

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

**Forest Service Manual 5409.12 – Appraisal Handbook**

**Zero Code**

**Amendment:** 5409.12-2021-4

**Effective date:** July 21, 2021

**Duration:** This amendment is effective until superseded or removed.

**Superseded Directive:** 5409.12,0 Code Contents Amendment 5409.12-2005-1, 02/14/2005;  
5409.12,0 Code Amendment 5409.12-2005, 02/14/2005

**Approved by:** Tina Johna Terrell, Associate Deputy Chief, NFS

**Date approved:** July 12, 2021

**Responsible Staff:**

**Posting Instructions:** Amendments are numbered consecutively by Handbook number 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 Handbook was 5409.12-2005-10 to 5409.12-60, 5409.12-2011-70.

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

**Digest:**

**07:** Updates to include current FSM 5410.8 reference.

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This Handbook is intended for use by Forest Service staff appraisers and by other Lands personnel concerned with real property valuation. This Handbook may also be used as a reference by staff appraisers dealing with private contract appraisers.

### **03 - Policy**

1. Match Assignment Complexity to Qualifications. The Regional Appraiser shall assign each appraisal to an appraiser with the training and experience necessary to process the appropriate appraisal approaches into sound, supported estimates of value. In making appraisal assignments, the Regional Appraiser shall consider the following:

- a. Complex Assignments. Assign appraisals for high value properties, large properties, improved properties, partial interests (including road rights-of-way), and condemnation only to qualified appraisers (FSM 5410.6).
- b. Assignments for Apprentice Appraisers. Do not assign Apprentice Appraisers who have not met the qualification requirements described in FSM 5410.6 to complete appraisals independently. However, Apprentice Appraisers may appraise low value, noncomplex properties provided they do so either under the supervision of or in collaboration with a qualified staff appraiser. Apprentice Appraisers may assist a qualified staff appraiser in appraising more complex properties and must be identified in the report as having contributed to the appraisal process.

### **05 - Definitions**

Except where specifically noted, the real estate terms used are as defined in the terminology publications of the sponsor organizations of The Appraisal Foundation.

1. Appraiser. (FSM 5410).
2. Private Contract Appraiser. (FSM 5410).
3. Staff Appraiser. (FSM 5410).

### **06 - Qualifications and Training**

1. Qualifications. Consult FSM 5410.6 for training and experience required to qualify as an appraiser.
2. In-Service Training. In addition to out-Service appraisal schools, schedule formal Regional or professional association appraisal training sessions or workshops at least annually. Such training should correlate out-Service training with Forest Service requirements and experience, and should address recurring aspects of appraising unique to the Forest Service or procedures or concepts not sufficiently covered for

Forest Service needs by out-Service courses. Schedule Regional training far enough in advance to include it on the Washington Office travel schedule.

3. Other Training and Self-study. In addition to taking formal appraisal courses and participating in Forest Service training, appraisers and review appraisers should subscribe to and read pertinent appraisal publications. They should participate in national meetings, local chapter meetings, and training programs of appraisal organizations. Appraisers should also attend and observe actual condemnation trials, preferably Federal cases.

## **07 - References**

See Forest Service Manual 5410.8 for a list of references associated with appraisals.