



USER'S GUIDE TO THE CIMARRON AND COMANCHE NATIONAL GRASSLANDS PLAN

U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service
Pike and San Isabel National Forests
Cimarron and Comanche National Grasslands
2840 Kachina Dr.
Pueblo, CO 81008



Photo by Steve Olson

USER'S GUIDE FOR THE CIMARRON AND COMANCHE NATIONAL GRASSLANDS PLAN

Contents

User's Guide to the Cimarron and Comanche National Grasslands Plan	1
Contents.....	ii
Initial Questions	3
Why revise the PSICC Plan?	3
Why does this Plan look so different from the 1984 Plan?.....	3
Where's the EIS?.....	4
What's this EA?.....	4
What's a FONSI?.....	4
Where is the comprehensive evaluation report?	5
The New Plan Organization	5
About Part 1: Vision (desired conditions, special areas).....	5
About Part 2: Strategy (objectives, suitability of areas).....	6
About Part 3: Design Criteria (guidelines).....	7
About Monitoring Questions and Performance Measures	7
Organization and Content within the Three Parts of the Plan	7
How Do You Know What's Working? Plan Monitoring!	9
The Plan Monitoring Program	9
Responses to Monitoring Results	9
Putting the Plan to Work	10
How do the five components of the Plan work together?.....	10
What's suitable where?.....	11
I want to use my OHV in Vogel Canyon. Can I?.....	11
How many acres would be prescribed burned each year?.....	11
Where would the Forest Service carry out prescribed burns?	11
How would you monitor progress towards desired conditions?	12
How does the Grasslands Plan affect existing decisions?	12
Oil and Gas Development.....	12
Rangeland Management	13
Collaboration and Public Involvement	14
An Objection Process, not an Appeal Process	14
Where to Get the Plan, the EA, FONSI, and Related Documents	15
Resources for More Information	15
Works Cited.....	16

This user's guide begins to answer some questions that we've been hearing, and questions that we've had ourselves, since we began developing the Cimarron and Comanche National Grasslands Land Management Plan (Grasslands Plan). Most of them are about the new planning rule, released in January 2005. This new rule, the National Forest System Land Management Planning, Final Rule¹ (2005 Planning Rule) brings about changes in some of the key elements of planning. One of the most obvious of those changes is how the Plan looks: the size, layout, and contents.

The first part of this user's guide directly addresses some of those questions. The second part reviews the new organization of the Grasslands Plan. The third part gives information about using the Plan and its relationship with some existing decisions, and the fourth part sets out some of the new changes in public involvement and responding to the Plan. The final section lists some places to get more information and to access some of the documents referred to.

The actual 2005 Planning Rule is a readable seven pages. The pages preceding the rule (the preamble) explain the rule's development and give an overview of the rule itself. This section also includes a summary of comments (that were received about the proposed rule) and responses to those comments.

The Plan and associated materials can be accessed at http://www.fs.fed.us/r2/psicc/projects/forest_revision/index.shtml.

Initial Questions

Why revise the PSICC Plan?

The National Forest Management Act (NFMA) requires that all land and resource management plans (Plans) are revised every 10-15 years. The Pike and San Isabel National Forests, Cimarron and Comanche National Grasslands (PSICC) Land and Resource Management Plan was completed in 1984 (1984 Plan).²

Now the Cimarron and Comanche National Grasslands has its own free-standing Plan. A revision of the 1984 Plan for the Pike and San Isabel National Forests is underway.

Why does this Plan look so different from the 1984 Plan?

The Cimarron and Comanche National Grasslands (Grasslands) is the first Forest Service unit in the nation to develop and release a plan under the 2005 Planning Rule. This is the

¹ U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service. 2005. National Forest System land management planning, final rule, part 219. Washington, D.C.: Federal Register. 70(3):1023-1061 [January 5, 2005]. Hereafter, references to the 2005 Planning Rule will include both CFR and Federal Register information.

² U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service. 1984. Land and resource management plan – Pike and San Isabel National Forests; Comanche and Cimarron National Grasslands. Pueblo, CO: Pike and San Isabel National Forests and Cimarron and Comanche National Grasslands, Supervisor's Office. 4 vols. + appendices.

main reason that the Grasslands Plan looks so different from the 1984 Plan.

Some major differences you might notice:

- It's shorter!
- There is a longer discussion of the overall vision for resources of the Grasslands, expressed as "desired conditions."
- We've included a short history of the Grasslands, to recognize continuity with our unique past.
- There's no EIS.
- There are no "standards." (But there are guidelines.)
- We have excluded policies, practices, and procedures that are more appropriately addressed in the agency's directive system or through other guidance material.

The Grasslands Plan is the context for subsequent project and activity decisions. It is not a final decision. It focuses on outcomes, rather than on outputs. For project-level activities, there will be public involvement as specific decisions are made, such as changes to oil and gas leasing, allotment management plans, or specific projects (for example, treating nonnative invasive plant species like tamarisk).

Where's the EIS?

Plans, like this Grasslands Plan, that are developed under the 2005 Planning Rule are strategic and aspirational, rather than prescriptive like the previous Plans were. The 2005 Planning Rule anticipated that because plans like the Grasslands Plan would not have on-the-ground effects they could be categorically excluded from NEPA documentation.

What's this EA?

We anticipated that the categorical exclusion would be established by the time our Grasslands Plan was released for the 90-day public comment period initiated in December 2005. This didn't happen, so, in the absence of a categorical exclusion, it was decided to release an environmental assessment (EA) and finding of no significant impact (FONSI) with the Grasslands Plan. The EA shows that the Grasslands Plan has no significant effects on the human environment. It summarizes key points from the Grasslands Plan; the "no action" alternative is the existing 1984 Plan.

What's a FONSI?

A finding of no significant impact (FONSI) is a decision document that states that, based on the analyses and results of the EA, no significant impacts to the human environment would occur in the project in question.

Where is the comprehensive evaluation report?

Before we began writing the Grasslands Plan, resource specialists did many evaluations, assessments, and analyses. These formed the foundation of the Grasslands Plan contents. Together they make up our initial comprehensive evaluation report (CER). They include evaluations of current ecological, economic, and social conditions and trends that contribute to sustainability.

Every five years the CER must be updated. Changes from the conditions and trends in previous evaluations must be described, and may be based on monitoring, surveys, assessments, analyses, or other appropriate studies. Based on a review of the updated CER, changes may be made to the Grasslands Plan or to the monitoring program (the monitoring questions and performance measures in the Plan).³

The New Plan Organization

The Grasslands Plan contains the five components required by the 2005 Planning Rule: desired conditions, objectives, guidelines, suitability of areas, and special areas. The Plan also includes associated material, for example: introductions, existing conditions, a glossary, list of acronyms, management challenges, monitoring questions, performance measures, proposed and possible actions.

In the Grasslands Plan document, the five required components and the associated material are distributed among three main parts, listed below:

1. Part 1 is the vision—the desired conditions or aspirations for the landscape, its people, and its resources.
2. Part 2 is the strategy—the objectives that will move us toward the desired conditions, the monitoring questions and performance measures that will help us gauge how we're doing.
3. Part 3 is the design criteria—the guidelines that are parameters for site-specific, on-the-ground projects and activities.

Because each of the three parts can be removed and used on its own, the Grasslands Plan is more portable and less awkward to use than previous land and resource management plans.

About Part 1: Vision (desired conditions, special areas)

The Vision summarizes what we aspire to—the existing and desired conditions for the Grasslands. It provides strategic direction for the Plan Area⁴ and describes the roles, contributions, and settings for local communities, and for Colorado and for Kansas. It

³ The CER is described in the 2005 Planning Rule (36 CFR 219.6; FR 1056).

⁴ Plan Area: “The National Forest System lands covered by a plan” (36 CFR 219.16; FR p. 1061). The area within the Grasslands administrative boundaries that includes only those lands administered by the Forest Service, not state or private lands. See the map in Appendix J of the Plan.

also establishes the context for projects and activities by describing the desired conditions for each of the four primary ecosystems and nine identified special areas that characterize the Grasslands, along with disturbance processes, and the benefits and experiences that these lands can offer. The Vision is long-term (it may extend beyond the 15-year planning period) and reflects ecological timeframes and social desires.

Desired Conditions: Aspirational in nature, desired conditions are the ecological, economic, and social attributes that guide management of the land and resources of the Plan Area. They don't prescribe or approve management projects or activities, but they do establish purposes for those future actions and projects. Desired conditions may be achievable only over a long time period, may be reached in the short-term, or may already exist.

Special Areas: Selected areas within the Grasslands are identified or designated (in the plan approval document) as special areas because of their unique or special characteristics. Special areas may be designated by statute, by a plan, plan amendment, plan revision, or by a separate process in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other applicable laws. Each special area may have different plan components that reflect its special and unique characteristics.

Monitoring questions and performance measures in Part 2: Strategy are used to assess progress toward the desired conditions.⁵

About Part 2: Strategy (objectives, suitability of areas)

The Strategy describes how the Grasslands intend to maintain or move toward desired conditions through measurable outcomes. It includes such required plan components as objectives and the suitability of areas for land uses. The Strategy states intent and focus for Grasslands management actions within the planning period. Key objectives describe levels of conditions, uses, and activities would achieve the desired conditions. The Strategy also identifies areas where the predominant land uses are generally suitable (compatible) with desired conditions.

Objectives: These are concise projections of measurable, time-specific outcomes intended to maintain or achieve the desired conditions described in Part 1: Vision. The objectives are a means of measuring progress toward achieving or maintaining desired conditions.

Suitability of Areas: The Plan identifies areas on the Grasslands as generally suitable for various uses. An area may be identified as generally suitable for uses that are compatible with desired conditions and objectives for that area. The identification of an area as generally suitable for a use is guidance for project and activity decision-making and is not a commitment or a proposal approving projects and activities in the Plan Area.

⁵ In previous plans, this may have been referred to as "effectiveness monitoring."

About Part 3: Design Criteria (guidelines)

The design criteria part of the Plan includes the parameters in which the Strategy operates. They are technical and scientific specifications that provide guidance and information for future project and activity decision-making. Design criteria can also include references to other applicable guidance for this decision-making.

Guidelines: These are information and guidance for project and activity decision-making to help achieve desired conditions and objectives. In some cases, more than one guideline is related to a desired condition or objective.

Other Referenced Direction: This referenced direction is not considered a plan component, but can be helpful in designing projects and activities. It helps achieve desired conditions and ensures that projects and activities are consistent with existing laws, regulations and policies, including forest- or unit-wide decisions that govern or guide resource management of National Forest System (NFS) lands.

About Monitoring Questions and Performance Measures

Plan monitoring questions are in Part 2: Strategy.⁶ Each monitoring question must link to one or more desired condition, objective, *or* guideline. However, not every desired condition, objective, and guideline needs to be associated with a monitoring question.

Performance measures, related to monitoring questions, are the basis for accountability, for both short-term objectives and long-term desired conditions.

Organization and Content within the Three Parts of the Plan

The content in each of the Plan's three parts is arranged in the categories and subcategories listed in Table 1. Maps of the four primary ecosystems and the special areas can be accessed on our Web site:

http://www.fs.fed.us/r2/psicc/projects/forest_revision/gr_documents.shtml.

⁶ "The plan must describe a monitoring program for the plan area" (36 CFR 219.6(b); FR p. 1056).

Table 1. Categories and subcategories in each of the three parts of the Plan

Category & sub-categories	What's addressed
Land administration	The management of National Forest System (NFS) lands in the Plan Area, including long-term goals for addressing boundary management and NFS land consolidation. Land administration is a separate category because, on the Grasslands, it influences the management of all other resources (ecological, economic and social, and physical).
Ecological resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Canyonland Ecosystem b. Riparian and Aquatic Ecosystem c. Sandsage Prairie Ecosystem d. Shortgrass Prairie Ecosystem 	The four primary ecosystems on the Grasslands (Canyonland, Riparian and Aquatic, Sandsage Prairie, Shortgrass Prairie). Ecological resources are described in terms of disturbance regimes and vegetation composition and structure.
Economic and social resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Livestock grazing b. Minerals and energy c. Recreation and tourism 	The administration and management of human uses of the Grasslands, including livestock grazing, minerals and energy development, and recreation and tourism, as well as local and national values for the Grasslands as identified through collaboration and comments.
Physical resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Heritage b. Landscape and scenery c. Paleontological 	Management of archaeological (cultural and historical), landscape and scenery, and paleontological resources.
Special areas	The general locations, within the four primary ecosystems on the Grasslands, of the nine identified areas that exhibit unique or special characteristics. The desired conditions of these special areas vary from those of the primary ecosystem(s) in which they are located, and, as a result, may require different plan components.

How Do You Know What's Working? Plan Monitoring!

To evaluate progress in maintaining or achieving desired conditions we use key ecological, economic, social, and physical performance measures that are relevant to the Plan Area. To track performance and verify that we are maintaining or moving toward desired conditions and that we are accomplishing objectives, the ecological, economic, social, and physical conditions and trends are monitored and reported annually (for selected projects or activities) or every five years (for all Plan components). The desired conditions and objectives of the highest priority are identified in the Plan monitoring program.

The Plan Monitoring Program

The desired conditions and objectives of the highest priority are identified in the Plan monitoring program. The “Plan monitoring program” includes the monitoring questions and performance measures (in the Plan) that are linked to Plan desired conditions, objectives, or guidelines.⁷

Documents that are closely associated with the monitoring program include:

1. A description of the process used to develop monitoring questions and performance measures.
2. Monitoring guide: Includes methods of data collection, schedule of monitoring activities during the planning period, and cooperators and their roles.
3. Annual monitoring work plan: Includes monitoring tasks, budget, personnel for the upcoming fiscal year and anticipated resources for carrying out the monitoring tasks.
4. Annual evaluation report: Includes summary of what monitoring activities were carried out; evaluation of what was monitored that year, recommendations of what, if any, is needed, and answers to monitoring questions.
5. Comprehensive evaluation report (CER): This report is prepared every five years, and builds from the information in the annual evaluation reports.

Responses to Monitoring Results

Monitoring information is collected, reviewed, and evaluated for key changes in conditions and trends that contribute to sustainability. The degree to which on-the-ground management is maintaining or moving toward desired conditions is specifically evaluated. Based on evaluations of monitoring results, the Responsible Official determines any needed adjustments to the monitoring program or required plan components.

To continually improve land management, performance measures would be periodically

⁷ Information in this and the next paragraph is from FSM 1921.5 and also the Forest Service Handbook (FSH) 1909.12 section 3. See also (USDA FS 2005a) 36 CFR 219.6; FR p. 1056.

reviewed. These reviews help identify current and future topics of interest or concern (“issues”) that could be considered in future planning. The most current and critical issues that call for concentrated effort are identified in the U.S.D.A. Forest Service Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2004 - 2008 as goals, objectives, and performance measures. The Plan objectives consider local conditions and concerns and contribute to the broader objectives of the Forest Service Strategic Plan (see Appendix A of the Plan).

As a result of monitoring, the Grasslands Plan can be updated through either Plan amendments or administrative corrections. Amendments are used to make substantive changes to desired conditions, objectives, guidelines, suitability of areas, and identified or designated special areas. Administrative corrections are used to make other changes, such as corrections and updates of data and maps, typographical errors, monitoring program and monitoring information, and other non-substantive changes.⁸ The public will be notified of any future amendments and administrative corrections to the Plan.⁹ Proposed and final changes to the Plan will be posted on the PSICC Web site.

Putting the Plan to Work

This part explains some of the ways the Plan and its components will work.

How do the five components of the Plan work together?

As a way of measuring progress toward overall desired conditions, *objectives* will guide program design. Most projects and activities will be developed specifically to achieve or maintain one or more of the *desired conditions* or objectives of the Plan. However, a project or activity may be neutral in relation to relevant desired conditions, or may have short-term variations to achieve long-term progress toward desired conditions.

The Plan identifies the *suitability of areas* for a variety of multiple uses by identifying which uses are generally suitable with the area’s desired conditions. In a project decision, this identification will be used to determine if uses will actually occur. This suitability can be changed with a Plan amendment at the time of a project, or by a Plan correction if a mapping error was made.

Relevant *guidelines* will be incorporated into project design, unless there is a documented reason to adjust the guidelines (generally no amendment would be required in that case.) Finally, the Plan has identified areas to be considered for designation as *special areas*. Each of these areas has its own unique desired conditions, objectives, suitability of areas, and guidelines, which are applicable along with those of the ecosystem involved.

Which objectives and guidelines do I use?

That depends on what you’re going to be doing and where, and what resources are involved. For activities and projects in the Sand Sage Prairie Ecosystem, for example, you’d look at those objectives (Plan section 2.1.2.d.). But if you’re going to be doing

⁸ For more about administrative corrections, see (USDA FS 2005a) 36 CFR 219.7(6)(b); FR 1057.

⁹ For more about changes to the Plan, see 36 CFR 219.9; FR 1058.

something in one of the identified special areas, you'd also want to look at the Special Areas objectives, too.

What's suitable where?

Look at Plan section 2.3. Suitability of Areas. You'll want to use both Tables 2-2 and 2-3 to make sure you've covered all the bases. For example, you want to go OHV-ing in Picket Wire Canyonlands, an identified special area within the Canyonland Ecosystem. Table 2-2 says that the Canyonland Ecosystem is generally suitable for that use, but to make sure, you look at Table 2-3. There you find reference to a guideline, PWC-1, that is specific to Picket Wire Canyonlands. You read the guideline and find that it is not specific to OHV use.

Remember, though, that each identified special area is part of an ecosystem! That is, an ecosystem is generally suitable for something but there might be a special area within it (and that special area may have its own unique guidelines).

I want to use my OHV in Vogel Canyon. Can I?

Look at the Tables 2-2 and 2-3 in Plan section 2.3. Suitability of Areas. You know that Vogel Canyon is part of the Canyonland Ecosystem, and you see that Table 2-2 says OHV use is generally suitable. Next look at Table 2-3, where you find that there are guidelines for OHV use in Vogel Canyon: VC-1. You find VC-1 in Part 3: Design Criteria, and learn that "Designated OHV use should avoid habitats and populations of species-of-concern plants." Species-of-concern plants are listed in the Plan, Part 1, section 1.1.1. and in Appendices B (Table B-2) and E.

A quicker way to do this is simply to go straight to Part 3: Design Criteria and look up Vogel Canyon.

How many acres would be prescribed burned each year?

See these sections of the Plan Part 2: Strategy:

- 2.1.2.b. Canyonland Ecosystem
- 2.1.2.d. Sandsage Ecosystem
- 2.1.2.e. Shortgrass Ecosystem

Where would the Forest Service carry out prescribed burns?

See these sections of the Plan Part 2: Strategy:

- 2.1.2.b. Canyonland Ecosystem
- 2.1.2.d. Sandsage Ecosystem
- 2.1.2.e. Shortgrass Ecosystem
- 2.1.5.a. Bent Canyon Bluffs
- 2.1.5.b. The Campo Research Natural Area
- 2.1.5.c. The Comanche Lesser Prairie Chicken Habitat Zoological Area
- 2.1.5.d. Mesa de Maya

- 2.1.5.e. OU Creek
- 2.1.5.f. Picket Wire Canyonlands
- 2.1.5.g. Picture Canyon

How would you monitor progress towards desired conditions?

Through a collaborative process, a comprehensive 15-year monitoring program was developed and included as part of the Grasslands Plan.

To track performance and verify that we are moving toward desired conditions and that multiple-use objectives are being met, ecological, economic, and social conditions and trends may be monitored and measured annually (for selected projects) or every five years (on all Plan components). When implementing the monitoring program, information would be collected and assessments made of key changes in conditions and trends that contribute to sustainability. Monitoring shows us how well we're maintaining or progressing toward desired conditions. Monitoring would also identify any needed adjustments to the program to account for unanticipated changes in conditions.

How does the Grasslands Plan affect existing decisions?

This Plan is not changing any existing decisions for the Grasslands, such as the oil and gas leasing decision or the range allotment management plans. At a future date, if these decisions are revised or amended, the broad direction in the Plan will be considered.

Oil and Gas Development

The potential for the occurrence of petroleum resources (oil and gas) is high on the Cimarron and portions of the Comanche National Grasslands. In 1991, an environmental impact statement covering oil and gas development addressed these resources and the projected development over the following 10-15 years. In 1992 the Forest Supervisor signed a Record of Decision that approved management of this program that covers an average of nine new wells completed each year.¹⁰ In 2003 these drilling estimates were reassessed, and resulted in a future projection averaging 11 completed wells per year over the next 15 years.¹¹ This reassessment validated the 1992 Decision, and Grasslands management of the oil and gas program will continue as in the past. During development of the Grasslands Plan, we ascertained that the desired conditions, objectives, and guidelines of the Plan would be compatible with the 1992 Decision. Therefore, at this time the Plan does not change any existing direction for the oil and gas program.

¹⁰ U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service. 1992. Oil and gas leasing record of decision. Pike and San Isabel National Forests, Comanche and Cimarron National Grasslands. Pueblo, CO: Pike and San Isabel National Forests and Cimarron and Comanche National Grasslands Supervisor's Office. 59 p. + appendices.

¹¹ Department of Interior, Bureau of Land Management. Oil and gas foreseeable development for the Pike and San Isabel National Forest. 2003. Canon City, CO.

Rangeland Management

The Grasslands have current decisions in place for managing livestock grazing¹². The permittees, organized into grazing associations and grazing districts, are authorized to graze cattle under permits that specify stocking rates, season of use, and other management practices. Following the decisions made and carried out for the Grasslands rangeland management program is expected to move resources toward the desired conditions of the Plan. All decision notices issued for this program will remain in effect when this Grasslands Plan is approved.

How will permitted livestock grazing be affected in identified Special Areas?

See Tables 2-2 and 2-3 in the Plan section 2.3. Suitability of Areas.

Livestock grazing has been found to be generally suitable in all identified Special Areas except for Picket Wire Canyonlands.

Will I still be able to graze on my allotment?

Yes. The Grasslands Plan does not eliminate grazing from any part of the grasslands that is currently being grazed. Through administration of the rangeland management program, some areas may require adjustments on an annual basis to meet resource needs.

¹²U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service. 2004a. Allotment management plan for the Campo Grazing Association. Unpublished report on file at the Pike and San Isabel National Forests and Cimarron and Comanche National Grasslands Supervisor's Office, Pueblo, CO. 15 p.

U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service. 2004b. Allotment management plan for the Pritchett Grazing Association. Unpublished report on file at the Pike and San Isabel National Forests and Cimarron and Comanche National Grasslands Supervisor's Office, Pueblo, CO. 20 p.

U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service. 2002a. Allotment management plan for the Kim Grazing Association. Unpublished report on file at the Pike and San Isabel National Forests and Cimarron and Comanche National Grasslands Supervisor's Office, Pueblo, CO. 120 p.

U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service. 2002b. Allotment management plan for the Timpas Grazing District. Unpublished report on file at the Pike and San Isabel National Forests and Cimarron and Comanche National Grasslands Supervisor's Office, Pueblo, CO. 34 p.

U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service. 2002c. Cimarron allotment management plan. Unpublished report on file at the Pike and San Isabel National Forests and Cimarron and Comanche National Grasslands Supervisor's Office, Pueblo, CO. 43 p.

Will I have to remove fences on the allotment I use?

The Plan says that the desired allotment sizes for the Sandsage Prairie Ecosystem “would remain at 2006 levels or would increase, where possible, if the pattern of grazing would help achieve vegetative or habitat objectives.” Desired conditions for the Shortgrass Prairie Ecosystem states that the “size of livestock grazing allotments would remain at current levels or increase, when feasible (on the Comanche), where the pattern of livestock grazing would be consistent with or would enhance vegetative or habitat conditions.”

Collaboration and Public Involvement

Rather than rely on the familiar model of holding public meetings in which the Forest Service presented information and the public asked questions, we have begun and will continue to engage in collaboration with all interested parties, including individuals, organizations, state and local governments and Federal agencies and tribal governments.¹³

To date we have held workshops and open houses, sent out letters, postcards, and newsletters, kept current information on our Web site, and responded to comments on the draft Plan. Collaboration will continue. If you’d like to be on our mailing list, let us know!

An Objection Process, not an Appeal Process

Under the 1982 Planning Rule, after the approval of a Plan, appeals were filed to contest parts or aspects of the Plan. The appeals process took a long time and cost a lot of money. Above all, it set up a relationship of opposition between the Forest Service and critics of the Plan.

Under the 2005 Planning Rule public participation begins with the planning process, so that interested parties can contribute while the Plan is being developed. This promotes a less antagonistic relationship among parties and encourages relationships and interactions that can continue beyond the approval of the Plan.

Instead of requiring a post-approval appeal process, the 2005 Planning Rule includes a comment period on draft (proposed) plans.¹⁴ Later, before a plan is approved, there is a 30-day review and objection period.¹⁵ This lets people collaborate, share ideas, and work out differences before the plan is completed. (This process is modeled after the successful objection process used by the Bureau of Land Management.)

Under 36 CFR 219.13(a), only those individuals or organizations, other than a Federal agency, who participated in the planning process by submitting written comments to the

¹³ See 36 CFR 219.9, “Public participation, collaboration, and notification;” FR 1058.

¹⁴ See 36 CFR 219.9, “Public participation, collaboration, and notification;” FR 1058.

¹⁵ See 36 CFR 219.13, “Objections to plans, plan amendments, or plan revisions;” FR 1059.

Forest Service pertaining to the Grasslands Plan or supporting documents may object to the Plan.

NOTE: All comments, names, and addresses become part of the public record and are subject to FOIA, except for proprietary documents and information.

Where to Get the Plan, the EA, FONSI, and Related Documents

The Grasslands Plan, the EA and FONSI, and supporting documents (such as evaluation reports, species diversity reports, existing condition and trend reports) can be accessed, viewed, and downloaded in pdf format from our Web site at http://www.fs.fed.us/r2/psicc/projects/forest_revision/plan_documents.shtml.

The Grasslands Plan and EA and FONSI are available in paper copy or on CD, by request, from the PSICC Supervisor's Office in Pueblo, Colorado.

PSICC – Forest Supervisor
2840 Kachina Drive
Pueblo, CO 81008

E-mail: r2_psicc_grassrevision@fs.fed.us

Resources for More Information

The 2005 Planning Rule in the Federal Register (in pdf):
<http://www.fs.fed.us/emc/nfma/includes/rule%20.pdf>

The 1982 Rule, about the 2005 Rule, and background documents:
<http://www.fs.fed.us/emc/nfma/index.htm>

The PSICC Grasslands Plan Development Web site:
http://www.fs.fed.us/r2/psicc/projects/forest_revision/index.shtml

The new Plan model and about the model:
<http://www.fs.fed.us/emc/nfma/model.html>

Works Cited

- U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service. **1984**. Land and resource management plan – Pike and San Isabel National Forests; Comanche and Cimarron National Grasslands. Pueblo, CO.: Pike and San Isabel National Forests and Cimarron and Comanche National Grasslands, Supervisor’s Office. 4 vols. + appendices.
- U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service. **1992**. Oil and gas leasing record of decision. Pike and San Isabel National Forests, Comanche and Cimarron National Grasslands. Unpublished report on file at the Pike and San Isabel National Forests and Cimarron and Comanche National Grasslands Supervisor’s Office, Pueblo, CO. 59 p. + appendices.
- U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service. **2002a**. Allotment management plan for the Kim Grazing Association. Unpublished report on file at the Pike and San Isabel National Forests and Cimarron and Comanche National Grasslands Supervisor’s Office, Pueblo, CO. 120 p.
- U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service. **2002b**. Allotment management plan for the Timpas Grazing District. Unpublished report on file at the Pike and San Isabel National Forests and Cimarron and Comanche National Grasslands Supervisor’s Office, Pueblo, CO. 34 p.
- U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service. **2002c**. Cimarron allotment management plan. Unpublished report on file at the Pike and San Isabel National Forests and Cimarron and Comanche National Grasslands Supervisor’s Office, Pueblo, CO. 43 p.
- U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service. **2004a**. Allotment management plan for the Campo Grazing Association. Unpublished report on file at the Pike and San Isabel National Forests and Cimarron and Comanche National Grasslands Supervisor’s Office, Pueblo, CO. 15 p.
- U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service. **2004b**. Allotment management plan for the Pritchett Grazing Association. Unpublished report on file at the Pike and San Isabel National Forests and Cimarron and Comanche National Grasslands Supervisor’s Office, Pueblo, CO. 20 p.
- U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service. **2005**. National Forest System land management planning, final rule, part 219. Washington, DC: Federal Register. 70(3):1023-1061 [January 5, 2005].
- U.S. Department of Interior, Bureau of Land Management. **2003**. Oil and gas foreseeable development for the Pike and San Isabel National Forest. Canon City, CO.