

Regional Interagency Executive Committee

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Memorandum

Date: July 26, 2016

To: Regional Interagency Executive Committee

From: James M. Peña, Chair, Regional Interagency Executive Committee



Subject: Distribution of the “Memorandum of Understanding for Management of Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management Forest Land within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl at the Regional Level”

This memorandum transmits the “Memorandum of Understanding for Management of Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management Forest Land within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl at the Regional Level” (MOU) dated March 1, 2016, to the Regional Interagency Executive Committee.

The purpose of the MOU (as described in Section III of that document) is “...maintain an interagency framework to achieve two distinct goals. The first goal is cooperative planning, improved decision making, and coordinated implementation as Federal land management agencies revise land management plans within the range of the northern spotted owl. The second goal is improved coordination and collaboration with State, Tribal, and local governments as they seek to implement management approaches that support or complement Federal agency goals within that range.”

The MOU describes the Regional Interagency Executives continued commitment to cooperation, coordination, and collaboration; it is the fifth five-year agreement stemming from the Northwest Forest Plan. A copy of the final, signed MOU is enclosed.

If you have questions regarding the MOU, please contact Becky Gravenmier at bgravenmier@fs.fed.us (503-808-2851).

Enclosure:

Memorandum of Understanding for Management of Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management Forest Land within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl at the Regional Level (dated March 1, 2016)

cc:

SMG
REO reps

2354/bg

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MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

FOR

**MANAGEMENT OF FOREST SERVICE AND BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
FOREST LAND WITHIN THE RANGE OF THE NORTHERN SPOTTED OWL**

AT THE REGIONAL LEVEL

I. PARTIES

This is a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) among the following parties:

US Army Corps of Engineers	USDI, Bureau of Indian Affairs
USDA, Forest Service, Region 5	USDI, Bureau of Land Management
USDA, Forest Service, Region 6	USDI, Fish & Wildlife Service, Pacific Region
USDA, Forest Service, PNW Research Station	USDI, Fish & Wildlife Service, Pacific SW Region
USDA, Forest Service, PSW Research Station	USDI, Geological Survey
USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service	USDI, National Park Service
USDC, NOAA, National Marine Fisheries Service	US Environmental Protection Agency

II. BACKGROUND

In 1993, a comprehensive forest plan was initiated to end the impasse over management of Federal forest land in the Pacific Northwest within the range of the northern spotted owl. The 1994 Northwest Forest Plan (NWFP) Record of Decision and Standards and Guidelines used an innovative approach based on ecosystem and watershed management. The NWFP transcended traditional administrative boundaries while addressing resource management, economic, and social issues. Implementation of the NWFP has required cooperation, coordination, and collaboration among the participating Federal agencies, and with States, Tribes, and local governments.

This MOU conveys the Regional Interagency Executive Committee's (RIEC) commitment to continued cooperation in the management of Federal forests in support of the principles first articulated in the NWFP consistent with agency-specific mandates. These five principles include:

- To include the human and economic dimensions;
- Protect the long term health of forests, wildlife and waterways;
- Actions must be scientifically sound, ecologically credible, and legally responsible;
- Provide a predictable and sustainable level of timber sales and non-timber resources; and
- Federal agencies must work together in collaboration not confrontation.

The USDI Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the USDA Forest Service (FS) are undergoing distinct and separate planning processes to revise land use and resource management plans within the NWFP planning area and may adopt different strategies to support these principles based upon their respective legal authorities during their plan revision and update process.

III. PURPOSE

Twenty-one years after the USDA FS and the USDI BLM land and resource management plans were amended by the NWFP, the parties to this MOU are committed to continued cooperation, coordination, and collaboration, while recognizing that both the FS and the BLM are required to periodically revise their land and resource management plans. The purpose of this MOU is to maintain an interagency framework to achieve two distinct goals. The first goal is cooperative planning, improved decision making, and coordinated implementation as Federal land management agencies revise land management plans within the range of the northern spotted owl. The second goal is improved coordination and collaboration with State, Tribal, and local governments as they seek to implement management approaches that support or complement Federal agency goals within that range. Fulfillment of both of these goals is integral to an ecosystem management approach that is scientifically sound, ecologically credible, and legally responsible.

The parties to this MOU agree to continue to:

- Refine and implement a cohesive vision and shared sense of mission for the management of Federal forest lands that balances multiple objectives, including the restoration and conservation of forest ecosystems and the production of sustainable economic and social benefits from the forests;
- Improve their ability to monitor and evaluate their progress toward established goals, and to adapt to change, as appropriate, in a cohesive manner;
- Continue cultivating trust, coordination, and collaboration among Federal agencies, within individual agencies, and with State, Tribal, and local governments;
- Integrate the best scientific information available from research and monitoring into adaptive management decisions;
- Work towards building a seamless, current, and accessible information network to support ecosystem management on Federal lands;
- Share information, technology, and expertise, and pool resources in order to make and implement better-informed decisions related to ecosystem and adaptive management across jurisdictional boundaries;
- Improve integrated application of agency budgets to maximize efficient use of funds toward the implementation and monitoring of sound forest management strategies;
- Coordinate Federal forest management activities with related or complementary efforts of State, Tribal, and local governments;
- Coordinate the ecosystem management aspects of sound forest management strategies with related or complementary socio-economic opportunities at appropriate scales including the community level;
- Implement interagency, broad scale, long term monitoring in the NWFP area during and after plan revisions to the extent Federal agency budgets allow;
- Communicate and coordinate among RIEC executives and their respective Washington Offices regarding the status of tasks associated with the Department-level "Memorandum of Understanding between the US Department of the Interior, US Department of Agriculture, and US Department of Commerce on BLM Forest Management in Western Oregon" (signed by the Secretaries in September 2010).

IV. STRUCTURE

The following interagency groups will continue to develop, monitor, and implement the comprehensive forest management principles for Federal forests within the range of the northern

spotted owl. They will support the development, implementation, and periodic adjustment of land and resource management plans of the FS and the BLM as appropriate. This agreement does not substitute for or alter the line authority of individual agencies.

It is the intent of this MOU to describe the functions of those coordination structures included in the NWFP Record of Decision and Standards and Guidelines, as well as new groups that the Federal agencies have established. It is understood that Federal agencies may establish additional coordination mechanisms and modify existing ones as needed.

This MOU will enable and encourage the signatory agencies to be creative and to consider a full range of approaches to achieve intergovernmental cooperation and collaboration.

A. Regional Interagency Executive Committee (RIEC):

The RIEC serves as the senior regional entity to ensure prompt, coordinated, and successful implementation of Federal forest management strategies at the regional level, including ecosystem-scale monitoring and adaptive management.

The RIEC may, at its discretion:

- Alter its membership;
- Refer issues to the Interagency Steering Committee (identified in the NWFP) for coordination or resolution;
- Consult with other Federal agencies, and State, Tribal, and local governments in appropriate situations;
- Conduct periodic reviews of interagency groups and structures and implement appropriate changes;
- Convene and seek advice from an Intergovernmental Advisory Committee constituted under the provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA); and
- Define the RIEC Chair rotation.

B. Intergovernmental Advisory Committee (IAC):

If convened, the role of the IAC will be determined by the RIEC. The RIEC will periodically review and evaluate the need for an IAC and make recommendations on chartering to the Secretary of Agriculture under the provisions of the FACA.

C. Senior Managers Group (SMG):

The SMG acts under the direction of the RIEC. In support of the RIEC, the SMG will:

- Be responsible for developing, evaluating, and recommending resolution of consistency and implementation issues assigned by the RIEC.

D. Regional Ecosystem Office (REO):

The REO serves as staff for, and acts under the direction of the RIEC. In support of the RIEC, the REO will:

- Fulfill remaining REO responsibilities identified in the NWFP and not otherwise redelegated; and
- Provide staff work and coordination to facilitate RIEC decision making and prompt interagency issue resolution.

E. Research and Monitoring Group (RMG):

An RMG may be convened as needed to present an independent science perspective in intergovernmental forums. If convened, the role and membership of the RMG will be determined by the RIEC. (All duties for this group outlined in the 1994 NWFP have been accomplished.)

F. Provincial Interagency Executive Committees (PIECs):

The PIECs serve as the senior provincial entities to ensure the prompt, coordinated, and successful implementation of Federal forest management strategies at the province level. The PIECs are under the general direction of the RIEC. Each PIEC may, under guidance from the RIEC, undertake specific activities within its province, including but not limited to:

- Coordinate landscape analyses to assess the health and condition of watersheds and to consider socio-economic conditions in local communities;
- Share information to support better decisions regarding the health of the ecosystem, including watersheds and local communities;
- Identify mutual goals, objectives, and priorities to support coordinated watershed restoration and conservation strategies;
- Share technology and expertise within the province;
- Coordinate and conduct monitoring within the province;
- Encourage complementary ecosystem management among Federal and non-Federal landowners;
- Coordinate ecosystem management activities in concert with Federal, State, Tribal, and local programs for economic, labor, and community assistance;
- Convene and seek advice from a Provincial Advisory Committee constituted under the provisions of the FACA.

G. Provincial Advisory Committees (PACs):

If convened, the role of a PAC is to advise its corresponding PIEC regarding implementation of Federal forest management strategies at the province level and to provide a forum for better integration of forest ecosystem management activities across jurisdictional boundaries at that level. The PAC roles and charters will be periodically reviewed and evaluated by the RIEC in coordination with the PIECs. Recommendations for chartering PACs will be made to the Secretary of Agriculture under the provisions of the FACA.

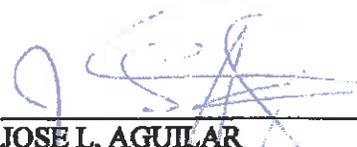
V. TERM

The term of this agreement is five years from the date of execution. Each agency's participation in this agreement shall be subject to the availability of funds. The RIEC will consider annually whether modifications to this agreement are appropriate.



JEROME E. PEREZ
State Director
USDI, Bureau of Land Management, OR/WA

11/24/15
Date



JOSE L. AGUILAR
Colonel, Corps of Engineers
District Commander

2016.02
Date



RANDY MOORE
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USDA, Forest Service, Region 5

1/6/16
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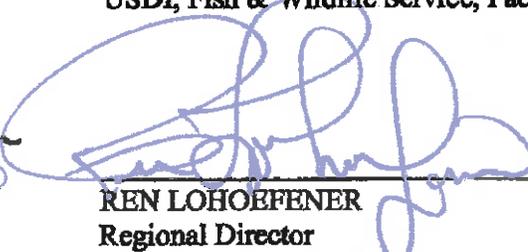
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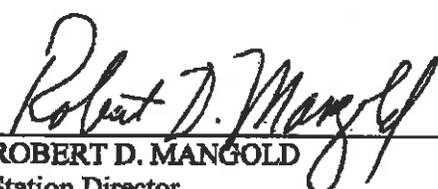
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