

**U.S.D.A. FOREST SERVICE  
DIXIE AND FISHLAKE NATIONAL FORESTS  
FOREST PLAN REVISION TEAM**

**Collaboration and Public Involvement Plan:  
*Moving Toward a Decision*  
External Collaboration ONLY**

December 2005-December 2006

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*Collaboration Plan: Moving Toward a Decision*  
Dixie and Fishlake National Forests (External Collaboration ONLY)  
December 2005-December 2006



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## COLLABORATION PRIORITIES, PRINCIPLES, AND A PROMISE

*Many citizens perceive the information they receive from agencies as managed, controlled, and manipulated in order to limit their capacity to participate. They see the techniques of participation (public hearings, surveys, focus groups) as designed, at best, to generate input but to keep citizens on the outside of the governance process. They are particularly aware of vacuous or false participation efforts that ask for and then discount public input. Such inauthentic processes simply lead to greater tension between administrators and citizens. It is better not to work with citizens at all than to work them under false, purely instrumental pretenses.*

– Cheryl Simrell King & Camilla Stivers, *Government Is Us* (1998, page 60)

At this point in our planning process, it is important that we step back and remember some key principles of collaboration that have been guiding principles for our “authentic” plan revision process.

In our guiding document “A Collaborative Process for Forest Plan Revision” (CPFPR) of April 2003 (first draft was in 2001), we identified six **Collaborative Priorities**.

1. Provide timely distribution of key information to all affected parties.
2. Find and use multiple opportunities and means for sharing information.
3. Develop ways of learning and of generating knowledge.
4. Build support for eventual proposal and a broad willingness to help implement it.
5. Demonstrate professionalism and creativity.
6. Create “living” documents.

As you will recall, based upon these priorities our planning team adopted the following eight **Collaboration Principles**.

1. Collaboration belongs throughout the planning effort.
2. Learning is a primary objective for collaboration.
3. Collaboration should lead to more integrated understanding.
4. Collaboration should demonstrate responsiveness and show responsibility.
5. Collaboration should grow support for the eventual forest plan and its implementation.
6. Collaboration activities should reflect value of the participant’s time.
7. Collaboration work should incorporate the valuable talent and experience of participants.
8. Collaboration activities should reflect that different individuals need different materials and kinds of interactions to collaborate most effectively.

It is also important that we remember our **Promise to the Public**.

The Forest Service will honor and carry forward those recommendations reached through consensus or based on substantial agreement that conform to existing laws, policies, regulations, and the mission of the Forest Service.

The CPFPR document was written in April 2003 after a series of “process meetings”<sup>1</sup> with the general public. We tried to reflect a common<sup>2</sup> understanding and commitment to the concept of collaboration<sup>3</sup> that we could carry forward in our revision process. The document was intended to guide the Forest Service and our planning partners through the process of collaboratively developing a proposal (called a Management Direction Package or MDP<sup>4</sup>) for revising the Dixie and Fishlake Forest Plans.

(When we unveil draft revised forest plans in early 2006, we will also present a Process Report that will document not only how we collaborated with people, but also share some insights about what we did with the many of the results of collaboration (the wide variety of thoughts and ideas we hear from collaborative partners) in our draft revised plan.)

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<sup>1</sup> At our process meetings we used the following definition for the word collaboration. “To work together, especially in joint problem solving.” (Reference *The American Heritage Dictionary, 1976*) Additionally, we presented, “*Collaborative* processes invite people (who usually have conflicting interests) to work together to meet the goals of all group members. *Compromise* is not the goal of collaborative processes. *Consensus*: An agreement that has been reached cooperatively by members of a group, and is acceptable to, and supported by, all group members. *This may or may not be the goal of collaboration.*” Emphasis from original Powerpoint presentation.

<sup>2</sup> Common to the Forest Service and those attending the early process meetings.

<sup>3</sup> There are many different definitions for collaboration. In our guiding document, we further clarify that “Collaboration is not necessarily a strategy for reaching consensus. Collaboration brings various interests together to aid in breaking down barriers, for jointly defining and understanding problems. Good-faith participation by the different interests is the true key to success. Collaboration allows the Forest Service and participants to learn from each other through the open exchange and debate of information. Collaboration helps increase acceptance and understanding, which, together, increase the opportunity for better decisions that have more support.”

<sup>4</sup> The MDP was presented at a series of public workshops in spring/summer 2005.

## **ADDITIONAL COLLABORATION ACTIVITIES NOT IDENTIFIED IN THE COLLABORATION PROCESS PLAN**

The CPFPR document helped to guide us through the Topical Working Group (TWiG)<sup>5</sup> process that ended in spring of 2004. Since this time, we have conducted several other significant collaborative activities to help us put together the MDP and ultimately draft Revised Forest Plans (expected to be released in early 2006). These activities included:

- Three workshops to discuss and refine our Eligible Wild and Scenic Rivers Report.<sup>6</sup>
- Several public workshops to discuss and refine our Undeveloped and Unroaded Inventory.<sup>7</sup>
- Numerous collaborative work sessions with our county and state cooperating agencies.<sup>8</sup>
- Numerous public field trips to explore potential special areas.<sup>9</sup>
- Several working sessions with interested planning partners.<sup>10</sup>
- Development of a web log (blog) to track the daily activities of our planning effort.<sup>11</sup>

In addition to this work with partners external to the Forest Service, we have continued to work collaboratively and often with our internal partners from the district level up to the Washington Office. Most notably, we have held several series of workshops with our district personnel and specialist groups across both the Dixie and Fishlake National

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<sup>5</sup> Other more detailed documents provided direction for administering the TWiGs and other collaborative meetings. The CPFPR document provided broad direction that we needed to expand upon sometimes.

<sup>6</sup> Workshops were held in the June 2004 in Richfield, Bryce Canyon, and St. George, Utah. These workshops were interactive and designed to help us refine our draft Eligibility Report.

<sup>7</sup> Workshops were held in August and September 2004 in Salt Lake City, Richfield, St. George, and Bryce Canyon. We engaged in a discussion of the draft inventories for undeveloped and unroaded. We also sought input on developing an evaluation (for wilderness) process for these areas.

<sup>8</sup> We held and continue to hold regular working meetings with the Five County and Six County Associations of Government Natural Resources Committees. We provide updates on progress in our planning effort and seek input from the counties in these areas with whom we have cooperating agency agreements. We also have held many individual county work sessions related to a variety of different issues (most notably our evaluation of undeveloped and unroaded areas, social and economic aspects of the planning effort, and wild and scenic rivers). Finally, we have also held several working meetings on a variety of issues with representatives of the Utah Department of Natural Resources and the Utah Governor's Office.

<sup>9</sup> Mostly special areas like backcountry or recommended wilderness, but also wild and scenic rivers. These field trips have taken place at various times in our planning process, but most notably in the summer of 2004 and the summer/fall 2005.

<sup>10</sup> Our collaborative policy has always been to have an open door. On a few occasions we have met with groups of planning partners at their request. Most notably we have met with the Three Forest Coalition on two occasions. The substance of these discussions has been driven mostly by the groups, but we have explored a number of different issues. It is our hope that we can continue to learn from these important planning partners in the future.

<sup>11</sup> Weblogs are new to the Forest Service. Ours is the first of its kind. We began using this tool in the summer of 2005 and hope that our partners will begin using it with more frequency.

Forests. Finally, we have had regular meetings with the Intermountain Region (R4) Interdisciplinary Team (R4 IDT). We anticipate continuing this important internal collaborative work in the future.

## **A REVISED COLLABORATION AND PUBLIC INVOLVMENT ROADMAP FOR MOVING TOWARD A DECISION**

Periodically during our planning process with the help of our neutral facilitator from the U.S. Center for Environmental Conflict Resolution and our convener at the Utah Center for Rural Life, we have done informal interviewing of planning participants to better understand how a variety of our planning partners were feeling about our collaboration and planning process. Additionally, we have also held several “lessons learned” discussions in order to better understand what has worked and what has been less effective in working with people. Data and suggestions from the public as well as our self-reflection during “lessons learned” sessions have helped us to adjust and refine our collaboration to better work with people.

It has become expedient for us to map out our collaborative future. In the CPFPR document we anticipated that Phase II (or post-MDP) of our collaborative and public involvement process would be more tradition and formal. There are several features of our process that will reflect this formal structure. For instance, our draft revised plans will be release for a 90-day comment period. Additionally, we will have a mandated 30-day objection period prior to a decision. While we need to follow these guidelines for public involvement and collaboration on the revised draft plans, we remain committed to more involved collaboration. We hope to have many more meaningful and insightful discussions with a variety of different planning partners leading up to a decision hopefully by the end of 2006.

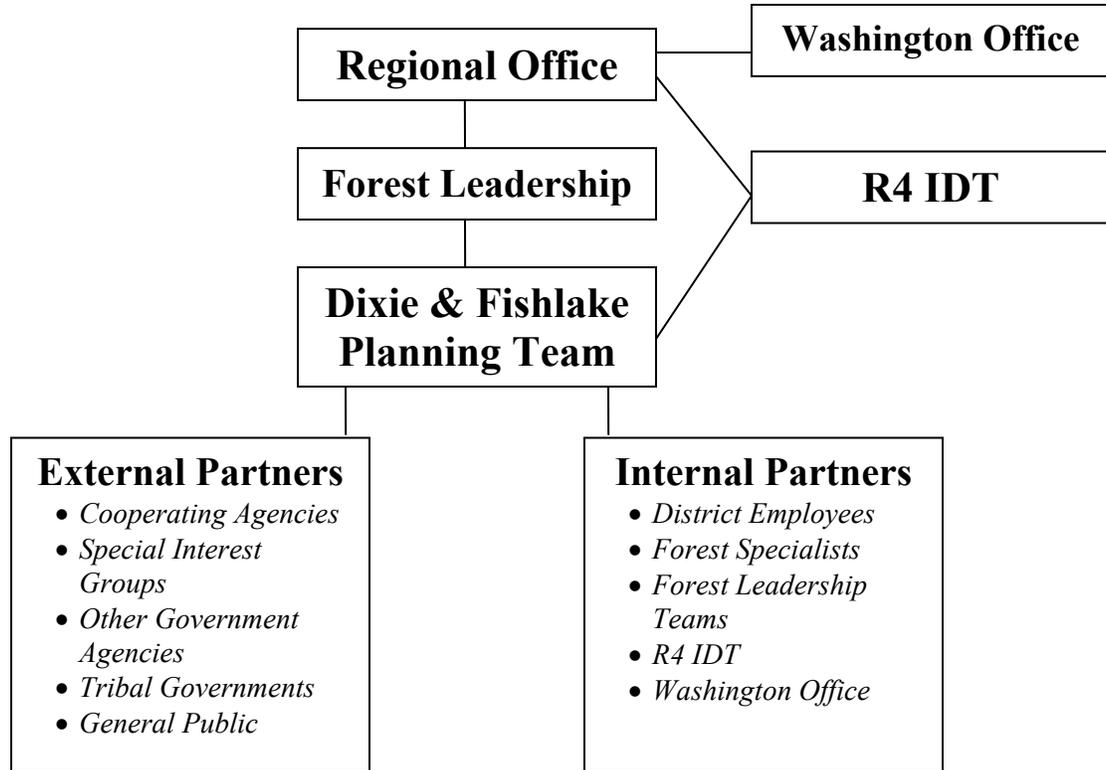
Our roadmap for moving towards a decision in 2006 has two primary directions: 1) internal involvement and collaboration, and 2) external involvement and collaboration.

The **internal** part of the plan involves the employees of the Forest Leadership Teams, the eight Ranger Districts and various scientific specialty groups on both forests. It also includes the R4 IDT (Ogden) and the Washington Office.

The **external** part of the plan is meant to guide our interaction with a wide group of people who may have different interests including: the eleven county commissions (who are “cooperating agencies” under Memorandums of Understanding that have been signed with our Forest Leadership), the state government, other Federal agencies, past participants in public workshops (e.g. those on the mailing lists), interest groups (representing a wide variety of interests), and other citizens (many of which have found us on the web).

This document confines itself to the external collaboration elements. A similar document contains our intentions for internal collaboration.

The following *flow chart* describes a few of the important relationships for forest planning collaboration and public involvement.



*One element not reflected in this diagram is the development of the Environmental Management System (EMS), which must be in place<sup>12</sup> prior to any forest planning decision. The Dixie and Fishlake have formed a joint EMS team. This team is largely composed of specialists not involved in forest planning. We anticipate that the EMS will be shared with the public in late spring/early summer 2006, perhaps during our Forest Plan Revision Summit.*

<sup>12</sup> As mandated by the 2005 Planning Rule.

## EXTERNAL COLLABORATION AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT ROAD MAP

### External Collaboration Objectives

- Demonstrate how input is used in product development.
- Establish relationships between District personnel and stakeholders as a foundation for forest plan implementation.
- Provide opportunities for objective discussions on science topics (water, forest health/fuels, species protection, and social/economics).
- Enable a collective conversation between the Forest Service, key interests, and cooperating agencies for critical plan components.
- Improve public accessibility of information related to revision progress and products.

### Tools for External Collaboration

- **Field Trips:** Field Review of special area designations and other management concerns. Emphasis is on cooperating agencies, interest groups, and local individuals.
- **Process Report:** Written document that describes and maps the processes used to solicit input, the processes used to analyze the input. This tool would be used to demonstrate how input was used, and the collaborative process relationships.
- **Summary of Changes and Use of Comments:** Accompanies the next update of the MDP to summarize how this version changed and to demonstrate how public comments influenced those differences.
- **Website and Blog:** Web-based discussion of selected plan revision topics. Website maintained for posting draft documents, announcements, and work updates.
- **Newsletter:** Quarterly update to describe planning progress, progress and upcoming collaborative opportunities.
- **Official Comment and Objection Periods:** Ninety-day review and comment period on Draft Plans; Thirty-day objection period on final plans.
- **Final Plan Component Meetings:** An opportunity to meet again, collectively, with the Forest Service, key contacts and cooperating agencies to discuss the final plan components. Doing this collectively would enable everyone to hear the same key messages and responses, and understand any changes to the Final Plan resulting from negotiated agreements. (Not planned yet.)
- **Informal Community Workshops:** An opportunity for District personnel to convene informal workshops to help local communities understand how the new plan affects the way they use their National Forests. (Not planned yet.)
- **Summit on Forest Plan:** The Dixie and Fishlake National Forests plan to convene a Forest Planning Summit (probably in Cedar City at Southern Utah University) near the end of the 90-day comment period. This will most likely be the last major collaborative event of our planning process. We will discuss the draft revised plans. A planning team (including participants from outside the Forest Service) will be asked to help the plan revision team plan this Summit. It

is anticipated that the Summit will provide a shared learning experience as well as a culmination to our collaborative effort. There will be opportunities to discuss science used (and alternative scientific viewpoints), plan components (including the strategic choices the Forest Service is proposing to make), the comprehensive evaluation report, plan implementation, and other resource issues.

**Planned External Collaboration Activities**

- 90-Day Comment Period on Draft Revised Forest Plans – March-May 2006
- 30-Day Objection Period prior to plan decision – Fall 2006
- Forest Planning Summit – Spring/Summer 2006
- Small group meetings to discuss various planning topics as requested.
- Newsletters (winter, spring, and summer 2006)
- Regular blog updates
- Regular working meetings and briefings with cooperating agencies
- Website
- Revised Draft Plan Preview with Cooperating Agencies – February 2006

<b>CHART DESCRIBING EXPECTED COLLABORATION ACTIVITES BY MONTH IN 2006</b>											
<i>External Collaboration and Public Involvement</i>											
	Jan '06	Feb '06	Mar '06	Apr '06	May'06	Jun '06	Jul '06	Aug '06	Sep '06	Oct	
<b>Cooperating Agencies</b>	FCAOG Natural Resources Committee meeting, BEWB	BEWB, Newsletter, Preview of Revised Draft Plans	90-Day Comment Period on Draft Revised Plans, BEWB			Newsletter, BEWB, Forest Plan Summit <sup>13</sup>	BEWB	BEWB	BEWB	BEWB	New BEW
<b>Other Government Agencies</b>	BEWB	BEWB, Newsletter	90-Day Comment Period on Draft Revised Plans, BEWB			Newsletter, BEWB, Forest Plan Summit	BEWB	BEWB	BEWB	New BEW	
<b>Interest Groups</b>	BEWB	BEWB, Newsletter	90-Day Comment Period on Draft Revised Plans, BEWB			Newsletter, BEWB, Forest Plan Summit	BEWB	BEWB	BEWB	New BEW	
<b>General Public</b>	BEWB	BEWB, Newsletter	90-Day Comment Period on Draft Revised Plans, BEWB			Newsletter, BEWB, Forest Plan Summit	BEWB	BEWB	BEWB	New BEW	

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<sup>13</sup> Will likely include a discussion and unveiling of the Dixie and Fishlake Environmental Management Systems.