

Dixie & Fishlake National Forests



**A Collaborative Process
for
Forest Plan Revision**

April 2003

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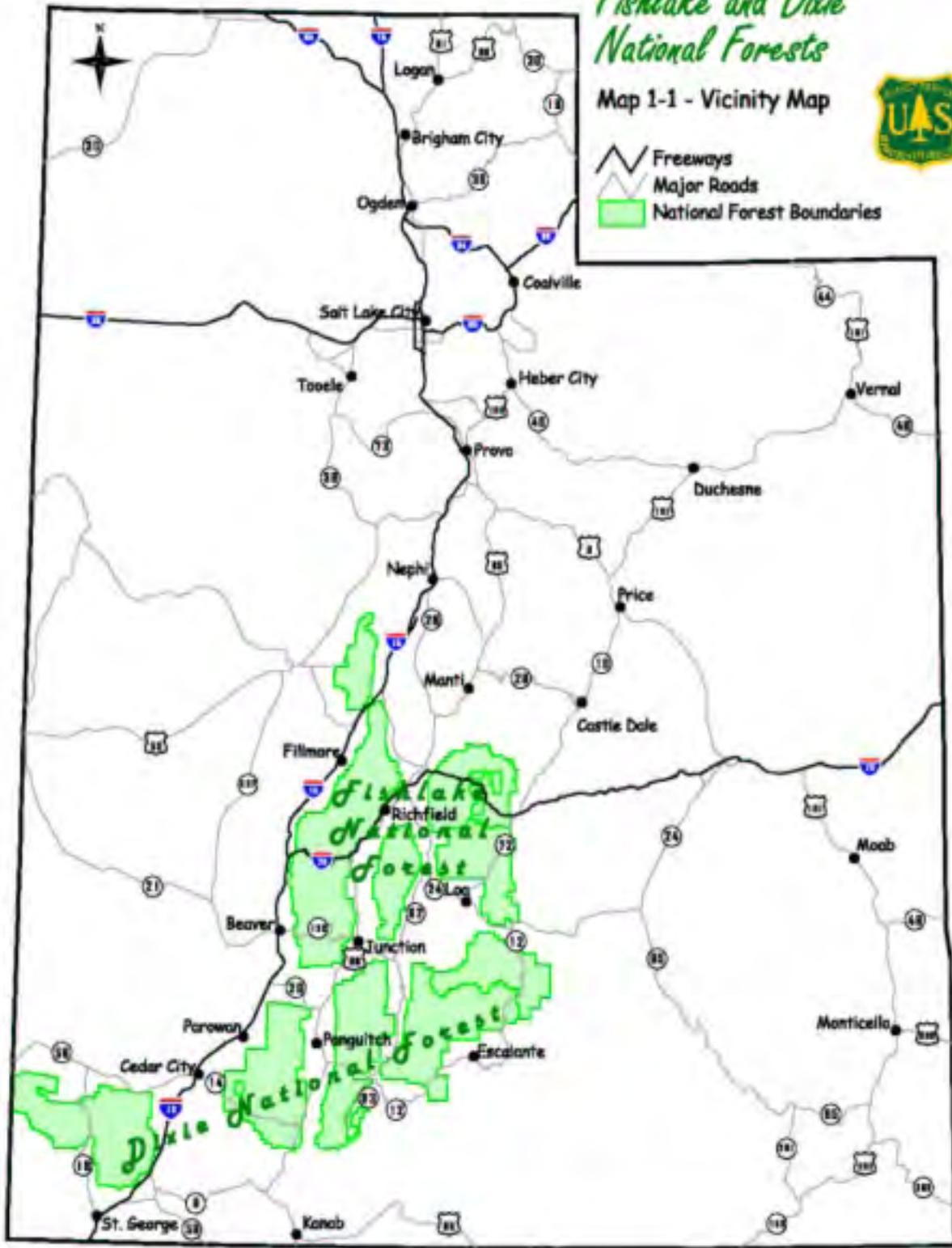
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Fishlake and Dixie National Forests

Map 1-1 - Vicinity Map



- Freeways
- Major Roads
- National Forest Boundaries



About This Handbook

You are invited to help us determine the next management plan direction for Dixie and Fishlake National Forests. This handbook provides a general guide to our work so far and the work yet to come. Perhaps you have helped already and perhaps you can help more as this work continues. We hope to see you at some of our future events and to hear your ideas and those of the many other folks who care about these two Forests.

As you may know, the Dixie and Fishlake National Forests in southwestern Utah are embarking on a revision of their forest plans. Developed in 1986, they provide broad direction for management of the two National Forests. Since then, much has changed on the forest, and among the people and communities who look to the forest for livelihood, recreation, and inspiration.

While none of us can halt inevitable change, we can work together to create a vision for the future of these forests and then to make it happen. Because the vision of the forests must include the people and communities who care about them, the leadership and the planning team for the Dixie and Fishlake National Forests are committed to a collaborative public involvement process that keeps the public in the loop and at the table.

This handbook explains key concepts of the forest planning process and the integrated collaborative public involvement process. Specifically, this handbook describes a unique approach for the public to work with the planning team on forestwide issues, as well as issues that affect local areas. There are several ways to participate, so that you and others can access the planning process at the level of involvement that suits your interests and needs.

The outcome of this unique approach to public involvement will be a proposed management direction package, which revises the current forest plans. This management direction package will be carried into the “formal” environmental analysis process that includes scoping and alternative development. At this early stage, you and others have a unique opportunity to be involved in developing the initial management proposal to revise the current plans, rather than simply reacting to a proposal developed by the Forest Service.

This collaborative approach provides an excellent opportunity for the public to work on planning the future management of landscapes they care about.

1. A Brief Introduction to Forest Plan Revision

1a. Forest Planning

The Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974 (RPA) created the need to prepare and periodically revise land management plans. The National Forest Management Act of 1976 (NFMA) requires that each national forest complete and periodically update a forest plan that captures a *“a balanced consideration of all resources in the land management process”* (quote from President Ford, speaking about NFMA). NFMA was passed in response to growing demands for goods, services and experiences on the national forests; today, demands are even greater and more diverse.

It is very important to note that *a forest plan does not prescribe site-specific actions* or projects. Instead, *a forest plan outlines broad goals and priorities*. These, in turn, guide local Forest Service managers on actions to take and projects to work on.

Forest plans must be revised every 10 to 15 years to keep up-to-date with changing natural and social conditions, new scientific knowledge, and new laws. Natural resources in southwestern Utah—such as forests, rangeland, water, and wildlife—have certainly changed due to natural causes (for instance, insect infestations). More significant are the changes in communities, including shifting patterns of land and resource use, different forms of economic activity, and new values.

Both the Dixie and Fishlake Forest Plans were completed in 1986; it’s time they were reviewed, and revised where necessary. ***Only those items that need to be changed will be updated and revised through the planning process.***

The Dixie and the Fishlake National Forests have decided to work together in revising their forest plans. These National Forests share many resource issues and similar landscapes. The decline of aspen forests, increases in recreation use, and threats to critical wildlife habitat are examples. These kinds of issues are more effectively addressed across the landscape of southwest Utah than on each Forest individually. The revision process will result in two forest plans. The Dixie and Fishlake National Forest Supervisors will make the final decisions for their revised forest plan, including which management strategy will be adopted.

The Forest Service believes that much of the direction in the plans may still be appropriate—but interested people will have many opportunities to express their opinions on what needs to change. As the planning team prepares to revise the forest plans, they realize there is tremendous value in inviting the public into the process early—earlier than ever before. They want interested citizens to help them craft a proposal for long-term management of the Forests, rather than simply asking them to react to a Forest Service proposal.

1b. Key points

- **Forest Plans provide strategic direction for Forest management – they are not “how to” documents.** Our revised Forest Plans will not prescribe site-specific actions or projects. Instead, they will outline broad goals and priorities. Those goals and priorities, in turn, will provide guidance about what kinds of actions to take where.
- **Forest Plans are streamlined and lean – they contain only direction not addressed elsewhere.** Our revised Forest Plans will not restate laws, regulations and policies. They will link and integrate with other government and agency plans.
- **Forest Plans are adaptable – they are kept current and relevant.** New information and monitoring of resource conditions will validate decisions made in the Forest Plans, or highlight needs for change. The Plans will be amended to reflect new information and learned results. They may also be amended to address new laws or policies.

2. What will be Decided?

2a. Decisions to make

The revised Dixie and Fishlake Forest Plans will begin by looking forward to a vision of the future. This will be a new component of the plans. The vision is a brief statement of what people want the Forests to be in the long term. How would they look? How would their natural elements—vegetation, water, soils, wildlife and so on—work together? How would people use and enjoy the Forests? What contribution would the Forests make to local communities and society as a whole? The Vision is a portrait of the Forests we want for our grandchildren — and their grandchildren. People will be asked for their ideas in crafting this vision.

The rest of the revised Forest Plans will comprise strategic direction. Some direction—perhaps much of it—may be brought forward from the current plans if it is found to be still appropriate.

Forest Plan Revision Topics and Questions (see Appendix 1) lists topics reviewed in the current forest plans. Under each topic are key questions that must be answered to assess whether management direction needs to be changed. Several topics have already been identified by the Forest Supervisors as needing a new look because conditions have changed so much: roadless area use, motorized recreation use, and dispersed recreation. Ultimately, there is a need to look at how natural elements of the landscape such as soil, water, wildlife and vegetation should be managed so they work well together.

There are six major components in a forest plan. In the revised plans, these components will be addressed for the topics needing change:

- 1) **Desired Conditions** — Desired conditions are the foundation—the primary focus—of a forest plan. Desired conditions are resource or social conditions that may exist now, could be moved toward, or could be achieved within the life of a forest plan.

- 2) **Objectives** — Objectives describe outcomes that must be achieved to move a forest toward desired conditions. Objectives are specific and measurable for a given resource.
- 3) **Standards** — Standards describe limitations required by law, regulation, etc. on land uses and management actions.
- 4) **Suitable and Unsuitable Uses** — For most forest uses, decisions must be made about whether an area is **capable** (can be used) and whether that area is **suitable** (should be used) for a given use. For instance, an area with very steep slopes is not capable of being used for livestock grazing. If an area without steep slopes is decided to be capable of supporting livestock grazing, then a *choice* must be made about whether it should be used for grazing. In making this choice, we recognize that an area may support a variety of uses.
- 5) **Special Designations and other Management Areas** — The Forest Supervisor may choose to designate special areas; recommend designation of special areas; or provide special management direction for existing areas. Examples of special designations are wilderness areas, wild and scenic rivers, research natural areas, botanical areas, significant caves, scenic byways, and historic areas.
- 6) **Monitoring** — A forest plan will include a strategy for gathering information to learn whether the plan is producing desired results. Monitoring will help determine if the forest plan needs to be modified.

Many of the public involvement activities will specifically address these components.

2b. Two levels of direction

Dixie and Fishlake Forest Plan direction will be provided at two levels: forestwide and by geographic area. Forestwide management direction will apply to all areas on the Forest, while geographic area direction will apply only to a specific geographic area. Geographic areas are specific areas of land that people consider to have unique, identifiable character; they have a “sense of place.”

Geographic areas represent a level of forest plan direction that is more localized than forestwide direction. Management direction is most specific at the geographic area level, and it includes local application of forestwide direction. In contrast to the management areas used in the current forest plans, geographic areas have more *integrated* resource management direction; they are more oriented to multiple uses.

For example, current management areas are designated for a primary management emphasis, such as timber management. As plans are revised under the concept of geographic areas, lands available for timber management within a geographic area would not be managed for timber harvest purposes solely. Rather, timber would be removed in accordance with the geographic area’s integrated desired conditions – timber management may be one use among many within a given geographic area. Geographic area direction reflects complex relationships among resource uses that must be considered to achieve desired conditions.

3. Our Approach to Public Involvement

3a. An Overview

Public involvement for forest plan revision on the Dixie and Fishlake National Forests will occur in two phases. Phase I will bring the Forest Service, other federal, state and local agencies and government, and interested members of the public together to work on information assessments and recommendations for a management direction proposal to revise the Dixie and Fishlake National Forest Plans. Phase II will begin by formally bringing the management direction proposal before the public through scoping.

“Scoping” is a structured public involvement opportunity required by the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) for any major federal action that has an impact on the human environment. During scoping, the public is asked to specifically comment on the management direction proposal (proposed action). To mark the beginning of the formal scoping period, the planning team will provide a press release, publish notices in local newspapers, announce it on their website (<http://www.fs.fed.us/dxnf/forest/index.html>), and publish an announcement in the Federal Register.

Each public involvement approach by itself is insufficient because voices and perspectives are inevitably not heard. Even though there may be opportunities for involvement, not everyone can or will want to take them. The public involvement efforts in Phase I and Phase II complement each other by involving people in ways that are most comfortable and convenient for them. The Dixie and Fishlake Forests leadership and planning team believe that the extra time working with the public during Phase I will pay substantial dividends in time and dollars saved during Phase II and forest plan implementation.

3b. Where We've Been

Phase I of the collaborative process has been under way since January 2002, though the Forest Service began discussing and designing this process in early 2001. Among the collaborative public involvement activities undertaken in 2002, three sets of public meetings were held: Planning Process Meetings, Forest-level Workshops, and Local-level Workshops. **Planning Process Meetings** were held in Cedar City (April) and Richfield (May). The purpose of these meetings was to orient the public to forest planning concepts, to discuss the proposed collaborative process, and to agree on group behaviors for future meetings. One hundred four people participated in these meetings. The participants agreed to the proposed collaborative process and reached consensus on acceptable meeting behaviors.

Forest-level Workshops were held in Las Vegas, Salt Lake City, Cedar City and Richfield in June. The purpose of these workshops was to identify “what’s broken” and “what’s missing” from forestwide goals and objectives listed in the current Dixie and Fishlake Forest Plans. Sixty-nine people participated in these workshops. The outcome of the workshops was a written record of the goals and objectives people liked, didn’t like, and would like to see added, as well as their reasons (for those that were discussed during the workshop).

Local-level Workshops were held in 10 local communities in August and September. The purpose of these workshops was to define the concept of geographic areas, discover how, where and why these areas are being used, and to collect specific resource information for these geographic areas. Two hundred thirty-one people participated in these workshops. The outcome was a written record of uses and conditions in each geographic area, plus suggested adjustments to proposed geographic area boundaries.

In addition to the written record of each meeting and workshop, written comments were solicited and received from the public. A copy of written comments, meeting and workshop summaries is available through the website (<http://www.fs.fed.us/dxnf/forest/index.html>) or upon request.

3c. Promise to the public

The Forest Service is asking interested members of the public to work with them—and with each other—to develop recommendations for a management direction proposal that will revise the current plans. Throughout this collaborative process, the Forest Service is looking for areas of substantial agreement (not necessarily consensus) on recommendations. Some of the recommendations will deal with forestwide issues; others will be specific to local geographic areas. Topical work groups (see Section 5 of this handbook) will be established for those issues that are forestwide and particularly challenging.

The management direction proposal developed at the end of Phase I of public involvement is unlikely to completely meet everyone's interests. However, identification of areas of substantial agreement will result in a better decision for all. ***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.***

3d. Collaboration priorities and principles

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.

In thinking about collaboration, the Forest Service identified six ***Collaboration 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"

Based on these priorities, the Forest Service adopted the following eight ***Collaboration Principles*** by which to design and measure the success of this effort:

- 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 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.

The Dixie-Fishlake Collaboration Process is designed to complement the forest planning process by engaging all of the interested parties early and often. It is important to a successful process and eventual decisions to encourage all communities of interest to participate as early as possible.

Collaboration is not just a series of public meetings. While the "public meeting" is a basic element of collaboration, it is not the only aspect. Meetings are just one way to allow people to participate actively in the planning process. To work collaboratively means that knowledge and information from the Forest Service and the public must flow both ways in a manner that can be shared by all interested parties.

3e. Special relationships

Everyone can have a voice in forest planning. Some organizations, however, have a special relationship with the Forest Service that obligates the agency to work with them in special ways. For example:

County governments (county commissioners) are entitled to participate as cooperating agencies in forest planning because, through the electoral process, they have been authorized to represent the concerns of their citizens. As cooperating agencies, they provide information and expertise in the development of assessments and inventories that contribute to the plans, and they comment on draft documents.

State and federal regulatory agencies, such as the Environmental Protection Agency, provide comment and information during the planning process and can require measures to ensure compliance with laws they oversee.

State and federal agencies that share public land management concerns participate with the Forest Service in coordinating planning efforts and sharing information and concerns. - Examples of these agencies are the Bureau of Land Management; the National Park Service; the Utah Division of Forestry; Fire and State Lands; and the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources.

Federally recognized Indian tribes are sovereign nations. The forest supervisors work personally with tribal leaders to ensure that treaty rights are observed in the forest plans, and that tribal concerns are addressed.

3f. Who is involved?

Many individuals and groups have already started participating in first phase of forest plan revision, as described in Where We've Been (3b). A number of these people represent interests that include ranching, outfitting/guiding, the environment, OHV use, hunting, telecommunications, trails, rural homeowners, forest products, and education. Many other participants are private individuals who simply love the Forests and want to help. Most participants, whether they represent an interest or not, are concerned with a range of forest issues.

The county commissioners of the counties of southwest Utah have attended workshops and meetings, and contributed ideas in commission meetings and personal conversations. Mayors and city managers have also become involved.

State and federal agency representatives, ranging from public land management agencies to wildlife, water quality, and recreation agencies, have attended meetings and sent letters about issues of concern.

The Paiute Tribe of Utah is contributing their ideas at meetings with tribal leadership.

A complete listing of meeting and workshop summaries, including lists of participants, is available through the planning website (<http://www.fs.fed.us/dxnf/forest/index.html>), or can be provided upon request. In addition, the planning website contains links to the websites of many participating agencies and organizations. Check these out for more information about participants in the collaborative process.

4. Looking ahead – The Road Map through Phase I

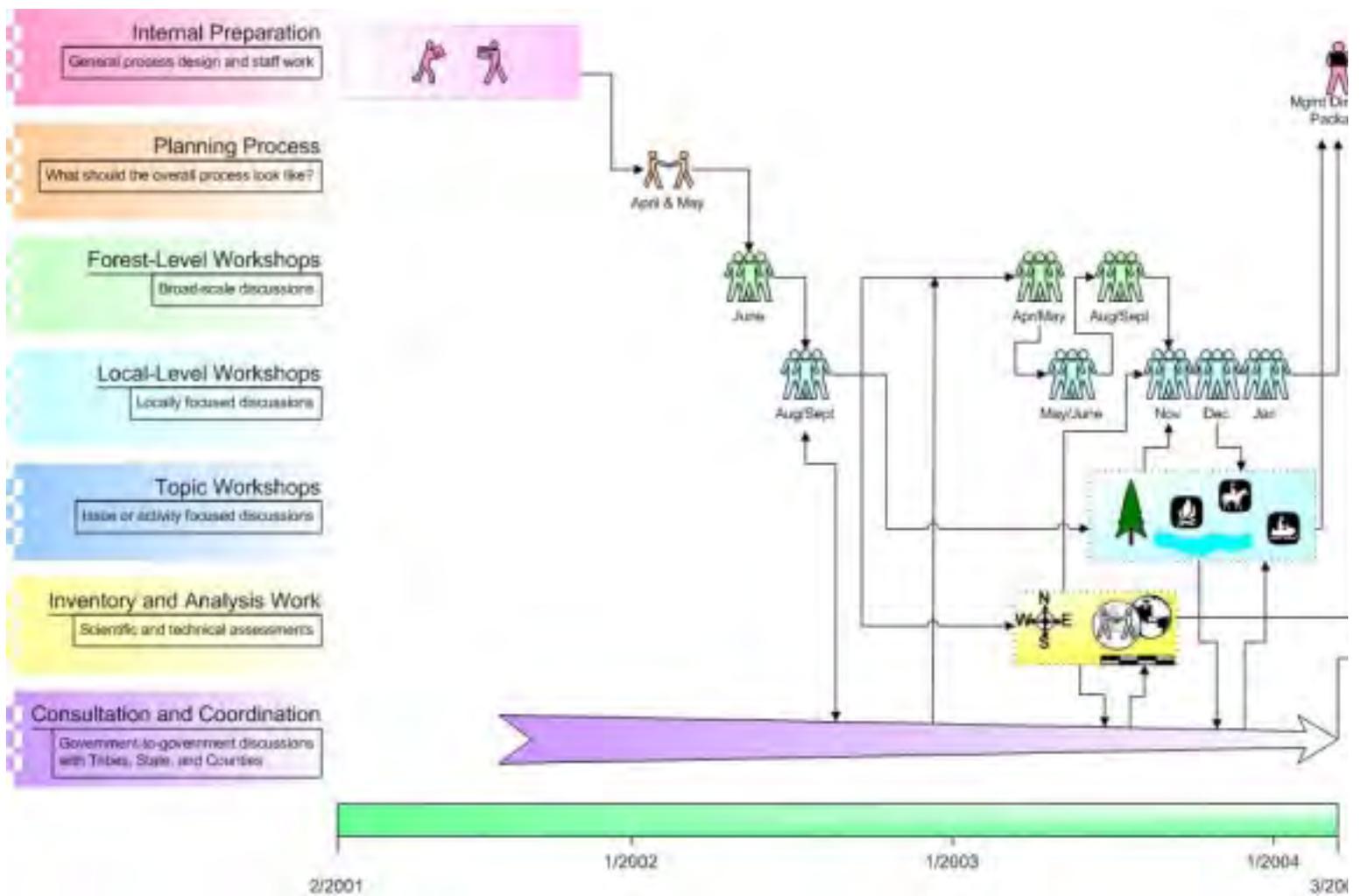
There are many opportunities to plug into the collaborative process. As mentioned earlier, we will be looking at forest plan revision topics at two different levels: Topics that are best addressed at a forestwide level, and those that are best addressed at a local, geographic area level. There will be specific public involvement opportunities to work at either or both levels.

There are also different degrees of collaboration that will occur, depending on the topic. For example, much of the inventory and assessment work will be completed by the Forest Service or contractors and shared with the public as information. In other instances (for example, the forest vision) the planning team may prepare a first draft of a product, and then ask the public to review and comment on it. And in other instances (for example the topical work groups), the public may be asked to work with the planning team to actually develop products.

The following activities are planned to occur throughout the remainder of Phase I, with a target date of March 2004 for the proposed management direction package:

March - Nov 2003	The Forest Service, cooperating agencies and contractors will complete inventory and data assessment work
April 2003	The Forest Service will prepare a first draft of a forestwide vision document.
May-June 2003	The public will be invited to participate in developing desired conditions at the geographic area level through a series of ten local community workshops
Sep-October 2003	The public will be invited to participate in forest-level meetings where inventory and assessment information will be reviewed, as well as forestwide and geographic area desired conditions (based on information from the May-June public workshops)
October 2003 – February 2004	Topical Work Groups will be convened and will work with the Forest Service to complete the work group recommendations on forest-level issues
November 2003 – February 2004	The public will be invited to participate in a series of local community workshops to complete the following by geographic area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalize desired conditions • Develop objectives • Review standards • Develop recommendations
March 2004	The Forest Service planning team will compile the recommendations from the Topical Work Groups and public workshops into a proposed management direction package.

The Road Map - A visual guide through Phase I



5. Topical Work Groups (a unique public involvement opportunity)

5A. Purpose of Topical Work Groups

Initially, Topical Work Groups (TWiGs) will be established for revision topics that are most appropriately dealt with at the forestwide scale (they are topics that are not specific to any given geographic area—refer to Appendix 1)). Potential topics are range suitability, timber suitability, roadless area inventory and evaluation, dispersed recreation suitability, and motorized recreation suitability. Other TWiGs may be formed later. The topical workgroups will provide interested parties a chance to investigate a topic that interests them at a more intensive level.

The TWiGs will review the applicable Inventory and Assessment work in a shared learning environment. They will also review the proposed forest-level desired conditions developed earlier in the process. In general, the task of each topical workgroup will be to propose criteria for determining capable lands/suitable lands process for determining suitability, and identifying areas that may be unsuited. However, each work group may have a slightly different mission. **The following are examples of potential TWiGs and their proposed purpose:**

1. Range suitability; - review capability inventory and suggest areas not suitable for livestock grazing. Provide rationale where applicable.
2. Timber suitability - review capability inventory and suggest areas not suitable for timber harvest. Provide rationale where applicable. Suggest what areas, if any, should be “timber production” areas.
3. Roadless area inventory and evaluation - review updated inventory and provide comments to refine inventory. Help with evaluation and description of roadless characteristics.
4. Dispersed recreation suitability - review inventory and current condition information, refine where needed. Suggest methods for determining capability and suitability.
5. Motorized recreation suitability - review inventory and current condition information, refine where needed. Suggest methods for determining capability and suitability.
6. Wilderness Area recommendations - review potentially eligible areas that meet the legally established criteria for wilderness. Develop a proposal for which eligible areas should be recommended to Congress.
7. Wild and Scenic River recommendations - Coordinate with the State of Utah in their review of potentially eligible rivers/stream segments that meet the legally established criteria for wild and scenic rivers. Develop a proposal for which eligible rivers/stream segments should be recommended to Congress.

It may also be appropriate to develop forestwide objectives for each topic area. Objectives must address desired conditions, related issues, and available assessment information. Objectives may be supplemented with maps, photos, indicators, and charts and figures. The topical workgroups will also discuss and document factors that could influence the accomplishment of objectives. While development of “standards” is **not** the focus of the topical workgroups, if suggestions for standards do come up, they should be captured for later use.

5B. Topical Work Group Logistics

Each working group will be composed of citizens who volunteer to work with the planning team and other resource specialists. The Utah Center for Rural Life, working in cooperation with the planning team, will serve as convener or co-convener of the TWiGs. A third-party neutral facilitator will facilitate and document work group meetings, managing meetings according to a set of operational guidelines agreed to by each group at their first meeting.

The participants will determine the timing and location of topical working group meetings. There may be meetings in the evenings and on weekends, especially for field trips.

TWiGs will begin their work in the fall of 2003, and could take three to six months to complete their assignments. This does *not* mean that a TWiG will have to meet every week for six months—but a significant commitment will be required. Workgroups will also identify any goals they may have in addition to a list of recommendations indicating areas of substantial agreement. If there is disagreement, capturing the rationale behind those differences will also be important.

5C. Topical Work Group Outcomes

The specific outcomes for each topical work group will depend on the workgroup's purpose. The expected outcomes will be agreed to at the first workgroup meeting.

The planning team will integrate the products from each topical work group, and the input received through the other collaborative activities, into a proposed management direction package. This package can then be taken forward into a more formal environmental analysis process (Phase II).

6. We'll know we're done when...

As mentioned earlier in the handbook, the Forest Service is trying a unique approach to public involvement. In the end, all participants should feel that their concerns, interests, and objectives are expressed in some form in the recommendations to the Forest Service. It is our hope that personal and working relationships among participants in this process will be strengthened, as well.

Proposed Management Direction Package: The end product for Phase I is a proposed management direction package that would revise the current forest plans. The planning team will integrate input from public workshops and the products from each topical working group into the proposed management direction package. This proposal can then be taken forward into a more formal environmental analysis process. The proposed management direction package for each forest will contain the following:

1. Forestwide desired conditions, objectives and standards
2. Geographic area desired conditions, objectives and standards
3. Description of capable uses and suitable uses
4. Proposals for special area designations

The package would be complete enough to begin formal environmental analysis, but it would not be completely whole or polished. The “polishing” would occur through the environmental analysis (Phase II) with additional public collaboration.

Revised Forest Plans: The end product for Phase II will be two revised forest plans – one for each of the Dixie and Fishlake National Forests. The Forest Service envisions a new look for the Forest Plan. So, even though the focus will be on revising only that forest plan direction that needs to be changed, *the appearance of the revised forest plan itself will be substantially different than the current plan.* As we move into Phase II, the expectations of what the revised forest plans will look like will be shared and discussed.

7. Keeping Tabs on the Process

As we continue moving through this collaborative process, we need to periodically stop and ask ourselves: 1) Are we doing what we said we would do?, 2) Is it working?, and 3) If not, what should we do differently?

At the end of each meeting or workshop in 2002, most participants and Forest Service staff completed a written evaluation. The results of these evaluations were compiled and analyzed. In addition, several participants were randomly contacted following most meetings/workshops to get their personal impressions. Finally, a group of Forest Service people and others involved in designing and leading the collaborative process met in November to discuss their own observations about what worked and didn't work.

We expect to continue monitoring and evaluating the process in 2003 and beyond, using a combination of written evaluations and informal conversations with those who are participating. Do you have some thoughts on how things are going? Please contact one of the people listed in Section 8 of this handbook – they would appreciate hearing from you.

8. Collaborative Process Contact Information

Website: <http://www.fs.fed.us/dxnf/forest/index.html>

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APPENDIX 1 – FOREST PLAN REVISION TOPICS AND QUESTIONS

The following topics help define the scope of the Dixie and Fishlake National Forest management plan revision effort:

Air
Biotic Diversity
Dispersed Recreation Use
Energy/Mineral Potential
Cultural/Historic Resources
Land Ownership
Motorized Recreation Use
Rangeland Assessment
Recreation Opportunity Spectrum
Roads Analysis Process
Roadless Areas
Scenery Management
Social/Economic Assessment
Soils
Timberland Assessment
Vegetation Condition
Water
Wild and Scenic Rivers
Wilderness Evaluation

Each topic has four parts:

1. An *objective* that the forest plans intend to address.
2. *Question(s)* that the revision effort intends to answer.
 - a. Where appropriate, questions have been referenced to the proper section of the proposed forest planning regulations (36 CFR 219)
 - b. Where appropriate, questions that address suitable uses¹ on National Forests are identified. The associated capability question is also identified.
3. Context of the *information needed* to answer the question(s).
4. Identification of *analysis tools* that will be used to develop these answers.

Each topic, with its *objective, questions, information needed and analysis tools*, is listed in the pages that follow. Questions will guide the revision process to 1) determine whether management direction for a topic needs to be changed in the existing forest plans, 2) define the analysis needed for the topic, and 3) make a finding. We encourage you to help us refine the list of questions. Call Frank Fay at 435.896.9233 or Tony Erba at 435.865.3700 to give your suggestions.

¹ *Suitability questions address whether it is appropriate to allow a land use to occur on the National Forest. They are mostly social or political questions. Capability questions address whether the National Forest can biologically or physically sustain a land use.*

Air

Objective

Meet or exceed air quality standards

Question(s)

1. Do the Forest Plan decisions (especially forest fuels management) have a high likelihood of meeting state air quality standards?

Information Needed

- State and/or federal air quality standards
- On-going monitoring results (compliance/non-compliance from forest information)
- Past burning activity effects (obtain from state agency)

Analysis Tools

Biotic Diversity

Objective

Identify sustainable ecological conditions that provide for maintenance and/or restoration of communities that support native and desirable species

Question(s)

1. Do the Forest Plan decisions have a high likelihood of providing for the diversity of plant and animal communities and tree species?
 - Covered under Options 1 and 2 (36 CFR 219.13(b)(2))
2. Do the Forest Plan decisions provide for measurable progress towards the maintenance and restoration of ecological conditions that will support the diversity of plant and animal communities and tree species?
 - Covered under Option 1 (36 CFR 219.13(b)(2)(i))
3. Do the Forest Plan decisions provide for a high likelihood of supporting native and desired non-native vertebrates and vascular plants within their ranges?
 - Covered by Option 1 (36 CFR 219.13(b)(2)(ii))
4. Do the Forest Plan decisions foster the maintenance or restoration of biological diversity, at ecosystem and species levels, within the larger landscape in which the plan area is embedded?
 - Covered by Option 2 (36 CFR 219.13(b)(2)(i))
5. Do the Forest Plan decisions reflect the unique opportunities that National Forest System lands provide to contribute to recovery of federally listed species?
 - Covered under Option 2 (36 CFR 219.13(b)(2)(ii))

Information Needed

- Extent and condition of habitat for focus species and species of concern
- Available scientific information on trends in the quantity, quality, and distribution of habitats and trends in animal populations
- Provisions within Biological Opinions or conservation strategies

Analysis Tools

Ecoregion Assessment for Utah High Plateau (completed by The Nature Conservancy)

Dispersed Recreation Use

Objective

Provide a wide variety of desired recreation opportunities

Question(s)

1. What areas are suitable for dispersed recreation use? (*capability question*)
 - Covered under 36 CFR 219.4(a)(4)
 - Reasons for non-suitable use:
 - § Law, regulation, executive order,

- § Resource management directives,
 - § Land productivity impairment,
 - § Incompatible with desired conditions
2. What opportunities should the Forest Plan provide? (*suitability question*)
 3. Where should these opportunities be located? (*suitability question*)

Information Needed

- Current use locations
- What people want (demands/trends)
- Capabilities of the land (environmental constraints, carrying capacity)
- Conflicts with resources and other uses
- Soil, vegetation, water, and wildlife resource impacts

Analysis Tools

Recreation Opportunity Spectrum, National Visitor Use Monitoring

Energy/Mineral Potential

Objective

Provide Forests' share for the minerals/energy needs of the American people

Question(s)

1. What areas are administratively available for energy resource development? (*suitability question*)
 - a. What stipulations should be imposed to protect the environment?
 - Covered under 36 CFR 219.4(a)(4)
 - Reasons for non-suitable use:
 - Law, regulation, executive order,
 - Resource management directives,
 - Land productivity impairment
 - Incompatible with desired conditions
2. Where should the Forest Plan allow saleable mineral (cinders, sand/gravel, rocks, decorative stone) activities? (*suitability question*)
3. For locatable minerals, should any land be withdrawn from mineral entry?
4. Do the forests need additional, or changed, utility corridors?

Information Needed

- For all leasables, current administratively available acreage; stipulations currently used and their effectiveness
- Known locatable mineral sites

Analysis Tools

Reasonably Foreseeable Drilling Scenario

Cultural/Historic Resources

Objective

Protect the cultural and historic resources on the Forests

Question(s)

1. What areas should be administratively designated?
 - Covered under 36 CFR 219.15(b)(2)

Information Needed

Location of cultural and historic areas

Analysis Tools

Land Ownership

Objective

- a) Identify land ownership consolidation/disposal needs for efficient Forest management
- b) Provide for management compatible with adjacent landowners

Question(s)

1. Do the Forest Plan decisions provide for an efficient land ownership management scheme?
2. Is Forest Plan direction compatible with adjacent landowner management objectives?

Information Needed

- Adjacent landowner management objectives
- Utah landownership map (GIS)

Analysis Tools

Motorized Recreation Use

Objective

Provide opportunities for motorized recreation use within acceptable resource and social impacts

Question(s)

1. What areas are suitable for motorized recreation use? (*capability question*)
 - Covered under 36 CFR 219.4(a)(4)
 - Reasons for non-suitable use:
 - Law, regulation, executive order,
 - Resource management directives,
 - Land productivity impairment
 - Incompatible with desired conditions
2. What are “acceptable impacts”? (*suitability question*)
3. What use levels can National Forests sustain? (*capability question*)
4. How much access will be allowed? (*suitability question*)
5. Where will this access be allowed (overland travel, designated routes)? (*suitability question*)
6. What specific use will be allowed where? (*suitability question*)
7. How will conflicting uses be balanced?

Information Needed

- Type of use (where does it occur? how much?)
- Use experience (why do people do this for fun? what experience do they want?)
- Use levels and trends
- Soil, vegetation, water, wildlife resource impacts
- Compliance with existing travel map designations

Analysis Tools

Rangeland Assessment

Objective

Identify lands where livestock grazing can be sustained, consistent with achieving objectives or desired conditions.

Question(s)

1. Where are the suitable lands for livestock grazing? (*capability question*)
 - Covered under 36 CFR 219.4(a)(4)
 - Reasons for non-suitable use:

- Law, regulation, executive order,
- Resource management directives,
- Land productivity impairment
- Incompatible with desired conditions

Information Needed

- Vegetative structure (presence or absence of palatable species)
- Soil productivity (minimum growth – 200 pounds forage/ac/yr)
- Operational/economic constraints (i.e., slopes, distance from water, etc)
- Past range program accomplishments.

Analysis Tools

Forest Service Range Suitability Protocol for Region 4, range condition and trend analysis, monitoring information

Recreation Opportunity Spectrum

Objective

Use as a tool to develop desired condition statements

Question(s)

1. What is the current recreation setting on the Forests?
2. What are the desired physical, managerial and social attributes of a particular landscape?
3. What mode(s) of transportation will be available for public use?

Information Needs

- Current recreation uses and trends
- Current physical, managerial, and social attributes on the Forests

Analysis Tools

Forest Service Technical Guide for Integrating Recreation into Plan Revisions

Roads Analysis Process

Objective

Identify a transportation system to meet management needs.

Question(s)

1. What minimum transportation system is needed to support Forest Plan decisions?

Information Needs

- Follow Roads Analysis Process to meet FSM 7700 direction (addressing Maintenance Levels 3, 4, and 5 classified roads)

Analysis Tools

Roads Analysis: Informing Decisions About Managing the National Forest Transportation System (Misc. FS-643, August 1999)

Roadless Areas

Objective

Identify non-wilderness roadless area characteristics/values to conserve and maintain.

Question(s)

1. What management direction should be assigned to unroaded areas not recommended for wilderness?
2. Are any areas worthy of administrative special designation to protect existing roadless values?
 - Covered under 36 CFR 219.15(b)(2)

Information Needs

- Where are roads located?
- Developments, past management, etc.
- Information to evaluate roadless characteristics

Analysis Tools

Forest Service Roadless Area Protocol for Region 4

Scenery Management

Objective

Identify existing and desired scenic conditions across the Forests; use as a tool to develop desired condition statements.

Question(s)

1. What are the scenic integrity objectives across the landscape, consistent with achieving objectives or desired conditions?

Information Needs

- Scenery inventory of each Forest (landscape character description, scenic attractiveness map, existing scenic integrity map, visibility map, scenic class map).

Analysis Tools

Scenery Management System Handbook

Social/Economic Assessment

Objective

Identify the implications of National Forest management for local communities/economies and vice versa

Question(s)

1. How do human activities, along with social and economic conditions and trends, affect ecological sustainability?
 - a. What are the conditions and trends of social and economic systems?
2. How can people contribute to maintaining and restoring the health of NFS land?
3. What values and benefits do NFS land provide?
4. What is the relationship between people and the National Forests?
 - Questions 1-4 covered under 36 CFR 219.13(a)(2) and (3)
5. How does the health and use of the forest affect the social and economic health conditions of the communities?

Information Needs

- Local community social and economic conditions and trends
- Community linkages to National Forests

Analysis Tools

Utah Governor's Office of Planning and Budget's socio-economic assessment and inventory

Soils

Objective

Meet or exceed Region 4 soil quality standards

Question(s)

1. Do the Forest Plan decisions have a high likelihood of meeting regional soil quality standards?
2. Does the Forest Plan direction provide for the maintenance and restoration of soil resources?

Information Needs

- § Region 4 standards
- § On-going monitoring results (compliance/non-compliance)
- § Best Management Practice effectiveness

Analysis Tools

Monitoring information

Timberland Assessment

Objectives

Identify lands where timber harvest is not allowed, where harvest is allowed for timber production, and where trees may be cut for multiple use values.

Estimate the amount of timber that can be sold annually on a sustained-yield basis, consistent with achieving objectives or desired conditions.

Question(s)

1. What areas are suitable for timber production? (*capability question*)
 - o Covered under 36 CFR 219.4(a)(4) and 36 CFR 219.16
 - o Reasons for non-suitable use:
 - § Land is not forest land.
 - § Technology not available to harvest timber without irreversible damage.
 - § No reasonable assurance that such lands can be restocked within 5 years.
 - § Timber production would violate statute, Executive order, regulation, or agency directives.
 - § Lands have been withdrawn by Secretary of Agriculture or the Chief of the Forest Service.
 - § Not justified after considering physical, ecological, social, economic, and other pertinent factors.
2. Where should timber harvest be allowed for timber production? (*suitability question*)
 - o Covered under 36 CFR 219.16(b)
 - o What is the ASQ level, based on sustained-yield basis, for the timber production lands?
 - § Covered under 36 CFR 219.17(a)
3. Where should timber harvest be allowed for multiple use values? (*suitability question*)
 - o Covered under 36 CFR 219.16(b) and (c)

Information Needs

Suitable Timberland

- § Vegetative structure
- § Presence of commercial species
- § Soil productivity (minimum growth – 20 cu ft/ac/yr)
- § Regeneration capability
- § Operational/economic constraints (i.e., slopes, available harvest systems, distance from roads, etc)

Allowable Sale Quantity

- § Suitable land base
- § Productivity (growth and yield models)
- § Existing stand structure (size class, species, density)
- § Management practices (silviculture)
- § Past timber program accomplishments

Analysis Tools

Forest Service Timber Suitability Protocol for Region 4, monitoring information

Vegetation Condition

Objective

Identify conditions that can sustain society's needs (range, timber, species habitat, recreation, etc.) and maintain and/or restore proper ecological function (riparian and upland communities, native and desirable species) across landscapes and watersheds.

Question(s)

1. What vegetation condition (composition and structure) do we desire to provide for multiple uses in a sustainable manner?
2. What areas have special vegetation management considerations (i.e., wildland urban interface, recreation administrative sites, riparian areas)?

Information Needs

- Disturbance regimes (fire, insect, disease, and associated threats/uncertainty/risks)
- Noxious weeds
- Similar "information needs" items for timberland assessment, rangeland assessment, water, soils, scenery management, and biotic diversity

Analysis Tools

Water

Objective

Meet or exceed state water quality standards; provide for protection, restoration, conservation, and improvement of watershed conditions that protect soil and water resources

Question(s)

1. What is the current and foreseeable future NFS water needs, and water quality/quantity to support those needs?
 - Covered by 36 CFR 219.13(b)(1)(i)(B) – Options 1 and 2 for Sustainability
2. Do Forest Plan decisions have a high likelihood of meeting or exceeding state water quality standards?
3. Do the Forest Plan decisions provide direction for improving impaired water bodies on the State's 303(d) list?
4. Does Forest Plan direction provide for the maintenance and restoration of water resources?

Information Needs

- State and/or federal water quality standards
- Beneficial uses
- Impaired water bodies (303(d) listing)
- On-going monitoring results (compliance/non-compliance)
- Best Management Practice effectiveness

Analysis Tools

Monitoring results

Wild and Scenic Rivers

Objective

Evaluate rivers/streams for wild/scenic/recreation eligibility and suitability

Question(s)

1. What river/stream segments would be eligible for suitable considerations? (*capability question*)
2. What eligible rivers/stream segments should be recommended for designation? (*suitability question*)
 - Covered under 36 CFR 219.15(b)(1)

Information Needs

- Inventory all streams/rivers that meet Region 4 criteria
- Identify Outstanding Remarkable Values
- Impoundments
- Flow

Analysis Tools

MOU with Utah for Wild and Scenic River eligibility

Wilderness Evaluation

Objective

Evaluate roadless areas for wilderness eligibility/recommendation.

Question(s)

1. What roadless areas would be available for wilderness considerations? (*capability question*)
2. What available areas should be recommended for wilderness designation? (*suitability question*)
 - o Covered under 36 CFR 219.15(b)(1)

Information Needs

- Where are roads located?
- Developments
- Past management
- Information to evaluate wilderness characteristic criteria.

Analysis Tools

Forest Service Roadless Area Protocol for Region 4

² *This question may be deferred until after the revision decision is made. We will likely follow the State's lead for pursuing suitable segments for Congressional consideration.*