

**Forest Service Manual  
National Headquarters - Washington Office  
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**Forest Service Manual 2000 – National Forest Resource Management  
Chapter 2060 - Ecosystem Classification, Interpretation, and Application**

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**Approved by:** James M. Peña, Associate Deputy Chief, NFS

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**Responsible Staff:**

**Last Change:** 2000-2011-2 to FSM 2000\_contents

**Superseded Document(s):** 2060, Amendment 2000-2010-1, November 24, 1991

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

**2060:** Makes minor technical and editorial changes throughout chapter.

**2060.3:** Adds one policy to include new Rangeland Interagency Ecological Site Handbook.

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### **2060.1 - Authority**

Ecosystem classification and inventory must conform to the requirements of the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974 (RPA) as amended by the National Forest Management Act of 1976 (NFMA), implementing regulations found in 36 CFR Part 219, the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and implementing regulations found in 40 CFR 1500-1508. See FSM 1901 for a summary of the Acts, FSM 1013 for the text of 36 CFR Part 219, FSH 1909.14, Resource Inventory Handbook, and 1909.15 for Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations implementing NEPA.

### **2060.2 - Objectives**

1. To provide an integrated ecosystem classification based on climatic regime, lithology, potential natural community, soils, and physiography to be used for mapping, analysis, monitoring, evaluation, planning, and data base linkages.
2. To provide a unifying ecosystem classification framework by implementing the National Hierarchical Framework of Ecological Units (NHFEU) for use in land and resource planning, assessment, and management for making interpretation of ecosystem responses to management, treatment, disturbances, and development over time.
3. To develop an ecologically-based classification system to aid in evaluating land capability, interpreting ecological relationships, and improving multiple-use management.
4. To cooperatively identify and define rangeland ecological sites for use in the inventory, monitoring, evaluation, and management of the nation's rangelands.

### **2060.3 - Policy**

1. Use the NHFEU (Cleland et al. 1997) as an organizing framework for ecological classification, ecological unit inventory, and to assess ecological conditions and trends.
2. Use the Terrestrial Ecological Unit Inventory Technical guide (Winthers et al. 2005) for ecological type classification to coordinate and integrate resource inventories, stratify land and resource production capability, and make predictions and interpretations for management.
3. Identify ecological units in inventory and use them in monitoring and evaluation, planning, and to make predictions and interpretations for resource management on National Forest System (NFS) lands.
4. Coordinate the characterization of ecological types and potential natural communities and the location and sampling of reference sites with other agencies.

5. Cooperate with other agencies and partners to identify, define, provide quality control and assurance, and manage rangeland ecological site descriptions for use in the inventory, monitoring, evaluation, and management of rangeland ecosystems based on minimum requirements listed in the Rangeland Interagency Ecological Site Manual.

<http://directives.sc.egov.usda.gov/OpenNonWebContent.aspx?content=27123.wba>.

6. Cooperate with other agencies and partners to implement a Rangeland Interagency Ecological Site Handbook.

<http://directives.sc.egov.usda.gov/viewerFS.aspx?hid=33150>.

#### **2060.4 - Responsibility**

##### **2060.41 - Regional Foresters and Station Directors**

Regional Foresters and Station Directors share the responsibility for:

1. Implementing standards for ecosystem classification and resource value assessment.
2. Ensuring the correlation of ecological type and site descriptions across regional lines and among other agencies.
3. Providing standards for development of interpretations of ecosystem relationships, responses, and values for ecological types and site descriptions.

##### **2060.42 - Regional Foresters**

Regional Foresters have responsibility for:

1. Implementing direction for the classification, inventory, and evaluation of ecosystem capability.
2. Ensuring that NHFEU and the Terrestrial Ecological Unit Inventory Technical Guide (TEUITG) are used in forest planning and in project implementation on National Forest System lands.
3. Ensuring the development and use of a list and description of landforms and/or a taxonomic key to landforms in each Region based on the service-wide GIS data standards for Geology and National Cooperative Soil Survey Glossary (1984). The list, descriptions, and keys must be correlated with adjacent regions.
5. Implementing TEUITG standards for application and interpretation of ecological types and site descriptions, and ensuring correlation of standards between Regions.

##### **2060.43 - Station Directors**

Station Directors have responsibility for providing direction for the use of ecosystem information in the nation-wide Forest Inventory and Analysis Program and research reports.