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**Route To:**

**Subject:** Public Participation and Recreation Sites Facility Master Planning (RS-FMP)

**To:** Regional Foresters, Station Directors, Area Director, IITF Director, Deputy Chiefs and WO Staff

Recently, some questions have been raised about how the public has been involved in the recreation site facility master planning process. I want to be clear about the importance of public participation as a critical part of RS-FMP. A fundamental aspect of RS-FMP is working with our stakeholders, constituents, and communities to optimize public enjoyment of developed recreation sites and services today and into the future. RS-FMP is an excellent business tool for managing recreation sites and its success depends on transparent and effective public participation.

We have learned much as we have progressed through this analysis and we have made adjustments to improve the process. To clarify some key points of participation:

- Forests beginning RS-FMP must engage key partners and the public to explain the goals of master planning and seek feedback on developed recreation sites and the recreation opportunities that meet the highest priority public needs. Forests then must continue to provide opportunities to engage the public throughout the process. A commitment to share the initial results of analysis and invite discussion of alternative ways of operating sites and building new partnerships is required.
- Forests in the middle of RS-FMP must contact stakeholders and the public regarding the planning process, explain the goals, and solicit feedback on priorities. In some cases, this may mean re-engaging the public in this process. In all cases, the public must be involved in setting priorities for maintaining developed recreational sites on the national forests.
- For the few sites where analysis and dialogue result in significant recommended changes to operations, Forests must also fulfill any additional public involvement requirements, such as those under the Recreation Enhancement Act (Recreation RACs, etc.) and NEPA before undertaking the action.

Through your staff's diligence and dedication, we will complete recreation site facility master planning on all forests in a manner that will enable us to set clear priorities for maintaining developed recreation sites with the strong support of our partners and the public. If you have any specific questions regarding RS-FMP, please contact Jennifer Eberlien, Acting Recreation Sites Program Manager, at 202-205-1169.

*/s/ Joel D. Holtrop*

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Deputy Chief for National Forest System

