Modernization Accomplishments & Highlights

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- The Timber Management for Line Officers (TMLO) Training is back! This year’s course will be held virtually July 12-15, 2021. Today’s line officers come from a variety of backgrounds and may not have experience with a complex timber management program. The TMLO training will guide line officers through the timber program from initial planning to sale closure. We will discuss the required tasks at each step in the process as well as the authorities and responsibilities of the line officer. Please see the attached call letter for more details.

- The FPM team kicked off a series of virtual road shows in Region 5 on March 3rd and Region 2 on April 22nd. We had great attendance at both events, with more than 80 participants from Region 5 and more than 150 participants in Region 2, representing a variety of roles and disciplines. Portions of both events were recorded for those who were not able to attend live.
  - Region 2 recordings: Region 2 Part 1 and Region 2 Part 2

The next stops on the road show are Region 6 and Region 4 later this year. We will share more information on those as details are confirmed.

Technology

- FScruiser V3 is now available! This is the latest generation mobile timber cruising application for the Forest Service’s 30-year-old National Cruise System. FScruiser V3 (Android) replaces FScruiser V2 (Microsoft Windows Mobile), used daily by hundreds of agency and contract field crews to sample and record timber measurement information used for Forest Service timber sale appraisals and contracts. FScruiser and the National Cruise System are also used by many of our partners, including the BLM and state natural resource management agencies.
**Business Practices**

- Eleven training modules on various Perms & Trusts topics are now live in AgLearn. You can access these trainings by searching in AgLearn for “FS-National-2430”. An additional 15 modules are under development and should be live in AgLearn by the end of FY2021. In addition, we offer Perms & Trusts webinars every few weeks. The webinar recordings can be accessed at [https://usfs.box.com/s/to5uw02xkz59ign1fikyhkptdmf51f8](https://usfs.box.com/s/to5uw02xkz59ign1fikyhkptdmf51f8).

- Several brand new trainings are in development, including a training package specifically for line officers, financial management training focused on the accounting adjustments related to P&T funds, and a training on the Impacts of the National Program Support Rate (being reduced in FY22). The next webinar is scheduled for July 20, 2021 ([Teams meeting link](#)) and will cover Reduced National Program Support Rate and its impact on the CWKV Annual Balance Analysis. Contact Jeff Matthews [jeff.matthews@usda.gov](mailto:jeff.matthews@usda.gov) for more information.

**Next Steps and Actions Underway**

**People**

- Last winter we hired 105 Forester or Forestry Technicians as part of the Forest Service’s [Society of American Foresters (SAF) National Hiring Event](#). Many of these new foresters and technicians have just graduated and starting their first field season under the Pathways program. Please keep your eye out mid-summer for the Call for Positions to be submitted for next Fall’s SAF Hiring Event. This is an excellent opportunity to fill entry level Forester and Forest Technician positions from a large candidate pool (1600+ applicants last year). Pathways Recent Graduates do not convert to permanent positions until a year of successful work, so are an excellent opportunity for Forests to hire and plan prior to expected vacancies.

**Technology**

- **Coming soon: National Timber Sale Dashboard.** In 2019, timber purchasers requested a single online platform where they could get information on sales available for bid. WO Forest Management staff is working with the USDA CIO to finalize and publish a public timber sale dashboard on the national FS website, which will be the first Tableau Public dashboard published by the Forest Service. The dashboard will not replace National Forests’ timber sale web pages; rather it will aggregate information from TIM and display all sales currently up for bid on a single map, linking to Forests’ web pages.

**Business Practices**

- The Forest Products staff is in the final stages of mapping the business processes used to implement a timber sale or stewardship contract that involves timber (IRTC, IRSC). This mapping exercise will not only display the most efficient path to take to prepare a timber sale, but will also
allow us to learn which action items are the most costly, most time consuming or even may be unnecessary. Forests will be able to use this mapping to compare their current practices to what is outlined in the new directives.

- Also, The Forest Products staff is working on two workflow automation pilots using the Microsoft Office 365 (0365) suite of tools. 0365 offers many automation tools that could help the agency map, norm and automate project workflows for timber sales and restoration projects, while enhancing integration and collaboration within the agency and with partners. In FY21, we are initiating two micro pilots, a Forest Products Training calendar with registration automation and automated silviculture task book review and approval.

Policy

- The first batch of revised Timber Management directives (Batch 1) are nearing the finish line and are expected to be issued in late July. The draft directives were published for a 30-day public comment period in October 2020. [View comments received](#). Batch 1 includes five chapters of FSM 2400, “Timber Management,” five chapters of FSH 2409.15, “Timber Sale Administration Handbook,” and a new Handbook, FSH 2409.18a, “Non-procurement Debarment and Suspension Procedures.”

Among the changes in the first batch are new policy for use of Stewardship and Good Neighbor Authorities (GNA), new authority for stewardship contracts up to 20 years in length, lower minimum rates for timber, an increase in free use material that can be granted to individuals and authority for free use of forest products to Federally Recognized Tribes. We will send a special FPM update once the final directives have been issued.

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Learn more about Forest Products Modernization:


FPM SharePoint site (internal link): [https://usdagcc.sharepoint.com/sites/fs-fm-fpm/SitePages/Home.aspx](https://usdagcc.sharepoint.com/sites/fs-fm-fpm/SitePages/Home.aspx)

Have a question or an idea? Send us an email: SM.FS.fp-modern@usda.gov