**Forest Service Checklist for Planning Green Hybrid Events**

Federal policy, including [Executive Order 13693, *Planning for Federal Sustainability in the Next Decade*](https://www.federalregister.gov/articles/2015/03/25/2015-07016/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 impact of hybrid events (i.e., some participants gather in one or more locations and others join remotely) by providing 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* Web site**](http://www.fs.fed.us/about-agency/greening-your-events)has more resources for all event types and checklists for onsite and virtual events.

Fill out the [Green Event Feedback Form](http://www.fs.fed.us/sites/default/files/green-event-feedback-form-v1.pdf) after your event, so we can learn from your efforts.

| Overall Actions for Green Hybrid Events | Resources |
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| * 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](http://meetgreen.com/resources/sustainability-policy-template/) |
| * Train event organizers or technology moderators in how to effectively use virtual technologies to engage participants (e.g., VTC, LiveMeeting, Adobe Connect, Skype for Business, SharePoint, and AT&T). | [FSTEAMS Collaboration Site](https://ems-team.usda.gov/sites/fs) (Adobe Connect, Skype for Business, and LiveMeeting resources)  [FS VideoTeleConference](https://ems-portal.usda.gov/sites/fs-cio/service-catalog/Pages/Video-Teleconferencing.aspx) |
| * Arrange for a facilitator familiar with hybrid events to ensure good pacing, transitions, polling, Q&A, and other interactive or engaging components, facilitating for both sets of attendees. | Learn how: [Success Factors for Virtual Meetings](https://www.facilitate.com/support/facilitator-toolkit/docs/Six-Critical-Success-Factors-for-Successful-Virtual-Meetings.pdf) (see more resources on the [Greening Your Events Web site](http://www.fs.fed.us/about-agency/greening-your-events/resources-support)).  OR Hire [Digital Visions](https://ems-team.usda.gov/sites/fs-rd-vms/SitePages/Home.aspx) or [InRe](http://fsweb.wo.fs.fed.us/inre/index.shtml) Enterprise Team for virtual event hosting/facilitation. |
| * Switch up the format often (present, discuss, poll, etc.), show presenters on webcam, engage participants often, and take breaks.   Integrate social media or other ways for onsite and virtual participants to network and engage with each other (as relevant). | [Guide for Effective Virtual Meetings](http://www.sae.org/standardsdev/virt_meetings.pdf)  [FS Virtual Event Logistics Planning Template](http://www.fs.fed.us/sites/default/files/fs-virtual-event-logistics-planning-v1.docx) |
| * Ensure broadcast location(s) has adequate internet/phone line connections to host the virtual event component and complete a run-through to test the setup. | [Webinar Run-through Checklist](http://www.fs.fed.us/sites/default/files/webinar_runthrough_checklist.docx) |
| * Use online media (Web sites, email, etc.) to market the event and, if relevant, for event registration (to minimize paper and printing). |  |
| * Integrate green tips in the online registration process, so that virtual attendees are aware of the sustainability measures they may implement from their remote location. |  |
| * Use an electronic evaluation format for participants to provide feedback after the event (and to reduce paper evaluations). | [FS Virtual and Hybrid Event Participant Evaluation Form](http://www.fs.fed.us/sites/default/files/media_wysiwyg/virtual-hybrid-participant-evaluation.pdf) |
| * Calculate and document the cost- and travel time-savings and greenhouse gas emissions avoided from reduced travel to and from this event (due to the hybrid format). | [FS Virtual and Hybrid Event GHG and Travel Cost Estimator Spreadsheet](http://www.fs.fed.us/sites/default/files/media_wysiwyg/virtual-hybrid-event-ghg-travel-cost-estimator-v1.xlsx) |
| * Document successes, barriers, and challenges to meet and implement the environmentally preferable and virtual goals and measures of the event. | [FS Green Event Feedback Form](http://www.fs.fed.us/sites/default/files/green-event-feedback-form-v1.pdf) |

| Other Actions for the Onsite Component | Resources |
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| * Site event location(s) near an airport and 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](http://www.bestplacestomeetgreen.com/) |
| * If lodging and/or non-FS meeting space is required, use a LEED or other green-certified facility, and encourage attendees to stay at hotels certified by “green” lodging standards. | [LEED](http://www.usgbc.org/LEED/) (Leadership in Energy & Env. Design)  [US. Green Building Council Green Venue Selection Guide](http://www.usgbc.org/Docs/Archive/General/Docs6275.pdf)  Green hotel programs: [Green Seal Lodging List](http://www.greenseal.org/FindGreenSealProductsandServices/HotelsandLodgingProperties.aspx), [Green Key Global,](http://www.greenkeyglobal.com/) [Energy Star hotels](http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?fuseaction=labeled_buildings.locator)  [Example Sustainable Venue Questionnaire](http://www2.aashe.org/heasc/resources/sus_meetings/Sustainable_Meetings_and_Conferences_Questionnaire-June_07.doc) |
| * 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](http://www3.epa.gov/epawaste/conserve/tools/cpg/products/paperproducts.htm) |
| * If food is provided, purchase locally-produced, organic/ sustainably-produced food and provide vegetarian options. | [Local Harvest](http://www.localharvest.org/) |
| * Provide condiments, etc. in bulk serving containers to minimize individual packaging. |  |
| * Use reusable dishes, utensils, and cloth napkins. If reusable options are not feasible, use Biobased or BioPreferred products. | [USDA BioPreferred Program](http://www.biopreferred.gov/BioPreferred/) |
| * Provide recycling and composting bins in meeting rooms. | [National Recycling Coalition Green Meeting Reference](http://www.fs.fed.us/sustainableoperations/greenteam-toolkit/documents/NationalRecyclingCollolitionGreenMeetingsReference.pdf) |
| * Arrange to donate leftover food to a nonprofit (or other) organization after the event (otherwise compost food waste). | [EPA Sustainable Management of Food Site](http://www2.epa.gov/sustainable-management-food) |
| * Ensure venue(s) meets accessibility standards and provide for accessibility as required (e.g., sign language interpreter). | [Guide for Accessible Meetings (DOJ)](http://www.ada.gov/business/accessiblemtg.pdf) |

| Other Actions for the Virtual Component | Resources |
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| * Provide handouts in the online platform, and instruct attendees to access the files electronically vs. printing. | [FSTEAMS Collaboration Site](https://ems-team.usda.gov/sites/fs) (Adobe Connect, Skype for Business, and LiveMeeting resources) |
| * Encourage attendees to consider sustainable options for their lunch and snacks, e.g., locally sourced, organic, reusable container. | [Local Harvest](http://www.localharvest.org/) |
| * Provide accessibility features, such as live captions and keyboard commands for live event and in recordings. | [Resources for accessibility on the *Greening Your Events* site](http://www.fs.fed.us/about-agency/greening-your-events/resources-support)  [Tips for Accessible Virtual Events with focus on using Adobe Connect](http://www.fs.fed.us/sites/default/files/accessible-virtual-events-tips-april-2016.pdf) |