limited to, conciliation, facilitation, mediation, fact finding, mini-trials, arbitration, use of ombudspersons, or any combination thereof (Administrative Dispute Resolution Act of 1996 (5 U.S.C. 571)).

Area of Analysis. The geographic area within which ecosystems, their components, or their processes are evaluated during analysis and development of one or more plans, plan amendments, or plan revisions. This area may vary in size depending on the relevant planning issue. For a plan, an area of analysis may be larger than a plan area. For development of a plan amendment, an area of analysis may be smaller than the plan area and include multiple ownerships.

Assessment. An analysis and interpretation of the social, economic, or ecological characteristics of an area using scientific principles to describe existing conditions as they affect sustainability.

Benefit (Outcome or Result). Inclusive terms used to quantify the results of an activity, project, or program.

Capability. The ability of a unit of land, based on defined physical and biological attributes, to support a particular use or suite of products while maintaining ecosystem sustainability.

Characteristics of Ecosystem Diversity. Parameters that describe an ecosystem; composition (major vegetation types, rare communities, aquatic systems, and riparian systems), structure (successional stages, water quality, wetlands, and floodplains), principal ecological processes (stream flows and historical and current disturbance regimes), and soil, water, and air resources.

Community of Interest. A group of people connected to each other by common interests, needs, or location; for example, local landowners, senior citizens, artists, conservationists, environmentalists, or recreational users.

Conservation. Measures taken to achieve preservation, maintenance, or restoration goals without impairing the sustainable flow of uses, values, benefits, products, services, and visitor opportunities for current and future generations.

Cost Effective. Achieving specified outputs or objectives under given conditions for the least cost.

Criteria and Indicators. Criteria are broad categories of conditions or processes by which the conservation and sustainable management of ecosystems and related resources may be assessed. Indicators are measurable conditions for various aspects of a criterion.

Cultural/Heritage Resources. Such resources as archeological, historical, or architectural sites, structures, places, objects, ideas, and traditions that are identified by field inventory, historical documentation, or evidence and that are important to specified social or heritage groups or scientific and management endeavors.

Demand. The amount of an output that users are willing to take at a specified price, time, and condition of sale.

Demand Analysis. A study of the factors affecting the schedule of demand for an output, including the price-quantity relationship, if applicable.

Designated Right-of-Way (ROW) Corridor. A parcel of land with specific boundaries identified by law, Secretarial order, the land use planning process, or by some other management decision as being a preferred location for existing and future ROW facilities. The corridor may be suitable to accommodate more than one type of ROW use or facility or one or more ROW uses or facilities that are similar, identical, or compatible. A designated corridor may already be occupied by existing utility facilities. It has been adequately analyzed to provide for a high degree of assurance that in being identified as a “designated corridor,” it can accommodate at least one new additional utility facility.

Desired Conditions. The social, economic, and ecological attributes toward which management of the land and resources of the plan area are to be directed. Desired conditions are aspirations and are not commitments or final decisions approving projects and activities, and may be achievable only over a long time period (36 CFR 219.7).

Discount Rate. An interest rate that represents the cost or time value of money in determining present value of future costs and benefits.

Discounting. An adjustment, using a discount rate for the values of money over time so that costs and benefits occurring in the future are reduced to a common point in time, usually the present, for comparison.

Diversity of Plant and Animal Communities. The distribution and relative abundance or extent of plant and animal communities and their component species, including tree species, occurring in an area (36 CFR 219.16).

Ecological Conditions. Components of the biological and physical environment that can affect diversity of plant and animal communities and the productive capacity of ecological systems. These components could include the abundance and distribution of aquatic and terrestrial habitats, roads and other structural developments, human uses, and invasive, exotic species (36 CFR 219.16).

Economic Efficiency. A term used to describe how well inputs (activities) are used to achieve outputs or outcomes when all inputs and all outputs or outcomes (including market and non-market) are identified and valued. Economic efficiency is usually measured in terms of the costs and benefits of a proposed action, which can be depicted as a present net value.

Economic Elements. (See Social and Economic Elements.)

Ecosystem Diversity. The variety and relative extent of ecosystem types, including their composition, structure, and processes within all or a part of an area of analysis (36 CFR 219.16).

Effect (Impact), Economic. The change, positive or negative, in economic conditions, including the distribution and stability of employment and income in affected local, regional, and national economies that directly or indirectly results from an activity, project, or program.

Effect (Impact), Physical, Biological. The change, positive or negative, in the physical or biological conditions that directly or indirectly results from an activity, project, or program.

Effect (Impact), Social. The change, positive or negative, in social and cultural conditions that directly or indirectly results from an activity, project, or program.

Evaluation. An appraisal and study of social, economic, and ecological conditions and trends relevant to a unit. The analysis of monitoring data that produces information needed to answer specific monitoring questions. Evaluation may include comparing monitoring results with a predetermined guideline or expected norm that may lead to recommendations for changes in management, a land management plan, or monitoring plan. Evaluations provide an updated compilation of information for use in environmental analysis of future project and activity decisions.

Executive Priority. A performance measure that the executive leadership feels is an important indicator of progress in delivering the mission. Executive priorities have annual, national-level accomplishments targets which are audited and reported in the annual Performance and Accountability Report.

Experimental Forest or Range. One of a series of areas established by the Forest Service in each region to provide for the research necessary to serve as a basis for managing forests and rangeland.

Federally Recognized Indian Tribe. An Indian or Alaska Native Tribe, band, nation, pueblo, village, or community that the Secretary of the Interior acknowledges to exist as an Indian Tribe pursuant to the Federally Recognized Indian Tribe List Act of 1994, 25 U.S.C. 479a (36 CFR 219.16).

Forest Land. Land at least 10 percent occupied by forest trees of any size or formerly having had such tree cover and not currently developed for nonforest use. Lands developed for nonforest use include areas for crops, improved pasture, residential or administrative areas, improved roads of any width and adjoining road clearing, and powerline clearings of any width (36 CFR 219.16).

Guidelines. Information and guidance for project and activity decisionmaking to help achieve desired conditions and objectives in the plan area.

Habitat Capability. The estimated ability of an area, given existing or predicted habitat conditions, to support a wildlife, fish, or plant population. It is measured in terms of potential population numbers.

Habitat Capability Model. A model which depicts the relationship of a species to a variety of habitat factors which provide for quantitative predictions of a species response (animal numbers) to habitat change.

Independent Peer Review. A review conducted using accepted practices that does not allow individuals to participate in the peer reviews of documents they authored or co-authored. A peer is a person who has substantially equal knowledge and standing in relation to the authors.

Indicator. A measure or measurement of an aspect of a sustainability criterion. A quantitative or qualitative variable that can be measured or described and, when observed periodically, shows trends. Indicators are quantifiable performance measures of outcomes or objectives for attaining criteria designed to assess progress toward desired conditions.

Input/Output Analysis. A technique for analyzing the interdependence of producing and consuming sectors in an economy.

Integrated Pest Management. A process for selecting strategies to regulate forest pests in which all aspects of a pest-host system are studied and weighed.

Inventoried Roadless Area. Areas identified in a set of inventoried roadless area maps, contained in the Forest Service Roadless Area Conservation, Final Environmental Impact Statement, Volume 2, dated November 2000, and any subsequent update or revision of those maps through the land management planning process (36 CFR 294.11).

ISO 14001. A consensus standard developed by the International Organization for Standardization and adopted by the American National Standards Institute that describes environmental management systems and outlines the elements of an environmental management system (36 CFR 219.16).

Issue. Issues may be considered as:

- a. A potential factor for determining need for change for a plan;
- b. Specific resource concerns about a proposed action under NEPA (FSM 1950);
- c. Points of contention or disagreement; or
- d. A subject or question of widespread public interest about management of the National Forest System.

Management Area. A specifically identified area in the plan area to which specific plan components (desired conditions, objectives, identification of suitable and unsuitable land uses, or special designations) are applied.

Mission. A major, continuing national area of concern or responsibility of the Forest Service directed by legislation, order, or regulation. The Forest Service mission represents the basic reason for its existence as a Federal agency and characterizes the agency's role in sustainably managing the Nation's forests and grasslands.

Monitoring. A systematic process of collecting information to evaluate changes in actions, conditions, and relationships over time and space or progress toward meeting desired conditions or plan objectives.

Multiple Use. The management of all the various renewable surface resources of the National Forest System so they are used in the combination that will best meet the needs of the American people: making the most judicious use of the land for some or all of these resources or related services over areas large enough to provide sufficient latitude for periodic adjustments in the use to conform to changing needs and conditions; that some lands will be used for less than all of the resources; and harmonious and coordinated management of the various resources, each with the other, without impairment of the productivity of the land, with consideration being given to the relative values of the various resources, and not necessarily the combination of uses that will give the greatest dollar return or the greatest unit output (Multiple Use-Sustained-Yield Act 1960, U.S.C. 528-531). Consistent with the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA), multiple use includes Federal energy and mineral resources underlying National Forest System lands. Exploration and production of those resources is considered one of the “principle or major uses” under FLPMA which, under section 202(e)(1) of that Act, are to be given special consideration in the planning process.

National Direction. Statements of missions, goals, policy, and objectives that guide Forest Service planning.

National Forest System. All National Forest lands reserved or withdrawn from the public domain of the United States; all National Forest lands acquired through purchase, exchange, donation, or other means; the National Grasslands and land utilization projects administered under Title III of the Bankhead-Jones Farm Tenant Act (50 Stat. 525, 7 U.S.C. 1010-1012); the Midewin Tallgrass Prairie; and other lands, waters, or interests therein which are administered by the Forest Service or are designated for administration through the Forest Service as a part of the system (16 U.S.C. 1608).

Native Species. Species indigenous to an area of analysis.

Need for Change. A finding by the responsible official that there is a need to modify plan components through a review of new issues and information, monitoring and evaluation results, and changes in law or regulation.

Net Public Benefits. An expression used to signify the overall long-term value to the Nation of all outputs and positive effects (benefits) less all associated inputs and negative effects (costs) whether they can be quantitatively valued or not. Net public benefits are measured by quantitative and qualitative criteria rather than a single measure and index.

Newspaper(s) of Record. The principal newspapers of general circulation annually identified and published in the Federal Register by each regional forester to be used for publishing notices as required by 36 CFR 215.5. The newspaper(s) of record for projects in a plan area is (are) the newspaper(s) of record for notices related to planning (36 CFR 219.16).

Niche. The role of the Forests, Grasslands, Prairies, or other comparable units in contributing to social, economic, and ecological sustainability.

Non-Substantive Changes. Modifications to the plan that do not appreciably change plan components (desired conditions, objectives, guidelines, and so on).

Objectives. Concise projections of measurable, time-specific intended outcomes. The objectives for a plan are the means of measuring progress toward achieving or maintaining desired conditions. Like desired conditions, objectives are aspirations and are not commitments or final decisions approving projects and activities (36 CFR 219.7). In the Strategic Plan, objectives are a more focused statement of aim or purpose for a strategic goal.

Objector. A person(s) or organization(s) who has submitted a timely objection to the appropriate reviewing officer.

Opportunity. A proposal that is considered in developing alternative activities, projects, or programs where an option exists to invest profitably to improve or maintain a present condition.

Outcome. The long-term results of a program activity compared to its intended purpose (Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA) (5 U.S.C. 306)).

Outcome Measure. See performance measure.

Output, Market. A good, service, or on-site use that can be purchased at a price.

Output, Nonmarket. A good, service, or on-site use not normally exchanged in a market.

Performance Measure. Indicators, statistics, or metrics used to gauge program performance.

Plan. A document, or set of documents, that integrates and displays information relevant to management of the National Forest System, Research and Development, or State and Private Forestry unit.

Plan Area. The National Forest System lands covered by a plan (36 CFR 219.16).

Plan Components. Broad guidance in a plan that identifies desired conditions, objectives, guidelines, suitability of areas, and special areas.

Plan Document. Information that documents the process of developing, amending, or revising a plan, including evaluation reports; documentation of the public involvement; the plan, including applicable maps; applicable approval documents; applicable National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) documents, if any; the monitoring program for the plan area; descriptions of the environmental management system established for the unit, and other information. This information also includes records that support analytical conclusions made and options considered by the interdisciplinary team throughout the planning process.

Present Net Value. The difference between the discounted aggregate values (benefits) of all outputs to which monetary values or established market prices are assigned and the total discounted costs of managing the planning area.

Productivity. The capacity of National Forest System lands and their ecological systems to provide the various renewable resources in certain amounts in perpetuity. For the purposes of this subpart it is an ecological, not an economic, term (36 CFR 219.16).

Program Budget. A plan that allocates annual funds, workforce ceilings, and targets among agency management units.

Program Budget Level. A single, comprehensive integrated program responsive to the Chief's direction that specifies a level of production attainable from a given investment of dollars and other resources. Each budget level represents a complete, full, and independent package within the criteria and constraints identified.

Program Proposals. A multi-year course of action proposed under a given set of assumptions and constraints.

Project. An organized effort to achieve an objective identified by location, activities, outputs, effects, times, and responsibilities for execution.

Project Design. The process of developing specific information necessary to describe the location, timing, activities, outputs, effects, accountability, and control of a project.

Public Involvement. A Forest Service process designed to broaden the information base upon which agency approvals and decisions are made by: (a) informing the public about Forest Service activities, plans, and decisions, and (b) encouraging public understanding about and participation in the planning processes which lead to final decisionmaking.

Public Lands. Any land, and interest in land, administered by the Secretary of the Interior through the Bureau of Land Management (Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976). This includes the mineral estates underlying National Forest System lands.

Public Participation. Activities that include a wide range of public involvement tools and processes such as collaboration, public meetings, open houses, workshops, and comment periods (36 CFR 219.16).

Range of Variation. Spatial and temporal variation in ecosystem characteristics during a period of time when the influences of European-American settlement were minimal.

Rangeland. Land on which the indigenous vegetation (climax or natural potential) is predominately grasses, grass-like plants, forbs, or shrubs and is managed as a natural ecosystem. If plants are introduced, they are managed similarly. Rangeland includes natural grasslands, savannas, shrub lands, many deserts, tundras, alpine communities, marshes, and meadows.

Recreation Opportunity Spectrum. A framework of land delineations that identifies a variety of recreation experience opportunities categorized into classes on a continuum. The Spectrum's continuum has been divided into six major classes for Forest Service use: Urban (U), Rural (R), Roaded Natural (RN), Semi-Primitive Non-Motorized (SPNM), Semi-primitive Motorized (SPM), and Primitive (P) (FSM 2311).

Renewable Resources Assessment. An appraisal of the Nation's renewable resources that recognizes their vital importance and the necessity for long-term planning and associated program development. The Assessment meets the requirements of section 3 of the Forest and Rangelands Renewable Resources Planning Act (RPA) of 1974 and includes analyses of present and anticipated uses, demands, and supplies of the renewable resources; a description of Forest Service programs and responsibilities; and a discussion of policy considerations, laws, and regulations.

Renewable Resources Program. The program for management and administration of the National Forest System, for Research and Development, for Cooperative State and Private Forest Service programs, and for conduct of other Forest Service activities developed in accordance with the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974. Unless and until the Resources Planning Act is amended, annual appropriations language substitutes the Government Performance and Results Act (5 U.S.C. 306) strategic plan for the RPA Program.

Research Natural Area. A specially designated area in as near a natural condition as possible which exemplifies typical or unique vegetation and associated biotic, soil, geologic, and aquatic resources. The area is established by the Forest Service to preserve a representative sample of an ecological community primarily for scientific and educational purposes.

Responsible Official. The official with the authority and responsibility to oversee the planning process and to approve plans, plan amendments, and plan revisions (36 CFR 219.16).

Reviewing Officer. The supervisor of the responsible official. The reviewing officer responds to objections made to a plan, plan amendment, or plan revision prior to approval (36 CFR 219.16).

Right-of-way (ROW). Public or National Forest System lands authorized to be used or occupied pursuant to a ROW grant or special use authorization.

Risk. A combination of the likelihood that a negative outcome will occur and the severity of the subsequent negative consequences.

Scenery Management System. An overall framework for the orderly inventory, analysis, and management of scenery (FSM 2382).

Science. For the purposes of this manual, “science” refers to the knowledge, information, concepts, and theories based on organized systems of facts that have been learned from study, observation, experience, and testing of hypotheses.

Science Consistency Review. A process to determine whether scientific information of appropriate content, rigor, and applicability has been considered, evaluated, and synthesized in the documents that underlie the land management plan approval. The science consistency review does not advise the decisionmaker for or against a particular course of action.

Scope and Scale. The term scope usually refers to the breadth, extent, or depth of an issue such as whether it refers to one or multiple resources, ecosystems, or species. Scale usually refers to geographic scale such as an ecosystem, landscape, or eco-region.

Self-sustaining Population. A self-sustaining population is one that is sufficiently abundant and has appropriate population characteristics to provide for its persistence over many generations.

Set of Documents. (See Plan Document.)

Social and Economic Elements. The variety of tangible and intangible uses, values, products, services, opportunities, and benefits provided by National Forest System lands.

Special Areas. Areas in the National Forest System designated for their unique or special characteristics (36 CFR 219.7).

Species. Any member of the currently accepted and scientifically defined plant or animal kingdoms of organisms (36 CFR 219.16).

Species-of-concern. Species for which the responsible official determines that management actions may be necessary to prevent listing under the Endangered Species Act (36 CFR 219.16).

Species Diversity. The number and relative abundance of different species within a plan area.

Species-of-interest. Species for which the responsible official determines that management actions may be necessary or desirable to achieve ecological or other multiple-use objectives (36 CFR 219.16).

Stewardship. Natural resource management emphasizing careful and conscientious use and conservation of resources and ecosystems in a sustainable manner.

Strategic Plan. The Forest Service Strategic Plan identifies long-term strategic priorities and is the basis for integrated delivery of the agency's mission, following the criteria of the Government Performance and Results Act (5 U.S.C. 306).

Suitability. The appropriateness of a particular area of land for applying certain resource uses. A unit of land may be suitable for a variety of individual or combined management practices.

Supply. The amount of an output that producers are willing to provide at the specified price, time, and condition of sale.

Sustainability. Meeting needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. Sustainability is composed of desirable social, economic, and ecological conditions or trends interacting at varying spatial and temporal scales embodying the principles of multiple-use and sustained-yield.

Timber Harvest. The removal of trees for wood-fiber use and other multiple-use purposes.

Timber Production. The purposeful growing, tending, harvesting, and regeneration of regulated crops of trees to be cut into logs, bolts, or other round sections for industrial or consumer use (36 CFR 219.16). In addition, managing land to provide commercial timber products on a regulated basis with planned, scheduled entries.

Transportation and Utility Corridor. A parcel of land, without fixed limits or boundaries, which is used as the location for one or more transportation or utility right-of-ways.

Visitor Opportunities. The spectrum of settings, landscapes, scenery, facilities, services, access points, information, learning-based recreation, wildlife, natural features, cultural and heritage sites, and so forth available for National Forest System visitors to use and enjoy (36 CFR 219.16).

Watershed Condition. The state of the watershed based on physical and biogeochemical characteristics and processes such as hydrologic, geomorphic,

landscape, topographic, vegetative cover, and aquatic habitat; water flow characteristics and processes such as volume and timing; and water quality characteristics and processes such as chemical, physical, and biological as they affect water quality and water resources (65 FR 62572, October 18, 2000).

Wilderness. Any area of land designated by Congress as part of the National Wilderness Preservation System that was established in the Wilderness Act of 1964 (16 U.S.C. 1131-1136), (36 CFR 219.16).

1906 - Forest Service Planning Process

Exhibits 01 and 02 provide two perspectives on the Forest Service planning process. Exhibit 01 links the several parts of the process on a temporal scale. Exhibit 02 identifies the steps of the process at different organizational levels.

The Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (Results Act) (5 U.S.C. 306; 31 U.S.C. 1115 - 1119; 31 U.S.C. 9703 - 9704) requires agency strategic plans, annual performance plans, and annual performance reports. Based on the intent of this Act, the Forest Service Strategic Plan outlines 4- to 5-year goals and objectives for the agency. Exhibit 01 displays some of the key elements and vehicles the Forest Service uses to carry out the steps called for in the Results Act. Exhibit 01 shows the performance accountability process as a cycle and illustrates that planning occurs over multiple time frames and organizational units. The cycle includes the agency Strategic Plan, Unit Plans (such as land management plans), State Forest Resource Plans, Station Research plans, Congressional Appropriations and earmarks, Integrated Programs of Work, and Performance Plans.

The Strategic Plan includes agency roles, responsibilities, and priorities informed by the Renewable Resource Planning Act (RPA) assessment. Sections three and four of the Results Act prescribe how the priorities of the Strategic Plan are translated into annual performance plans, providing a basis for agency budget requests. The annual performance plan for a particular year establishes annual goals and objectives for what must be done, in the near term, in order to make progress toward the desired outcomes articulated in the Strategic Plan and unit plans. The agency's annual performance report will include information on what was accomplished relative to annual performance measures and the status of progress toward the Strategic Plan objectives, based on multiyear trends.

Exhibit 02 summarizes how Forest Service plans achieve sustainably healthy landscapes. The model reflects the relationships between budgetary and planning processes at multiple scales. Projects and activities are designed to advance the agency mission of sustainable resource management.

1. Inventory and Assessment. Resource information is collected and assessed based upon selected criteria and indicators useful to decisionmaking. Information is derived from multiple sources and scales to inform interrelated decisionmaking processes.

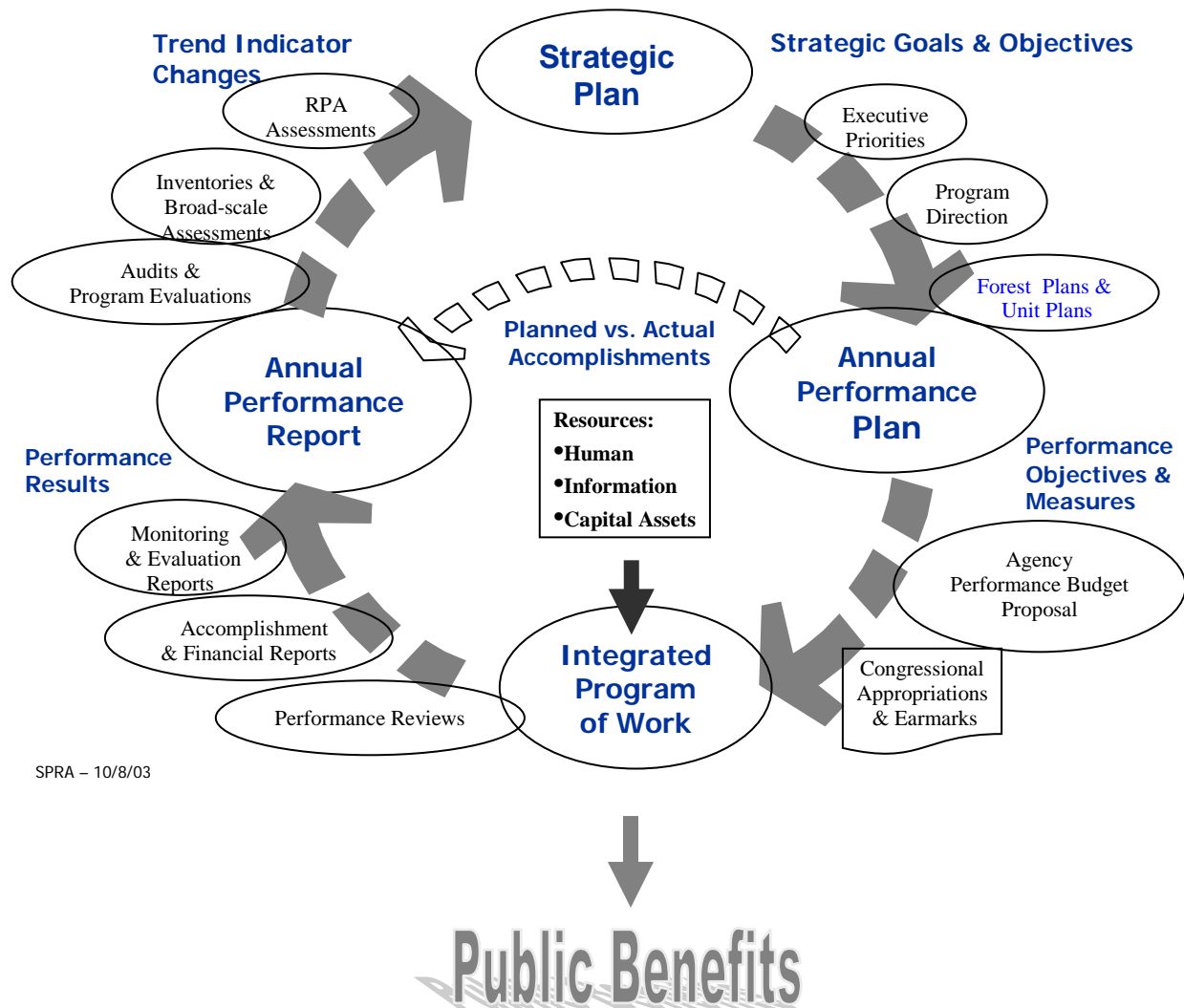
2. Planning. Emerging resource management needs are addressed by identifying desired conditions and objectives. The future conditions are based on evaluation of monitoring, inventory, and assessment information. National and local issues are considered and coordinated when developing strategic, program, and annual goals and objectives. Projects are planned to contribute to accomplishing the Forest Service's mission within the context of the Strategic Plan, land management plans, and annual appropriations.

3. Implementation. Priorities are established and funding is provided to carry out actions designed to provide services and facilities to move the agency towards desired conditions. The collective outcome of project and activity level work reflects progress toward the desired conditions and objectives of strategic and unit management plans.

4. Monitoring. The agency tracks performance measures to gauge progress toward desired conditions, by monitoring at a scale that appropriately answers the monitoring questions. This monitoring provides data for informed decisionmaking, particularly so that adaptive management is responsive to emerging needs and changing conditions.

5. Corporate Information. Corporate information provides the foundation for consistent and effective information collection, analysis, storage, maintenance, and evaluation at multiple scales for various reporting requirements and needs, including the Annual Performance and Accountability Report.

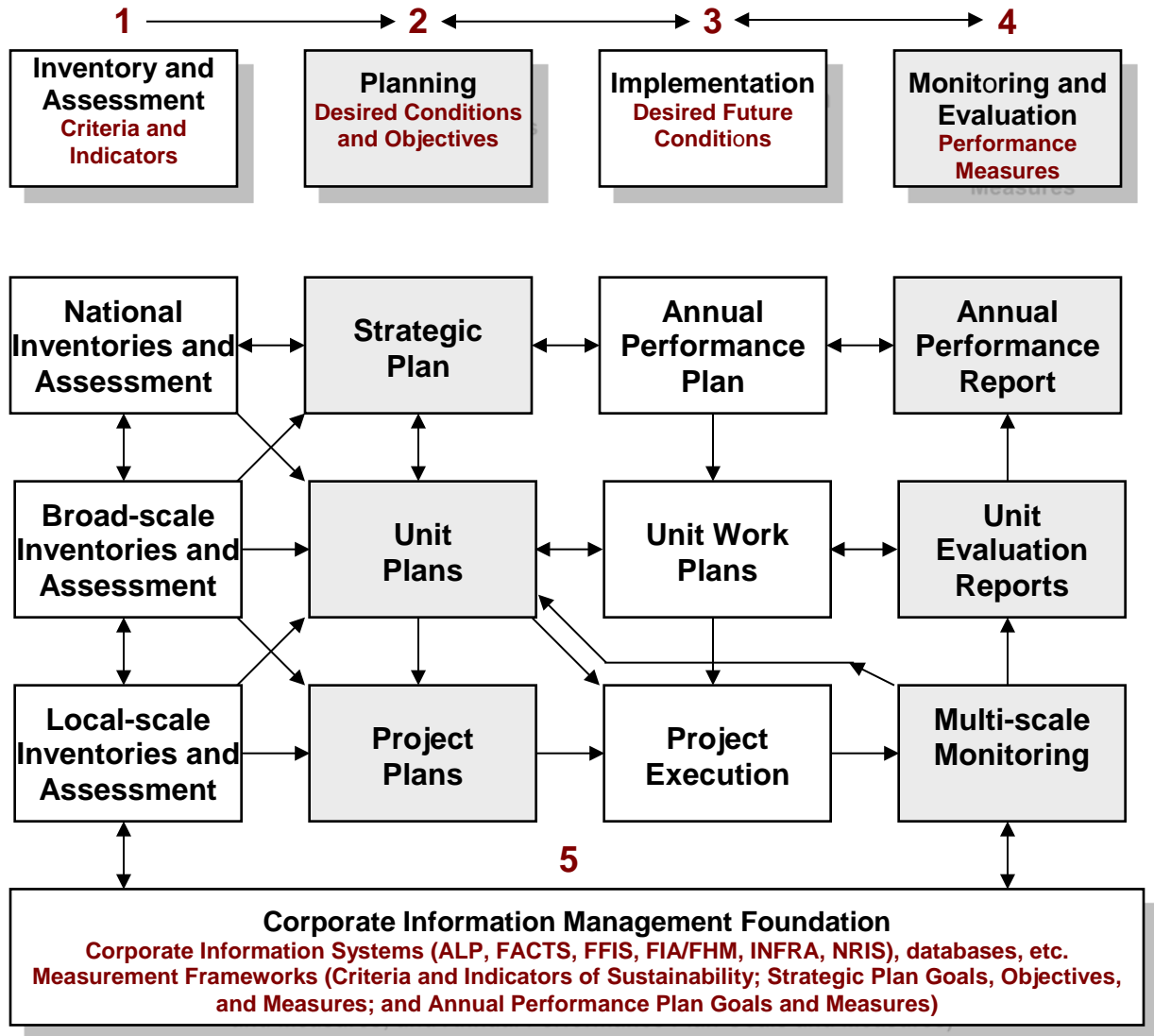
Forest Service Performance Accountability Process



SPRA – 10/8/03

1906 - Exhibit 02

Planning Overview



1906.1 - Long-Range Planning

The Forest Service has an integrated long-range planning process involving national, regional, and local levels.

1906.11 - National Planning

1906.11a - Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974 (RPA) Assessment

Every 10 years, the Forest Service conducts a renewable resource assessment (FSM 1905) of the forest and rangeland situation including timber, range, water, wildlife and fish, outdoor recreation, and wilderness. Based on emerging trends and projections, the Renewable Resource Planning Act (RPA) assessment informs decisionmaking processes, as well as identifies potential opportunities to meet the Nation's future needs.

1906.11b - Forest Service Strategic Plan

The Forest Service Strategic Plan presents a national plan to the Congress and the American people on what work the agency proposes to promote sustainable management of the Nation's forests, grasslands, prairies, or other comparable units. The Strategic Plan outlines goals and objectives to help guide the agency's National Forest System, Research and Development, and State and Private Forestry programs for 4 to 5 years. Long-term trend measures are identified to gauge progress toward achieving the stated goals and objectives. The strategic plan establishes a national strategic vision, using the Renewable Resource Planning Act (RPA) assessment of social, environmental, and economic trends.

1906.12 - Regional Planning [Reserved]

1906.13 - Localized Planning

1906.13a - Land Management Plans

Land management plans (LMP or plans) are now in place for all national forests, grasslands, and prairies. These plans provide a strategic vision for 10 to 15 years. They establish the desired conditions to be achieved through the management of National Forest System lands to best meet the needs of the American people. The plans blend national and regional priorities with local Forest capabilities and needs. Thus, each plan provides a vision of how its unit uniquely fits within a broader landscape and community context (FSM 1920). Responsible officials revise plans every 10 to 15 years based on a comprehensive evaluation of local conditions and trends.

1906.13b - Research and Development Plans

The Research and Development program is organized into research work units assigned to experiment stations and the Forest Products Laboratory.

Each research work unit has a detailed description of its planned work over a period of up to 5 years. A Station research plan is the sum total of all planned work in the research work units' plans. FSM 4000 specifies research planning requirements.

1906.13c - State and Tribal Forest Resources Planning

The states and tribes form the primary delivery system for the Forest Service's State and Private Forestry program. Because of this partnership, there is a special need to coordinate natural resource planning among all three entities in order to identify how national goals and objectives interact with state and tribal priorities. States prepare state forest resources plans for their own long-range planning purposes. However, these plans are also an integral part of the Forest Service planning framework for national program development and implementation.

1. State Forest Resources Plans. The State Forest Resources Plans are designed to fulfill the following roles:

- a. Provide a basis for effective state forestry participation in state and Federal natural resources planning.
- b. Serve program plans, not land-use plans.
- c. Identify forest resource needs, opportunities, and issues for all forest landownerships (state, private, tribal, Federal, and industrial).
- d. Define actions and program levels to assist state and private forest resources development to meet future demands.
- e. Emphasize the utilization of forest resources to diversify and strengthen the state's economic base.

2. Integrated Natural Resources Plans. Tribes prepare Integrated Natural Resources Plans for their own long-range planning purposes. However, these plans are also an integral part of the Forest Service's planning framework for national State and Private Forestry (S & PF) program development and implementation. The Tribal Integrated Natural Resources Plans are designed to fulfill the following roles:

- a. Provide a basis for effective tribal natural resource participation in state and Federal natural resources planning.
- b. May be program plans or land-use plans.
- c. Identify natural resource needs, opportunities, and issues for tribal landownerships and National Forest System (NFS) lands where tribes have treaty rights.

- d. Define actions and program levels to assist tribal natural resources development and management to meet future demands.
- e. Emphasize the use of natural resources to diversify and strengthen the tribe's economic base.

State and tribal natural resources planning and Forest Service land management planning should be well-coordinated and portray the respective contributions of Federal, state, tribal, private, and industrial lands to the overall state economy (FSM 3900).

1906.2 - Short-Range Tactical Planning

The focus of short-range plans is to design projects and activities under long-term guidance of the strategic plan, land management plans, or state and tribal resources plans. This includes analysis and evaluation of the projects and activities under the plans. Examples of National Forest System short-range tactical plans include timber sale action plans, watershed analyses, fire management action plans, roads analysis processes, and wilderness implementation schedules. Such plans and processes deal with the specifics of how to get the job done. Setting priorities and the scheduling of work are major considerations in short-range tactical planning.

1906.21 - Project Planning

Project-level plans describe on-the-ground projects and activities designed to achieve long-term objectives identified in the strategic plan and moving the planning area toward desired conditions or to meet public demand. Most site-specific projects and activities are designed to meet the objectives of the land management plan while reflecting current local issues and needs. Projects and activities are subject to the National Environmental Policy Act and other applicable laws and regulations. The level of required environmental analysis and planning to carry out a project is dictated by the scope and complexity of the project, public issues, and the project's potential effects on the human environment.

1906.22 - Program Development and Budgeting

The Program Development and Budget process is key to implementing plans. It is the framework used for setting priorities to determine what projects (including facilities and management services) are to be funded. An annual process is initiated with the Chief's direction to field units to submit budget proposals tied to the Forest Service Strategic Plan, annual performance plan, and as reflected in local plans. Budget proposals represent commitments by field units to achieve certain levels of accomplishments at specified costs. Budget proposal priorities and decisions are reviewed at many levels of government, including regional offices, research stations, Area Office, the Chief's Office, the Secretary's Office, the Office of Management and Budget, the Administration (in the annual budget to Congress), and finally, the Congress through the appropriations process.

Although the Agency's Strategic Plan and the Chief's annual formulation process serve as the bases for initial budget proposals, budget proposals are frequently adjusted to respond to current issues and administration and congressional priorities. Once an appropriation act becomes law, the budget becomes a firm commitment for which the Forest Service is held accountable for carrying out national priorities. Funds and workforce authorizations are allocated to field units based on their capabilities and opportunities as adjusted by the decisions made during the budgeting and appropriation processes (FSM 1930).

1909 - Handbooks

1909.1 - Servicewide Handbooks

1909.12 - Land Management Planning Handbook

The Land Management Planning Handbook is intended for use by line officer(s), planning teams, resource specialists, and others involved in planning. This handbook includes:

1. Procedural guidance for developing, amending, revising, and implementing land management plans and associated documents issued pursuant to the Title 36, Code of Federal Regulations, part 219, subpart A; and
2. Procedures for evaluating potential wilderness and wild and scenic rivers, and for documenting and processing these evaluations.

1909.13 - Program Development and Budgeting Handbook

This handbook provides detailed guidelines and procedures to carry out the program development and budgeting process.

1909.14 - Resource Inventory Handbook

This handbook identifies inventory-derived information that may be needed for future Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act (RPA) assessments and Forest Service land management planning. The handbook provides guidance to ensure that inventories of aesthetics, air, energy and mineral, fish and wildlife, land, recreation, soil, transportation, vegetation, water, and wilderness resources are conducted in efficient ways.

1909.15 - Environmental Policy and Procedures Handbook

This handbook provides the procedural guidelines for implementing those portions of the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations (CEQ) (40 CFR 1500-1508) pertaining to Forest Service activities.

1909.17 - Economic and Social Analysis Handbook

This handbook contains qualitative and quantitative procedures for economic and social evaluation.

1909.2 - Unit Handbooks

1909.21 - Land Management Planning Handbook

Regions may issue handbooks under this code to augment planning procedures. The title must be appropriate for the Region or sub-Region; for example, "FSH 1909.21 California Region, Land Management Planning Handbook."

1909.22 - Economic Analysis Handbook

Regions may issue handbooks under this code to augment national procedures on economic analysis.