



Land Management Planning under the 2012 Planning Rule

**Northern Region
November 2016**





Background for Rule and Directives 1/2

- 1976—National Forest Management
- 1982—Planning Rule as amended
- 1990—Critique of Land Management Planning
- 1998—Ohio Forestry Assoc. V. Sierra Club
- 1999— Committee of Scientists Report
- 2000 – Planning Rule
- 2002—Process Predicament.





Background for Rule and Directives 2/2

- 2002—Overview of Decisionmaking (OGC)
- 2003— Plan Model
- 2005—Planning Rule
- 2008—Ecological Restoration Policy (FSM 2020)
- 2008—Planning Rule
- 2011—Watershed Condition Framework
- 2012—National Best Management Practices Program





Planning Regulations

1982 vs. 2012

- 1982 Regulations – Initial plans developed were generally output oriented with standards and guidelines to minimize adverse effects
- However, revisions using 1982 regulations incorporate ecological principles as the best science to meet the purposes of the rule.

Plans “provide for multiple use and sustained yield of goods and services from the NFS in a way that maximizes long term public benefits in an environmentally sound manner”...from the purposes and principles of the 1982 regulations





Planning Regulations 1982 vs. 2012

- 2012 Regulations – Outcome oriented and guide ***proactive*** contributions to ecological, social, and economic sustainability

“The purpose of this part is to guide the collaborative and science-based development, amendment, and revisions of land management plans that promote the ecological integrity of the national forests and grasslands and other administrative units of the NFS.”

(36 CFR 219.1)





Purpose of Plans

National Forest System lands---

1. Are ecologically sustainable (ecosystem integrity)
2. Contribute to social and economic sustainability
3. Have diversity of plant and animal communities (avoid need to list species of conservation concern)
4. Provide ecosystem services and multiple uses
5. Have range of benefits for the present and future

36 CFR 219.1





Best Practices of Planning

The planning rule based on best practices:

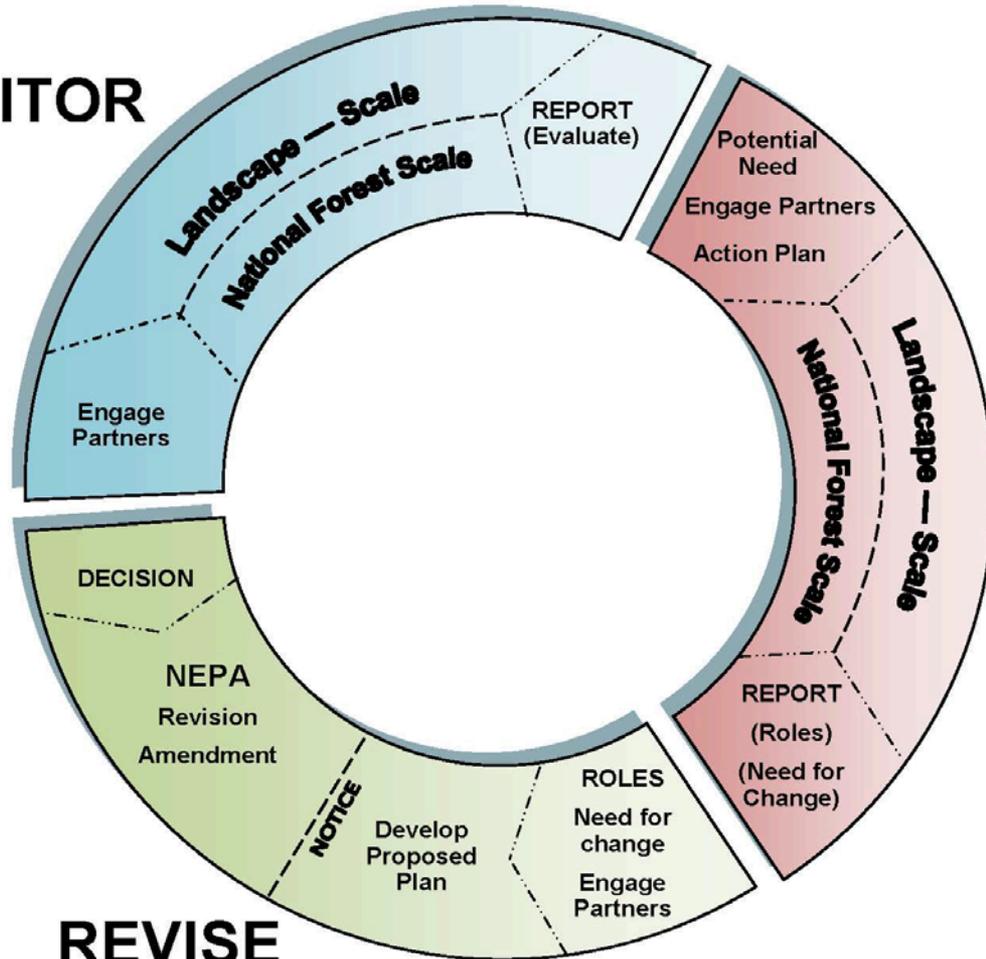
1. Includes assessments
2. Focus on restoration
3. Consider climate change
4. Use collaborative processes when appropriate
5. Consider landscape-scale context
6. Use science to inform process
7. Use coarse filter/fine filter approach for maintaining diversity.





The Planning Framework

MONITOR



ASSESS

REVISE
(or Amend)





Nature of a Plan

- A framework that guides and constrains
- Like a zoning ordinance that enforces limits
- Does not authorize any project
- Does not commit to any action
- Establishes sideboards within which the Forest Service makes project decisions.
- Direction for the Forest Service, not the public
- See 36 CFR 219.2(b)





Plan Model





Required Plan Components

- Desired Conditions - VISION
- Objectives - STRATEGY
- Suitability of lands - STRATEGY
- Standards – DESIGN CRITERIA
- Guidelines – DESIGN CRITERIA





Business Model of Planning





Determining consistency

36 CFR 219.15(d)

Every project and activity must be consistent with the applicable plan components. A project or activity approval document must describe how the project or activity is consistent with applicable plan components developed or revised in conformance with this part by meeting the following criteria:





Desired Conditions and Objectives

The project or activity contributes to the maintenance or attainment of one or more goals, desired conditions, or objectives, or does not foreclose the opportunity to maintain or achieve any goals, desired conditions, or objectives, over the long term.





Standards and Guidelines

Standards. The project or activity complies with applicable standards.

Guidelines. The project or activity:

- (i) Complies with applicable guidelines as set out in the plan; or
- (ii) Is designed in a way that is as effective in achieving the purpose of the applicable guidelines (§ 219.7(e)(1)(iv)).





Suitability

A project or activity would occur in an area:

- (i) That the plan identifies as suitable for that type of project or activity; or
- (ii) For which the plan is silent with respect to its suitability for that type of project or activity.





One Forest Example

Instructions for addressing desired conditions: A desired condition may or may not be relevant or applicable for a specific project or a specific alternative. If a desired condition is relevant, answer the following question and provide a summary of the rationale that was used. In addition, provide a page or section reference from the EA/EIS and/or specialist report where more detail may be found on the rationale for the conclusion. If concerns are raised (through public comment or IDT discussions) regarding non-relevant desired conditions, provide a summary rationale for the determination.

Question: Would the alternative:

- 1) Make progress towards helping to achieve the desired condition;

If the alternative would not contribute toward achieving the desired condition, would it prevent attainment of it?

Specifically, would the alternative:

- 2) Be neutral towards helping to achieve the desired condition;
- 3) Have a negative, short-term impact towards the desired condition; or
- 4) Have a negative, minor impact toward the desired condition?

Desired Condition	Forest Plan Page	Description
VEGETATION		
FW-DC-VEG-01	11	The composition of the forest is within the desired ranges for the dominance groups illustrated in figure 2. More of the forest is dominated by western white pine, ponderosa pine, western larch, and whitebark pine. Conversely, less of the forest is dominated by grand fir, western hemlock, western redcedar, Douglas-fir, and subalpine fir. Although they are not depicted in figure 2, more hardwood trees occur in the Forest such as quaking aspen, black cottonwood, and paper birch.
		Response:
FW-DC-VEG-02	12	FW-DC-VEG-02. The structure of the forest is within the desired ranges for each size class illustrated in figure 3. More of the forest is dominated by stands occurring in the large size class. Less of the forest is dominated by stands that occur in the small and medium size classes.
		Response: