



Blue Mountains Forest Plan Revision

Community Collaborative Workshops
October/November 2004



Overview

- **Forest Plans**
- **Sustainability Framework**
- **How we are using what we learned from you in Round 1**



The purpose of this part of the workshop is to provide a review of what a forest plan does, an overview of the sustainability framework that we will be using in the revised forest plan, and describe how we are using the comments and what we learned from the Round 1 workshops.

There will be time for questions at the end of each presentation.

What Forest Plans Do

- **Provide overall management direction**
- **Identify**
what we want the forest to look like,
what we want the forest to provide,
how we plan to achieve it, and
any limits to how or where
activities may occur.



We talked about the forest plan during our Round 1 meetings, but I want to review that briefly for those who were not there because I think the differences between the current plans and the revised plans are important to understand.

The forest plans provide overall management direction as a foundation for making future decisions. They set the framework that guides site-specific decisions which will be made later. The main focus for the forest plan is describing what we want the forest to look like, why we want it to look that way, and what we want the forest to provide. We refer to these statements as Desired Conditions as they describe the conditions we desire our forests to exhibit. Forest plans also establish standards that limit how or where activities may occur as well as outlining monitoring that we will do.

What Forest Plans Do

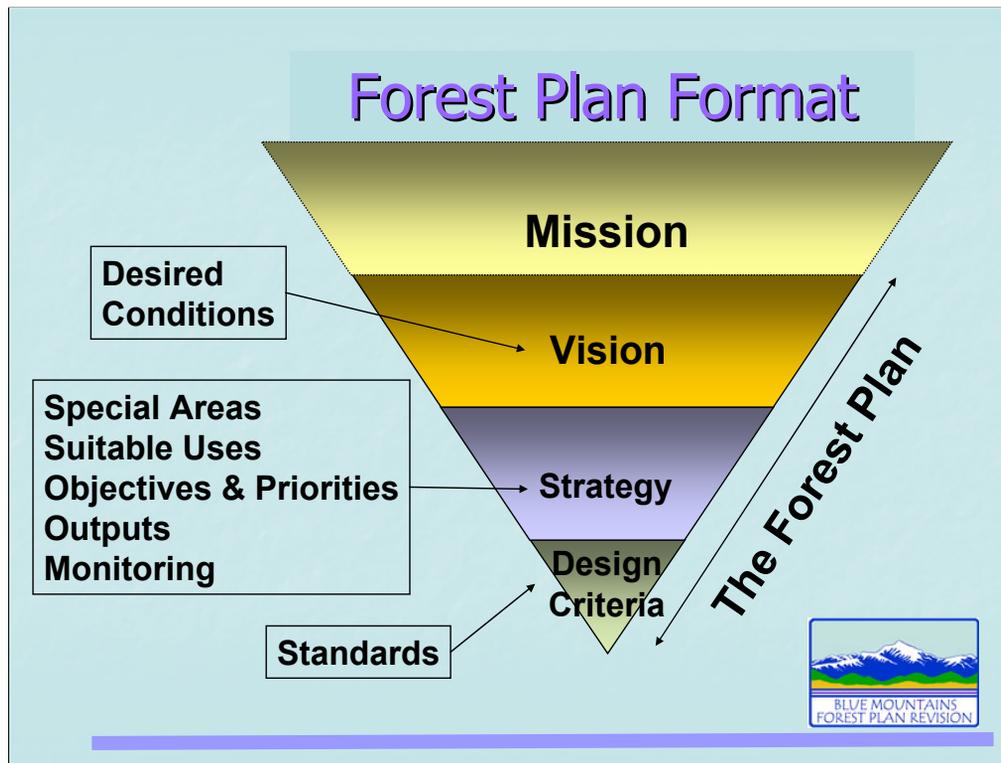
- **Guide management for 10 to 15 years**
- **Can be amended as needed**
- **Provide target conditions (desired conditions)**



Forest plans are intended to guide management for the next 10-15 years, so they are not expected to last forever.

They can be amended during that time as needed.

Forest plans provide the target conditions unit managers will try to achieve. The unit managers make site-specific decisions on what activities will take place or be allowed to occur to move toward or maintain those desired conditions. These site-specific decisions change ground conditions in compliance with the Forest Plan and are usually applicable to a much shorter time period (1-5 years).

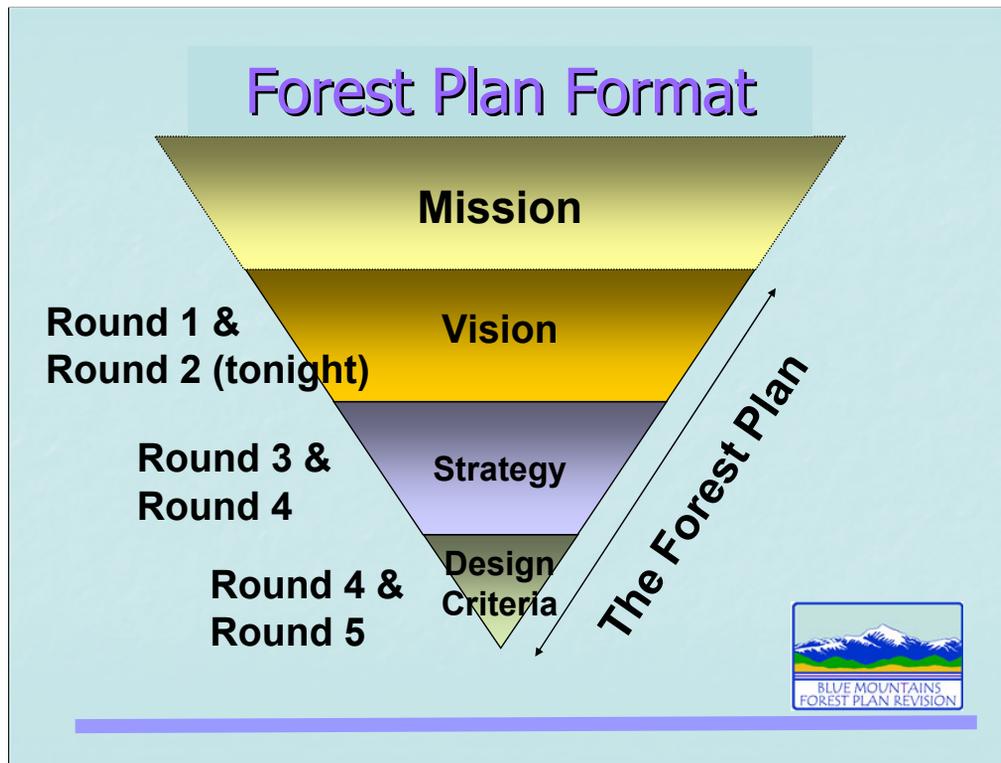


We've adopted a new format for the revised Forest Plans based on a strategic planning model with three main components – vision, strategy, and design criteria.

- The mission refers to the Forest Service mission we will talk about shortly; the forest plan describes how we will fulfill our mission.
- The vision defines the roles and contributions of national forest lands through a series of desired condition statements.
- The strategy identifies special area designations, defines the suitable uses, describes objectives and priorities for management, estimates outputs that would come from the forest, and outlines monitoring that will take place.
- The design criteria define standards and other guidance that limits how management activities can occur. These are the technical and scientific specifications that would be met in designing projects.

This figure provides an outline of the Forest Plan documents. The sustainability framework (which we will talk about in a minute) provides the foundation for how we are currently developing the desired conditions that make up the vision section. The final desired conditions will become the Vision section of the revised forest plans.

You were given a copy of the draft desired conditions when you arrived and I hope you took some time to look them over. Let me emphasize, these are our first cut. There is still a lot of work to do before we get to the final version. The purpose of our workshop tonight is to allow you to discuss a few of them and give us some feedback.



There will be plenty of time for you to comment on them. We realize you just saw them and you will need time to think about what they say. Over the next few months, we would like you to think about them, talk about them with your friends, meet with others to discuss them and give us your comments. We will be glad to discuss them with you individually or come to your organization meetings to discuss them. We hope the discussion will include various viewpoints and be a collaborative effort.

Tonight we want to focus on these draft Desired Conditions – or the Vision. We developed these “first cut” desired conditions for each criteria and indicator in the framework based on your comments in Round 1, our professional judgment and experience, and current science.

We will bring them back to you in the Round 3 meetings and begin to talk about the Strategy portion of the plan. In Rounds 4 and 5, we will complete the proposed revised plan. Each Round of workshops will focus on the next step in drafting the revised plan and provide you an opportunity for comment and discussion.

Forest Service Mission

The mission of the USDA Forest Service:

“...to *sustain* the health, diversity, and productivity of the Nation’s forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations.”

“..*sustaining* our natural resources for future generations, producing personal & community well-being, and providing economic wealth for the Nation.”

(USDA Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2004-2008)



The Forest Service mission is “to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the Nation’s forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations”.

The Forest Service Strategic Plan for 2004-2008 describes this further by stating that the mission “is based on the relationship between the American people and the nation’s natural resources. The relationship is founded on the principles of sustaining our natural resources for future generation, producing personal and community well-being, and providing economic wealth for the nation.”

The challenge is to decide what to sustain, for whom, how much, and at what cost to the present and for the future?

Sustainability

...the desire for an environment
that can provide for our needs
now and in the future.

A human value – not a fixed condition



Sustainability is a value, I believe, we all share when talking about our natural resources. The word is easy to say, the concept, however, is hard to define. We each have a different perspective and expectation that we want sustained.

Sustainability expresses “the human desire for an environment that can provide for our needs now and will also be able to provide for of future generations.” (LUCID Management Edition, pg. 1) To me, it is our desire that what we see and experience in our forests now, is what will be available, in a reasonably similar condition, for our children and other generations to come.

Describing appropriate sustainable conditions is difficult because sustainability is a human value, not a fixed condition. It is affected by the **social values** and **economic expectations** of the people who visit the forest and **ecological capability** of the forest to support resource conditions. These form the three principles (**triangle**) of the sustainability framework. It is also complicated by the fact that each of these can easily change over time. Each of us, given the opportunity, would define the sustainable conditions differently. We saw this in Round 1 as we heard very contrasting visions from those who participated. While the ecological capabilities may be consistent, our social values and economic expectations vary greatly. In revising the forest plan, we will work together to develop management direction that is acceptable to a broad population (each with differing values and expectations) and provide sustainable conditions.

Guiding Principles

- Social - producing personal and community well-being
- Ecological -sustaining our natural resources for future generations
- Economic - providing economic wealth for the nation

(USDA Strategic Plan, pg. 3)

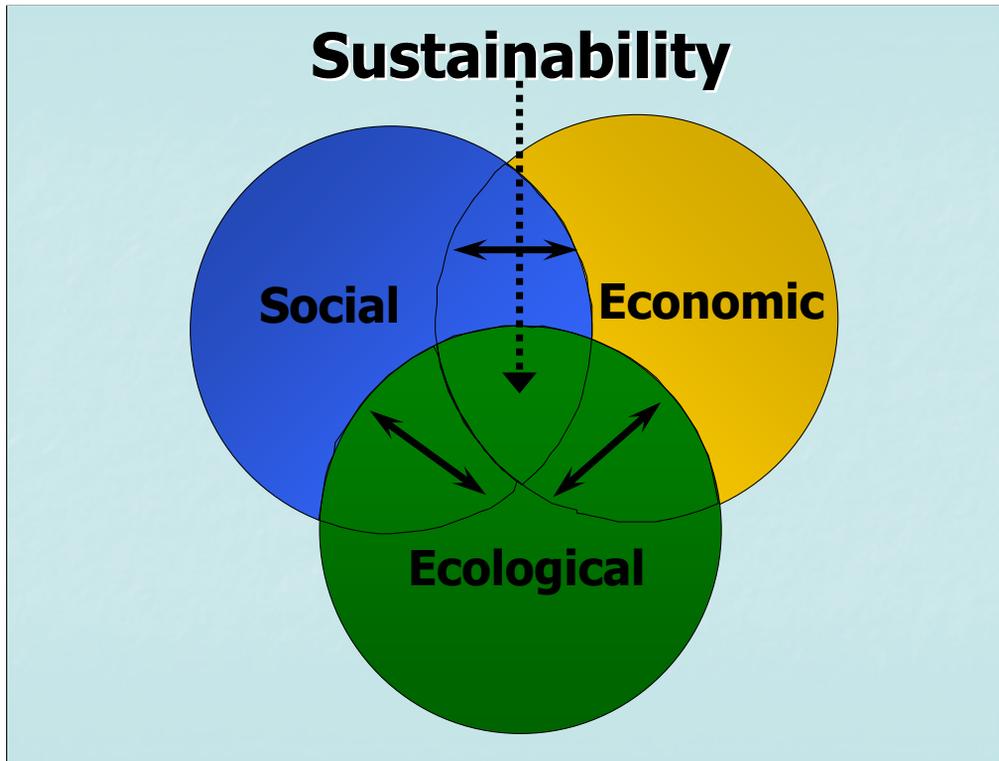


In order to achieve the mission, we are working from three guiding principles reflected in our Strategic Plan:

- Social - producing personal and community well-being
- Ecological - sustaining our natural resources for future generations
- Economic - providing economic wealth for the nation

(These are found in the USDA Strategic Plan on page 3).

These principles are also found in other sustainability efforts, so we are not alone in thinking they are the appropriate principles on which to build and they do represent current science on sustainability.



By focusing our efforts on describing the relationships between the social, ecological, and economic systems rather than looking at parts, we can increase our understanding of the role of the Forests to make better decisions for the future.

One consideration in sustainability is **scale**. At what scale are the criteria and indicator applicable? For most of them we are considering, the area of application is forest wide. That means that the desired condition may not exist on every site. For example: wilderness is focused on ecological conditions and will not contribute physical products (like boards) to the economic sustainability; a ski area is focused on economic conditions and will not meet the overall ecological conditions.

There are also outside **factors that place limits** on various conditions. Laws, for example, determine what conditions we will work toward; the Clean Air Act and Endangered Species Act for example. We have materials on the Introduction to Forest Planning table that list the laws, regulations, executive orders, and agreements we work under.

This Sustainability Framework will be an integral part of the revised forest plans. *Refer to the Sustainability Framework outline handout.*

Any questions on the forest plan or the sustainability framework?

Elaine will now talk about what we learned in Round 1.

NOT PART OF PRESENTATION UNLESS THE QUESTIONS COMES UP ABOUT WHERE THE FRAMEWORK CAME FROM: In 1999, the 3 Blue Mountains National Forests participated in an effort to identify criteria and indicators at the Forest level that we could monitor to keep our systems in a sustainable condition. The group included scientists from a variety of backgrounds and involved many people both inside and outside the Forest Service. The Revision Team has adapted and updated that work to focus on the components necessary for describing sustainability of the national forests in the Blue Mountains and developed a draft sustainability framework using criteria and indicators for social, ecological and economic conditions.

How we are using what we learned from you in Round 1



For the next 10-15 minutes, we will overview how we are using what we learned from you in Round 1 workshops to create the draft desired conditions that you are reviewing tonight.

Round 1 Workshops

- Purpose: Start developing a vision and desired conditions for the Blue Mountains
 - What do you want your Blue Mountains national forests for?
 - Why is this important?
 - Where is this important to you?



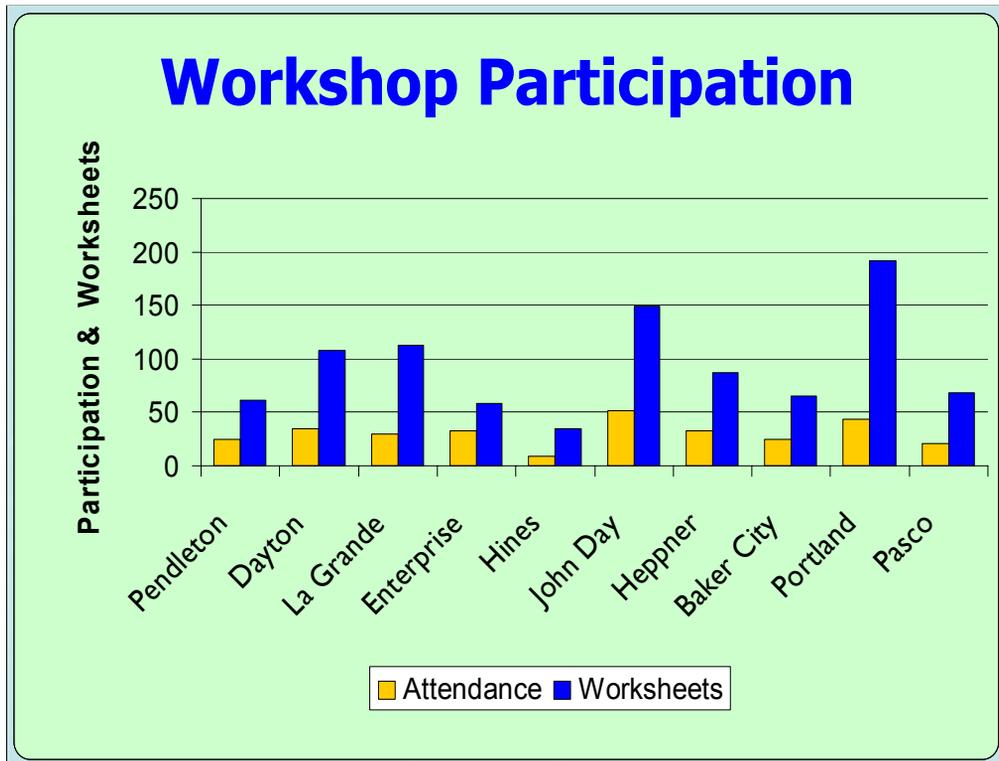
The focus of the Round 1 workshops was for us to collectively start developing a vision and series of desired condition statement for the Blue Mountains national forests.

Just to remind everyone, these questions guided the vision activity that we did and were listed on individual worksheets:

[show copy of worksheet]

- What do you want your Blue Mountains national forests for?
- Why is this important?
- Where is this important to you?

This is the foundation for the vision and the desired condition statements that you will be reviewing tonight.



We felt overall participation at the 10 locations was a really good starting point for the first round of workshops.

As you can see, we held workshops starting in Pendleton, Dayton, La Grande, Enterprise, Hines, John Day, Heppner, Baker City, Portland, and Pasco.

We had over 300 people attend and fill out 936 worksheets expressing their desired conditions.

People also provided their ideas on the vision and desired conditions in 24 letters and 40 emails.

[Point out locations along the bottom of the graph. Point out numbers and worksheets for specific location where we are.]

Vision Activity

The activity was well-received by most people, and people were very engaged in it!



People were very engaged in the activity. As you recall people were moving around and putting sticky notes on the maps, talking with each other.

We also had a group discussion at the end of the meeting to engage people's in each others ideas about the vision.

What We Learned

- Participants liked writing their ideas without having to talk in a larger group.
- People expressed a broader range of what they cared about on the worksheets than what was said out loud in the discussions at the end of the workshops.
- Both written and verbal comments covered a wide diversity of opinions at all locations.

Participants felt the vision activity gave them an opportunity to say what was really important to them in a way that they wouldn't feel comfortable with in a larger group.

Based on this, what you heard out loud at the end of the meeting doesn't necessarily mean that's what everyone in the room was thinking or agreeing with. When we looked at the comments, we didn't find that any particular meeting location was one-sided on any issue. This means there is a strong diversity of interests in all locations.

This information was helpful for us in designing what we hope is an effective format for tonight as well. You'll get a chance to provide both written and verbal comments to us.

Team Learning

We reviewed and discussed the wide diversity of reflections on how the Forests affect your life, your family, your livelihood, and your future.

We gained a deeper understanding of what you know and how much you care about your relationship with the land.



This was very helpful to us and thank you for participating in the first Round if you did, and also thank you for coming tonight. We hope to continue to learn more from you.

Team Analysis

- Responses were grouped based on the Sustainability Framework into a database:
 - Blue Mountains-wide desires – 49%
 - Specific subbasin desires – 51%
- Much of what people desire links with other social, ecological, and economic conditions.
- The database provides us with many ways to further review the responses.

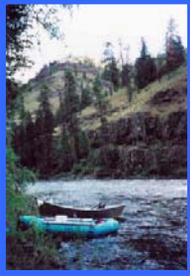
Responses were grouped based on the Sustainability Framework into a database. [Refer to the Sustainability Framework outline and the worksheet handouts].

Approximately 49% of the responses expressed desires for the Blue Mountains as a whole, and 51% were specific to certain geographic locations.

Based on reviewing and analyzing the comments, we found that much of what people desire overlaps across multiple social, ecological, and economic conditions. Most of the desires are interrelated with each other.

The database provides us with many ways to further review the responses. The display in the back of the room provides some spatial maps of some of the results if you didn't get a chance to see this earlier in the workshop.

- **Enterprise # 384** "Hunting – open access"
- **La Grande # 237** "Hiking in the Eagle Caps"
- **Pendleton # 7** "Snowmobiling"
- **Pasco # 1137** "Maintain access for as many diverse users as possible"



These are some example comments from Round 1. This is also what you may have had a chance to review at one of the displays in the back of the room in the earlier part of the workshop.

Where do your comments fit?

1.4 Criteria – Social & Cultural Values



1.4.6 Indicator – Access & Use

High use areas are managed within social and ecological capacities in order to maintain the quality of experiences.

Turn to your packet and the Sustainability Framework outline. Walk people through the example.

For example, refer to the outline for Social Well-Being (hold up handout and point to it). We queried the database for comments related to Principle 1 Social Well-being, Criteria 1.4, and specifically for 1.4. 6 – Access and Use.

This is one example of how we looked through the lens of the diversity of all of the public comments, combined with current science and professional judgment to draft a desired condition statement applicable to the Blue Mountains national forests. You may not see your exact words here.

How we do achieve this condition, is part of the strategies and objectives discussion that Dave mentioned earlier. Tonight, we are looking for your review and comments on the desired condition statements.

- **Baker City # 816** "Clean, clear, cool water"
- **John Day # 627** "Water quality and fish habitat are diverse as the site which they flow"
- **Pasco #1084** "Manage watersheds wisely"



Here is another example...

Where do your comments fit?

2.2 Criteria – Ecological Structure and Composition



2.2.2 Indicator - Water Quality

Water quality will comply with standards established by the States of Idaho, Oregon and Washington.

Walk through the example...

In some cases the desired condition may not be new or entirely different from the current management already is. This is an example of a desired condition we want to carry forward into the revised plans.

What we are asking from you tonight is whether or not you can agree with these statements. You'll get a chance here is a few minutes to work on this.

Questions?



More information is available at the stations in the back. Public comments are in notebooks and database form for you to review, etc.

Questions on either the sustainability framework or how we incorporated the public comments so far?

Tonight's Focus

- Review and comment on the desired condition statements for the national forests of the Blue Mountains
- Identify needs for change



Now we will spend some time reviewing and discussing these desired condition statements. Can you live with them?