



Sustainable Operations

Creating Habits Today, Conserving Resources for Tomorrow



U.S. Forest Service

Q&A: GREENHOUSE GAS INVENTORIES FOR BUSINESS OPERATIONS

What type of work has the Forest Service done previously with greenhouse gas inventories?

In 2007, the Forest Service (FS) became the first federal land management agency to join the EPA Climate Leaders program. This has assisted the FS in developing wide-ranging emissions measurement and mitigation strategies. From 2007-2010, the FS conducted five independent greenhouse gas (GHG) pilots at the Tongass National Forest, Francis Marion Sumter National Forest, the Washington Office Yates Building, the Pacific Southwest Region and Pacific Southwest Research Station, and the six National Forests in the Greater Yellowstone Area (GYA). The GYA audit was the first inter-agency GHG inventory effort and included the participation of the FS, the National Park Service, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, and the National Renewable Energy Lab (NREL). It serves as a model for all future GHG audits.

Why does the Forest Service need to complete greenhouse gas audits?

In 2009, President Obama signed Executive Order (EO) 13514, "Federal Leadership in Environmental, Energy and Economic Performance," which required all agencies to submit a comprehensive GHG inventory and establish a percentage reduction target. The FS, along with USDA, plans to reduce absolute Scopes 1 & 2 emissions by 21% and Scope 3 emissions by 7% by 2020, relative to a FY 2008 baseline.

What has the Forest Service achieved in Year One of the EO 13514?

In June 2010, the FS hosted an inter-agency GHG inventory planning meeting with representatives from NREL, the Agricultural Research Service (ARS) and the USDA to develop a comprehensive, agency-wide design to capture emissions. The agency is also in the process of calculating Scopes 1, 2, and 3 GHG emissions data in preparation for submission of report to the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) by December 31, 2010. Scope 1 sources are owned or controlled by the institution (e.g., fleet), Scope 2 sources are indirect emissions generated in the production of purchased electricity (e.g., purchased steam), and Scope 3 sources are indirect emissions that are a consequence of the activities of the institution (e.g., commuting and employee business travel).

What is the purpose of conducting a GHG inventory?

The purpose of the GHG inventory is to facilitate the Agency's understanding of its emission profile and help prioritize mitigation efforts. Conducting the inventory will also improve the performance of the FS in all six environmental footprint areas: energy, water, green purchasing, fleet and transportation, waste prevention and recycling, and sustainability leadership. The inventory is also meant to engage employees and leadership to strategically address climate change, and help identify opportunities for short- and long-term cost-savings

What does the Forest Service hope to accomplish with GHG inventories?

- Continue to comply with EO 13514 and submit annual GHG inventory reports
- Analyze results for downward reporting and communication with the field
- Make recommendations on how to reduce emissions in various sectors
- Encourage leadership to integrate sustainability objectives and build organizational capacity for future sustainability efforts
- Relay successful practices to other departments and organization