

Forest Service Checklist for Planning Green Onsite Events

Federal policy, including [Executive Order 13693, Planning for Federal Sustainability in the Next Decade](#), and Federal Travel Regulations encourage sustainable events. Forest Service Handbook (FSH 6509.33 Chapter 300) also states, “It is the responsibility of the Forest Service Deputy Chiefs to...Ensure units manage resources in an environmentally positive way, which includes giving preference to virtual events and facilities which consume less energy.”

This checklist guides event coordinators in reducing the environmental footprint of onsite events (i.e., all participants are in-person at a single location) by providing sustainable actions to consider and related resources. This also supports “Getting to YES” on the FS Climate Change Scorecard, Element 10 v2.0, Core Action 5, which asks units to: “Incorporate sustainable practices into onsite events and/or replace some onsite events that require travel with hybrid or virtual events.”

The [Greening Your Events website](#) has more resources for all event types and checklists for virtual and hybrid events.

Fill out the [Green Event Feedback Form](#) after your event, so we can learn from your efforts.

Actions for Green Onsite Events	Resources
<input type="checkbox"/> Conduct a cost, time, and greenhouse gas emissions comparison analysis to holding your event virtually.	GSA’s Federal Planner Toolbox overview
<input type="checkbox"/> Develop an environmental statement for the event and include that in event materials, so participants are aware of the green aspects.	MeetGreen Sustainability Policy template
<input type="checkbox"/> Site event near an airport/public transit to reduce travel distances and the need for automobile rentals, and inform attendees of environmentally-preferable transit and travel options.	Best Places to Meet Green
<input type="checkbox"/> If lodging and/or non-FS meeting space is required, use LEED or other green-certified facility and encourage attendees to stay at hotels certified by “green” lodging standards.	LEED (Leadership in Energy & Env. Design) US. Green Building Council Green Venue Selection Guide Green hotel programs: Green Seal Lodging List , Green Key Global , Energy Star hotels Example Sustainable Venue Questionnaire
<input type="checkbox"/> Ensure venue meets accessibility standards and provide for accessibility as required (e.g., sign language interpreter).	Guide for Accessible Meetings (DOJ)
<input type="checkbox"/> Use online media (websites, email, etc.) to market the event and, if relevant, for event registration (to minimize paper and printing).	
<input type="checkbox"/> Minimize paper handouts and ensure all documents are printed double-sided on 100% post-consumer recycled, chlorine-free paper labeled as such. If possible, use biobased inks.	EPA Paper Recycling
<input type="checkbox"/> If food is provided, purchase locally-produced, organic/ sustainably-produced food and provide vegetarian options.	Local Harvest
<input type="checkbox"/> Provide condiments, etc. in bulk serving containers to minimize individual packaging.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Use reusable dishes, utensils, and cloth napkins. If reusable options are not feasible, use Biobased or BioPreferred products.	USDA BioPreferred Program
<input type="checkbox"/> Provide recycling and composting bins in meeting rooms.	National Recycling Coalition Green Meeting Reference
<input type="checkbox"/> Arrange to donate leftover food to a nonprofit (or other) organization after the event (otherwise compost food waste).	EPA Food Waste Basics
<input type="checkbox"/> Use an electronic evaluation format for participants to provide feedback after the event (and to reduce paper evaluations).	FS Green Event Participant Evaluation (coming soon)
<input type="checkbox"/> Share successes, barriers, and challenges to meet and implement the actions in this checklist, so others can learn from your efforts.	FS Green Event Feedback Form