

Desired Conditions – Social and Economic—DRAFT

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In southwest Utah, the social conditions and economic conditions are intertwined to an extent that makes it difficult to discuss them separately. Some economic factors can be tied to production revenues and other quantifiable economic values. Most social and cultural values are not easily quantifiable, however, they often can have an even greater impact on people's lives. The Forest can directly and indirectly impact local economies, individuals, and businesses. For those reasons, the following section considers social and economic desired conditions as a single unit.

The Dixie and Fishlake National Forests contribute to the sustainability of the social and economic systems in southwest Utah¹. The National Forests do not independently sustain a social and economic system, but are critical components of the system. Forest managers understand the numerous ways people are linked to the Forest. These links are balanced within the managers' decision space. Forest managers understand how their decisions may affect current and future social and economic conditions. Objective decisions balance science, multiple uses, sustainability, and desired conditions for the good of the land over time. The Forest is managed with a sustainable, multiple-use philosophy.

Local communities and forest users understand how their actions may affect others and participate in appropriate activities. This understanding is supported by cooperative education programs. Forest users are good stewards of the land:

- They exhibit responsible behavior,
- They encourage others to do the same, and
- They contribute to society's responsibility for the long-term sustainability of the Forests.

Social and Economic Opportunities

The Forests provide a wide variety of opportunities that contribute to social and economic sustainability. Historic, prehistoric, and current residents and communities near the Forest have strong ties to the land. Economic linkages include, but are not limited to, wood products, water, livestock grazing, mineral extraction, recreation, federal employment, and seed gathering. Social linkages include recreation, traditional activities, family events, and an intangible feeling of interest. These, along with other traditional linkages and their associated activities, are considered in the decision-making process. The following bullet statements describe the desired conditions of the Forest's significant contributions in southern Utah²:

- **Timber** – The Forests provide a sustainable and predictable level of timber and wood products. These products are available to the local and regional economies. The resulting timber industry is a reliable, capable, and appropriate tool for forest

¹ For social and economic analysis, the primary impact area is southwest Utah. However, the two Forests are also a smaller part of the social and economic fabric of the southwest United States and of the entire Nation.

² The list does not include all contributions

management. In turn, the timber industry provides stable employment opportunities for the communities of southwest Utah.

- **Range** – The livestock-grazing program is managed for sustainable forage production. Forest resources and long-term land productivity are not degraded. Livestock ranchers are recognized as an important thread to communities' social fabric. Grazing is a living symbol of the rural lifestyle. The livestock grazing industry contributes to open space through a combination of federal and private rangeland. This leads to a low risk of landscape fragmentation that could be caused by future development.
- **Recreation** – A wide variety of recreation opportunities are available to local, regional, national, and international visitors. Opportunities for both private and commercial uses are readily available. These opportunities are in harmony with long-term resource sustainability. Uses that are incompatible with each other are zoned to appropriate locations.
- **Minerals** – Opportunities for mineral development (locatable, saleable, and leaseable) (oil, gas, mining) are available in accordance with applicable laws. Development results in minimal resource impacts, both during and after operations.
- **Culture** – The Forests are linked to several cultures and have a rich history. These values reflect the prehistoric, historic, and current occupants of the area and are sustained for current and future generations' enjoyment and education. Historic and cultural values are respected and integrated into decisions and actions.
- **Quality of Life** – The Forests continue to be an integral part of life in southwest Utah. They are a source of clean air, water, and open space. The Forests provide visually pleasing landscapes and their existence increases the quality of rural life.
- **Water** – Many communities exist within close proximity of the Forests and are dependent upon water resources developed within or impacted by National Forest management. Water rights are recognized. Existing water sources are appropriately managed. Communities' future water needs are given consideration.

Planning

National Forest planning is collaborative. It builds trust, reaches substantial agreement, and encourages a sense of stewardship to achieve the stated desired conditions. Governments (state and local), groups, and individuals are welcomed partners in the planning process. Tribal governments participate through their government-to-government relationship with the Federal government. Forest Service officials retain their delegated decision-making authority. However, their decisions result from an open, established, and accepted process. Knowledge and learning are shared among all partners.

Implementation

Forest Plan implementation is coordinated with other Federal, state, and local agencies or governments. Groups and individuals are provided cooperative opportunities to assist with implementation. Effective communication channels are maintained. Partnerships and agreements are instruments to cooperatively implement strategies described in the plan. The Forest Service and neighboring communities share resources, planning goals, and expertise to achieve desired conditions across the landscape. The Forest Service fosters a relationship of mutual respect with Forest users and their various links to the Forest.