



***Pathway to the Future:***  
**Assessing Strategic Priorities for  
Clients of FS R&D Mission Area**

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# Objective of the Project

- Assess the strategic priorities of clients, stakeholders, and partners for research by FS R&D
  - Current priorities
  - Looking ahead 10 years



# Why Now?

- New FS Strategic Plan just issued
  - Obj. G: *Advance Knowledge*
- Time of transition in FS R&D leadership & scientist cadre
- SAF sees forestry as evolving
  - Changing global markets & policies
  - New & different science/technology needs
- Former plans are outdated
  - 10 years since last R&D effort like this
  - 13 years since last NRC report
  - NAUFRP is redoing their 2006 plan



# The View from Outside

- Many former clients feel disconnected from FS R&D
- Some question FS R&D's
  - Relevance
  - Productivity
  - Accountability
  - Transparency
- Bottom Line: Support for the broad R&D program has waned



# What We Hope to Achieve

- Leverage SAF's leadership in the community of interests to create "listening opportunities"
- Gather information about research needs & assess opportunities across the entire forest sector
- Re-connect clientele with FS R&D leaders at national & regional levels
- Build broader and deeper support for FS R&D program and its contribution to the FS Strategic Plan



# How Will We Do It?

- Structured interviews
  - Key interest groups
- Focus group discussions
  - In Washington, DC
  - Around the U.S.
- Synthesize what we hear
- Handoff results to FS R&D leaders
  - Use results to craft R&D's contribution to FS Strategic Plan, Obj. G: *Advance knowledge*
  - Build deeper & broader foundation of support for agency programs



# Structured Interviews

- Beginning with key national clients
- Listening to their current impressions of FS R&D programs
- Refining points to discuss in focus groups
- Sensing other groups to engage



# Structured Interviews

- Already met with
  - NASF @ their annual convention & winter board mtg
  - NAFO
  - American Forests & Paper Assn.
  - Sustainable Forestry Initiative
  - Federal Forest Resource Coalition
  - U.S. Endowment for Forestry & Communities
  - NAUFRP @ SAF Convention & winter board mtg.
  - American Forest Foundation
  - American Forests
  - Pinchot Institute for Conservation
- More interviews are being scheduled



# Focus Groups

- Nine day-long meetings planned
  - One in D.C.
  - Eight around the country
- Invitations jointly from SAF & R&D
- Doing early thinking about
  - When (April to June 2016)
  - Who to invite
  - Where to meet; easy access
  - How to organize
  - Facilitation assistance



# Invitees – Science Users

- Total number based on “small group” conceptual approach (4 to 5 small groups)
- Local members of national interests
- Regional interests
- NFS & S&PF
- Local & regional SAF leaders
- Others in room
  - Facilitator(s)
  - Observers & note takers



# Questions?



# What have we heard so far?

- Adaptation and scale (both geo-spatial and temporal) are increasingly important issues
  - These are “big” concepts that need additional focus in the R&D program
- Translation of science is an issue
  - Bringing the findings down to information land managers can understand and use
- Synthesis of science is needed
  - E.g., summarize the last 30 years of research on managing spruce-fir forests



# What have we heard so far?

- Forest products research focus debated
  - Should FS R&D be doing research that leads to incremental progress/incremental efficiency gains? **OR** Should FS R&D be doing research on potentially disruptive issues/technologies that would be “game-changers?”
    - E.G., Southern pine plywood and OSB glues...
- With all the recent leadership retirements, NGOs have lost track of who the leaders are
  - Not unexpected because many positions aren't yet filled



# Concept for 6-hour program

- 8:30 - 9:00 Welcome, Safety Msg, Introductions
- 9:00 - 9:30 Introduce the Project
- 9:30 – 9:45 Break
- 9:45 – 10:45 Small Group Exercise #1 + Reports Out
- 10:45 – 11:45 Small Group Exercise #2 + Reports Out
- 11:45 – 12:30 Catered Lunch
- 12:30 – 13:00 Summary & Reflections on the Morning
- 13:00 – 14:00 Small Group Exercise #3 + Reports Out
- 14:00 – 14:15 Break
- 14:15 – 15:15 Small Group Exercise #4 + Reports Out
- 15:15 – 15:45 Summary & Reflections on Afternoon
- 15:45 – 16:00 Closing Remarks & Thank You

