



National Policy Summary Analysis

Proposed Modernization of Land Management Planning Directives

The Land Management Planning Directives consist of Forest Service Manual 1920, “Land Management Planning,” and 1909.12, “Land Management Planning Handbook”. The Planning Directives are a collection of ten chapters that provide procedural guidance for implementing land management planning pursuant to the 2012 National Forest System Land Management Planning Rule (77 FR 21165, April 9, 2012). The primary users of these directives are interdisciplinary team members and line officers responsible for land management plans.

The agency will draw on over a decade of experience implementing Planning Directives to ensure a consistent national framework while empowering local leaders with greater flexibility to make decisions closer to the ground. Streamlining the planning directives is intended to improve operations efficiency, strengthen stewardship outcomes, promote local innovation, and empower line officers.

The streamlined Planning Directives will consolidate required direction, eliminate unnecessary process and improve efficiency in land management planning. The updated Planning Manual will retain the minimum requirements established in the Planning Rule while removing burdensome internal procedures.

Overall, this effort seeks to simplify internal guidance, reduce procedural hurdles, and empower line officers to act quickly and innovatively. Creating an environment where policy flexibility supports operational adaptability will enable plans to be completed without delays.

What would modernizing the planning directives accomplish?

National forest and grassland supervisors would be able to use the modernized planning directives to improve decision-making and operational efficiency. This approach:

- Helps the Forest Service make timely, science-based decisions that support active forest management, reduce wildfire risk, strengthen forest health, and provide a reliable, sustainable supply of timber and other natural resources.
- Provides greater flexibility for local leaders while maintaining national consistency in land management planning
- Streamlines internal planning procedures to reduce unnecessary process and increase efficiency

What are the substantive elements of this modernization?

The modernized Forest Service Manual will retain the minimum statutory requirements of the National Forest Management Act and the 2012 Planning Rule. The Forest Service through the 2012 Planning Rule is required to:

- Establish planning procedures
- Establish requirements for national best management practices for water quality
- Establish procedures for obtaining inventory data on various renewable resources
- Establish procedures for estimating the quantity of timber that can be removed

annually in perpetuity on a sustained-yield basis and exceptions.

The modernized directives will provide focused guidance in a single, consolidated Land Management Planning manual that makes it easier to apply planning requirements consistently across geographic areas and remove process requirements to allow for local innovation and efficiency.

How can Tribes request consultation?

Tribal governments may request consultation with national, regional, and local Forest Service consulting officials. The National Office of Tribal Relations will coordinate consultation requests by email at SM.FS.otrtribalcon@usda.gov.

Where can I find more information?

This summary analysis, and information regarding other agency actions, is available on the Forest Service Office of Tribal Relations website:

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/working-with-us/tribal><https://www.fs.usda.gov/working-with-us/tribal-relations/national-consultation>

For any other questions or comments, please email: Brad Kinder, Deputy Director for Ecosystem Management Coordination:
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