

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

**Forest Service Manual 3500 – Cooperative Watershed Management  
Chapter 3520 - River Basin Programs**

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**Approved by:** Mike Dombeck, Chief

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**Responsible Staff:**

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**Posting Instructions:** This is a technical amendment that converts the format and style of this FSM title from Applixware to the current corporate word processing application. Since this amendment replaces all text except Interim Directives (ID's), do not check for the last transmittal received for this title; instead place this transmittal sheet at the front of the title. DO NOT remove ID's when posting this amendment. ID's are not being reformatted at this time.

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

Please read the new posting instructions (above) carefully.

**3500:** The entire amendment text has been reformatted and replaced, so that the amendment text on the Service-wide Directives Home Page in the Forest Service Web/Intranet (<http://fsweb.wo.fs.fed.us/directives/index.html>) corresponds with the amendment text on the Forest Service Directives Home Page in the Forest Service World Wide Web/Internet (<http://www.fs.fed.us/im/directives>).

Although some minor typographical and technical errors have been corrected, substantive direction has not been changed.

**Table of Contents**

<b>3520.2 - Objectives .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>3520.3 - Policy .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>3520.4 - Responsibility .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>3520.41 - Soil Conservation Service .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>3520.42 - Forest Service .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>3520.42a - Cooperative Forestry .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>3520.42b - Regional Foresters and the Area Director.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>3520.42c - Station Directors.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>3520.6 - Reference.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>3521 - Management of River Basin Studies .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>3521.1 - Washington Advisory Committee .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>3521.2 - Field Advisory Committee.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>3521.3 - Forest Service Study Management.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>3521.31 - Program Accountability.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>3522 - River Basin Study Information and Reviews .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>3522.1 - Study Information .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>3522.2 - Reviews.....</b>	<b>6</b>

Cooperative river basin studies deal with specific needs of the requesting agency consistent with the mission and responsibilities of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Generally, the studies are limited in scope and of short duration. They provide specific information needed for problem solving.

### **3520.2 - Objectives**

1. To ensure the proper role of forestry in river basin programs and recognize the benefits from, and the impacts on Federal, other public, and private forest lands.
2. To improve the well-being of people and the quality of life through planned use of the Nation's water and land resources.
3. To identify and analyze alternative plans for the protection, management, and development of forest and forest-related resources.
4. To provide water and related land resources information to meet Forest Service and other agencies' or entities' planning needs.

### **3520.3 - Policy**

Provide technical and planning assistance to other agencies, Federal, State, or local entities in water-related resources matters pertaining to forestry.

### **3520.4 - Responsibility**

#### **3520.41 - Soil Conservation Service**

The Soil Conservation Service (SCS) administers the program providing overall direction, procedures, and guidance. The SCS State Conservationists administer the program in their respective States. The SCS chairs the Washington Advisory Committee and the Field Advisory Committee. The State Conservationist is responsible for meeting the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act, except in P.L. 639 plans where the Army Corps of Engineers may be responsible.

#### **3520.42 - Forest Service**

Forest Service responsibilities in river basin planning are broadly set forth in the Department's Administrative Regulations (7 CFR subtitles A, 260(a)(8)(i) and the Memorandum of Understanding between the Soil Conservation Service, Economic Research Service, and Forest Service (FSM 1540.72).

### **3520.42a - Cooperative Forestry**

The Director, Cooperative Forestry, Washington Office is responsible for Forest Service participation in this program including national coordination with the Soil Conservation Service and membership on the Washington Advisory Committee.

### **3520.42b - Regional Foresters and the Area Director**

Regional Foresters, except Region 9, and the Area Director are responsible for field activities in the river basin program including the technical adequacy of the forestry portion of study reports, coordination with the Soil Conservation Service's State Conservationist, membership on the Field Advisory Committee, and the necessary liaison with commissions, compacts, committees, and task forces.

### **3520.42c - Station Directors**

Station Directors shall provide forest inventory and analysis data as available and appropriate for the designated study area. Make available research staffs for consultation regarding watershed management, forest survey, and forest economics.

### **3520.6 - Reference**

The Soil Conservation Service's (SCS) National Basin and Area Planning Manual contains guidelines, operation procedures, and directions for the administration of the program.

## **3521 - Management of River Basin Studies**

### **3521.1 - Washington Advisory Committee**

At the national level, the Soil Conservation Service and Forest Service maintain a staff committee to:

1. Provide coordination and oversight of Department of Agriculture participation in river basin studies.
2. Review Department of Agriculture planning activities and develop procedures and recommendations for needed administrative adjustments.
3. Formulate Department of Agriculture guidelines, standards, and instructions of river basin surveys.
4. Review and evaluate survey proposals and recommend priorities for planning activities.
5. Review and coordinate agency funding needs for the river basin program.

6. Review and recommend approval of river basin survey plans of work.
7. Provide other coordination services including the preparation of consolidated reports.

### **3521.2 - Field Advisory Committee**

When a river basin is authorized for study, the Soil Conservation Service and Forest Service establish a Field Advisory Committee comprised of representatives of both agencies. The Field Advisory Committee shall:

1. Coordinate assigned river basin surveys and participate in plan formulation.
2. Maintain field liaison with other departments, agencies, State, and other concerned entities to ensure proper coordination of Department of Agriculture field work with that of other participants.
3. Prepare survey plan of work.
4. Interpret national guidelines, instructions, and procedures to meet the requirements of the survey in a uniform manner.
5. Prepare, justify, and recommend project budgets to the Washington Advisory Committee.
6. Prepare special reports on progress, expenditures, and problems as required by the Washington Advisory Committee and the parent agencies.
7. Provide field guidance for Department of Agriculture aspects of interagency coordinated program recommendations.
8. Accomplish other necessary coordination and programming functions as recommended by the Washington Advisory Committee.

### **3521.3 - Forest Service Study Management**

Regional Foresters and the Area Director shall: (1) staff and initiate the forestry portion of approved river basin studies; (2) participate in Coordinating Committee and Field Advisory Committee meetings; and (3) provide in-Service and interagency coordination.

#### **3521.31 - Program Accountability**

The plan of work, prepared at the beginning of a river basin study, is the basis for the Forest Service annual funding request and the accountability of work accomplished with this funding, as in a contract. The Field Advisory Committee must concur with changes from the planned work items, scheduled completion dates, or funding needs.

Cooperative Forestry, Washington Office, assigns a project accounting number at the start of each active study. Do not make any charges to a study until this number is issued.

Within the framework of the National Finance Center accounting structure, the Regional Foresters and Area Director shall maintain records of obligations, expenditures, and unobligated balances for each river basin study.

Regional Foresters and the Area Director shall provide information on Forest Service budget needs to the Field Advisory Committee for submission to the Washington Advisory Committee. Send a copy of this budget information to Cooperative Forestry, Washington Office.

### **3522 - River Basin Study Information and Reviews**

#### **3522.1 - Study Information**

Information in cooperative river basin study reports shall conform to: (1) Soil Conservation Service's National Basin and Area Planning Manual; and (2) the outputs and outline presented in the plan of work prepared for the study.

Cooperative study reports identifying potential projects that could be implemented under existing authorities are not action documents and, therefore, do not require environmental impact statements. However, appropriate chapters in study reports must include environmental descriptions and impact information. The Forest Service shall contribute forestry information to these chapters in study reports and to environmental impact statements for special reports that recommend implementation authorization for specific projects.

#### **3522.2 - Reviews**

The Field Advisory Committee coordinates the technical and policy reviews of study reports. The Soil Conservation Service's Technical Service Centers review and concur in draft study reports for the agency. Regional Foresters and the Area Director shall provide technical and policy review of forestry portions of study reports and agency comments and concurrence to the Field Advisory Committee. Staff other than the River Basin Planner should make this review. Send Cooperative Forestry, Washington Office, an information copy of the comments and concurrence.