

Agenda - 5 Year Review - July 11, 1990
(Bob Hensler, Paul LeBrun, Dennis Heffner, Marcus Wah)

1. PURPOSE: "...review conditions on the land covered by the plan..."
2. Conceptual and Substantive content:
 - a. Review trends of all 5 years of annual monitoring
 - b. Provide an analysis of the trends
 - 1) include identification of new issues and demands
 - 2) include identification of any changes needed that have been ascertained from monitoring
3. Brainstorm "skeleton" for process in developing 5 yr review. Include:
 - a. purpose of why we are looking a 5 year review (see Blackhills NF)
 - b. what will be the results of the review
 - 1) amendments (what causes one)
 - 2) revisions (what causes one)
 - c. what issues or questions will the 5 year review attempt to answer
 - d. what will the 5 year review provide us after it is complete
 - 1) how do we use it
 - 2) what is it's relevance to the 10 Year Review.
 - e. resources we are monitoring
 - f. types of information we are collecting and why
 - g. etc.
4. What Decisions will the 5 Year Review impact or affect
5. What is objective of 5 Year Review as we contemplate the amendment or revisions:
 - a. is it zero base planning (back to square 1...and WO says no!)
 - b. is it incremental planning (changes from current plan....WO says yes!)
6. Time table for process to begin
7. Action Plan to accomplish the 5 Year Review
8. Finished product....something like:
 - a. desk reference
 - b. model format with boilerplate paragraphs and forests fill-in the rest
 - c. etc.

The purpose of the Forest Plan Review is to provide the Forest Supervisor with an opportunity to review the conditions on the land covered by the Plan at least every 5 years to determine whether conditions or demands of the public have changed significantly (36 CFR 219.10 (g)).

1. Draft regulations amending NFMA set forth guidelines and processes for implementing, amending and revising Forest Plans. Section 219.10 (g) states that amendments only apply to the decisions made in the Forest Plan. The following are Forest Plan decisions that can be amended (219.10 (a)(1)):

- (i) Forest multiple-use goals and objectives, including a range of quantities of goods and services that are projected to be produced.
- (ii) Forest multiple-use prescriptions including a description of the desired land condition goal and associated standards and guidelines to guide the implementation of management practices for each management area.
- (iii) Identifying management prescriptions that contain land that is suitable for timber production.
- (iv) Determining the allowable sale quantity of timber that may be sold and the associated sale schedule.
- (v) Monitoring and evaluation requirements needed to determine the effectiveness of the plan and the need for amendment or revision.
- (vi) Estimated schedule of management practices for management areas to fulfill the needs of the plan, including the planned timber sale program allow sale quantity.

II. Monitoring and evaluation requirements - As a Forest Plan decision, Item (iv) above, outlines the conditions under which the Forest Plan needs to be amended or revised. Section 219.10 (h)(2) of draft regulations includes criteria for amending or revising the Forest Plan based upon the findings of the monitoring:

After five years of plan implementation, a determination will be made through the evaluation of the results of monitoring whether a plan needs to be amended or revised. This determination will depend on the degree of change that is necessary. If management prescription direction or allocations are deemed adequate, and the level of goods and services estimated by the plan will not be exceeded, no change is necessary. If management prescription direction and allocation are adequate, but there is a need to increase the level of goods and services, an amendment is appropriate. If major changes to management prescription direction or allocations are made and the level of goods and services increases or decreases below a reasonable range, a revision is required (219.10 (h)(2)).

Threshold

III. Amendment - Amendments include changes that apply to the entire Forest Plan or management area direction or variances from the standards and

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guidelines for an individual proposed action. There are two types of amendments:

(1) Amendments or variances made in association with a proposed action and the amendment will be described in the disclosure document and the rationale placed in the decision document.

(2) Amendments based on monitoring and evaluation or a determination of a need to change a decision on a proposed action.

IV. Management Practice Variance - A variance from a standard and guideline in the Forest Plan can be made when selecting a proposal through the NEPA process. the purpose is to recognize the inherent differences in the physical, biotic, social and economic characteristics of a unique area of land while still attempting to achieve management direction of the Forest Plan.

Variance- less restrictive than a standard

Mitigation Measures- more restrictive standards

The difference between applying the STD/GDS and varying the guideline will be disclosed in the NEPA documents. The variance will only apply to the individual proposed action and will not be considered an amendment to the entire management prescription. Variances or mitigation measures are appealable.

V. Maintenance - Forest Plans and planning records shall be maintained as necessary to reflect changes in data or inventory, minor clarifications or descriptions of process. Such maintenance is limited to further refining previously approved decisions made in the Forest Plan, or monitoring and evaluation information in the planning record useful for possible amendment or revision. Maintenance is not considered a Forest Plan amendment and shall not require formal public involvement.

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Reply To: 1920

Date: August 1, 1989

Subject: Revision of Forest Plans

To: Regional Forester, R-10

During our recent visit on the status of Tongass National Forest Land and Resource Management planning, we agreed to clarify the differences between development of a Forest plan and revision of the plan.

The initial development of Forest plans addressed the question of how the land should be managed. In the revision of a plan, it is not in the public interest to assume that all current commitments and investments are void. The key question during revision of Forest plans is determining the need to change management direction (36 CFR 219.12 (e)(4)). Keeping this perspective in mind, the following clarification should help in applying existing rules and regulations.

The Forest plans established direction guiding how the Forests were to be managed. A critical step during revision of Forest Plans is "a determination of the need to establish or change management direction" (36 CFR 219.12 (e)(5)). The focus of this effort should be determining changes needed to the Forest plan so that it will offer the vision needed for the next 10-year period. The Analysis of the Management Situation (AMS) focuses on this determination.

There are five components of the determination to establish or change direction. They are:

1. Results of monitoring and evaluation (36 CFR 219.12(k))
2. Current direction (36 CFR 219.12 (e)(2))
3. Resource potential (36 CFR 219.12 (e)(1))
4. Projections of demand (36 CFR 219.12 (e)(3))
5. Potential to resolve issues and concerns (36 CFR 219.12(e)(4))

The AMS provides "a determination of the ability of the planning area covered by the forest plan to supply goods and services in response to society's demands" (36 CFR 219.12 (e)). It leads to "a determination of the need to establish or change management direction" as explained above. It is further stated that the "primary purpose of this analysis is to provide a basis for formulating a broad range of reasonable alternatives" (36 CFR 219.12 (e)). Therefore, it is logical that the determination to establish or change direction is to be used as the basis for alternative formulation.

The initial forest planning process was "issue-driven." This was entirely appropriate since current direction was not as clearly defined or visible to the public as it is now. Plan revisions, in contrast, should be driven by the "need to change." The issues and concerns are a major component of the

determination of a need to change. Therefore, they will not be minimized in importance during revision, but rather framed in context of the existing Forest plan as amended.

With this in mind, there will be differences when doing a revision as compared to an initial Forest plan. For example, the minimum and maximum resource potentials which frame the distribution of alternatives per 36 CFR 219.12(f)(1) should be defined in a revision with respect to the issues and "need to change" rather than the benchmarks. With regard to NEPA, the purpose and need statement in the EIS should focus on those elements of current direction which have been identified in the "need to change" determination. The proposed action is thus defined by only those elements of current direction identified thru the "need to change" determination, rather than all aspects of forest management.

It should be noted that the "need to change" determination in the AMS does not commit the line officer to a decision to alter current direction; but rather identifies those elements of current direction which merit further indepth analysis due to one or more of the five components of the determination highlighted above.

There are certain elements of current direction which must be reevaluated in a revision. These include a determination of lands not suited for timber production and roadless area determinations. Data gathered during plan implementation should be available to assist in making these determinations during revision.

The key point to remember is that a revision is not "zero-based" planning as was the case during initial development of the plans. Instead, it is an opportunity to fully review the plan, updating its direction only as needed. The amount of effort which this will require may vary greatly depending on the circumstances of each Forest. In those instances where the plan has had effective monitoring and evaluation coupled with timely amendments, the revision effort should be considerably less demanding than initial plan development. If this has not been the case, however, or if there has been a major change in conditions or widespread controversy, then the scope of a revision may prove as encompassing as the initial planning effort.

/s/ James C. Overbay

JAMES C. OVERBAY
Deputy Chief

DECISION FLOW DIAGRAM NARRATIVE
Forest Plan Monitoring Workshop 11/1/89

The Decision Flow Diagram is found in the Forest Plan Chapter IV, Monitoring, Figure IV-1, Page IV-13. The chart takes some time to follow but does outline the entire process for taking ACTION when deviations are found in Forest Plan Implementation. The following narrative and ROAD MAP will aid in use of the diagram to determine what to do when management practices, outputs, or budget as called for in the Forest Plan are not working.

Monitoring Requirements are found on Forest Plan page IV-10, table IV-2. The Evaluation of Collected Data for each Monitoring Element should focus on whether the Threshold to Initiate Further Action (see table IV-2) was exceeded or not. Where monitored items are not identified specifically within the table but are part of Standards and Guidelines or Best Management Practices the threshold is the Standard, Guide or Best Management Practice. Evaluation of all Monitoring Results is directed by the Decision Flow Diagram.

Each action statement found below is keyed to the DECISION FLOW DIAGRAM BY (ROAD MAP) number and letter for easy reference.

When Monitoring Results show there has been a Deviation in Forest Plan Management Practices or Management Direction from Forest Plan Standards:

Definitions:

Management Practice - A specific activity, measure, course of action, or treatment. Project activities are management practices

Management Direction - A statement of Multiple-Use and other Goals and Objectives, the associated management prescriptions, and standards and guidelines for attaining them. The Lands suitability to produce goods (R/X) and the schedule of production.

Schedule - The estimated projected outputs and activities by time period as displayed in Table II-1, page II-13 of the Forest Plan

Budget - The projected budget required to implement the Forest Plan, Appendix C of the Plan.

Standards - An indication or outline of policy or conduct. Forest Plan Forest-wide Standards, Management Area Standards and Best Management Practices provide the measurement tools to determine effective application of Management Practices.

1. CONTINUE THE PRACTICE WHEN:

a. Evaluation of data gathered for management practices, management direction, schedule or budget indicates deviation variability is within acceptable limits. Action: Continue the practice, continue monitoring and document findings to the planning team.

b. Evaluation of data gathered for management practices, management direction, schedule or budget indicates a first time deviation variability that exceeds acceptable limits, but continuation of the practice would not result in serious consequences. Action: Continue the practice, reevaluate the validity of variability limits set for the practice and document change to the planning team.

2) REFER THE PROBLEM TO THE APPROPRIATE LINE OFFICER WHEN:

Data gathered indicates deviation variability exceeds acceptable limits, continuation of practice would result in serious consequences, and:

a. The problem is an unacceptable application of one or more management practices. Action: Refer the problem to the appropriate line officer who will correct the problem. Document action taken to the planning team.

b. The problem is that the schedule of outputs has been affected by natural catastrophe (fire, insects, etc.) or by inadequate budget; however the schedule can be adjusted to maintain flow of outputs within variability limits for a 5 year average. Action: Refer the problem to the appropriate line officer who will revise the schedule. Document changes through the planning team.

c. The problem is that the budgeted cost/unit of output is insufficient to maintain quality or quantity of outputs. Action: Refer the problem to the appropriate line officer who will revise the cost/unit portion of the budget process and program funds to accomplish the backlog that will accumulate during the adjustment period. Document with the planning team.

d. The problem is that the budget is insufficient to produce projected quality and quantity of outputs; however the future budget outlook is favorable to accomplish projected flow and backlog of outputs. Action: Refer the problem to the appropriate Line Officer who will adjust the schedule of outputs and adjust the budget request to accomplish the backlog of work accumulated during the adjustment period. Document action taken to the planning team.

3) AMEND THE FOREST PLAN WHEN:

Data gathered indicates deviation variability exceeds acceptable limits, continuation of practice would result in serious consequences, and:

a. The problem is the design of management practice is ineffective in meeting goals and outputs; however the proposed correction or adjustment of management practice would not affect other resources or management direction. Action: Modify the management practice through the Forest Management Team, treat as amendment and document the change through the planning team.

b. The problem is that the design of management practices is ineffective in meeting goals and outputs. The proposed correction or adjustment of management practices would affect other resources or management direction; however the proposed change is limited to one or fewer management areas and will not change major direction of the practice. Action: Modify the management practice through the Forest Management Team, treat as amendment and document the change through the planning team.

c. The problem is that management direction is not compatible with land suitability; however, the adjustment needed will not have a major effect on output flow and is within variability limit. Action: Change management direction through the Forest Management Team, treat as amendment and document change through the planning team.

4) INITIATE REVISION OF THE FOREST PLAN WHEN:

Data gathered indicates deviation variability exceeds acceptable limits, continuation of practice would result in serious consequences, and:

a. The problem is that the design of management practices is ineffective in meeting goals and outputs. The proposed correction or adjustment of the management practice would affect other resources or management direction on more than one management area, or would change major direction or practice. Action: Initiate revision of the Forest Plan.

b. The problem is that the schedule of outputs affected by natural catastrophe (fire, insects, etc.) or by inadequate budget cannot be adjusted to maintain flow of output within acceptable limits. Action: Initiate revision of the Forest Plan.

c. The problem is that management direction is not compatible with land suitability and the adjustment needed will have a major effect on output flow which will deviate from variability limits. Action: Initiate revision of the Forest Plan.

d. The problem is that the budget is insufficient to produce projected quality and quantity of outputs and the future budget outlook is not favorable to accomplish projected flow and backlog of outputs. Action: Initiate revision of the Forest Plan.

219.10 FOREST PLANNING-GENERAL PROCEDURES

(a) PURPOSE AND PRINCIPLES.

The regulations in this subpart set forth guidelines and processes for implementing, amending and revising land and resource management plans for the National Forest System.

Forest Plans were developed to integrate and guide all resource management for the National Forest System. They must be implemented in the same integrated manner as they were developed, recognizing the inherent differences and resource conditions on each unique area of land. Forest Plans, because of their programmatic nature, are dynamic documents that will change over time as they are implemented in a site-specific manner and monitored and evaluated.

The public should be involved throughout the implementation of the process but must formally be informed when decisions to implement management practices or amend or revise the Forest Plan are made. These decisions must comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements and are appealable under 36 CFR 217.

(1) FOREST PLAN DECISIONS: Forest plan amendments or revisions are needed when changing decisions made in the Forest Plan. Decisions made in the Forest Plan include:

(i) Forest multiple-use goals and objectives, including a range of quantities of goods and services that are projected to be produced (36 CFR 219.11(b)).

(ii) Multiple-use prescriptions including a description of the desired land condition goal and associated standards and guidelines to guide the implementation of management practices for each management area. (36 CFR 219.11 (c)).

(iii) Identifying management prescriptions that contain land that is suitable for timber production (36 CFR 219.14).

(iv) Determining the allowable sale quantity of timber that may be sold and the associated sale schedule (36 CFR 219.16).

(v) Monitoring and evaluation requirements needed to determine the effectiveness of the plan and the need for amendment or revision. (36 CFR 219.11(d)).

(vi) Estimated schedule of management practices for management areas to fulfill the needs of the plan, including the planned timber sale program allow sale quantity.

(2) IMPLEMENTATION DECISIONS. Forest Plan implementation determines project and activity level decisions necessary to implement the goals and objectives of the Forest Plan. Proposed actions and their alternatives must be confined to specific sites for analysis. The site specific analysis has several purposes:

(i) Determines proposed actions that are consistent with the Forest Plan's management prescription (36 CFR 219.10 (f)(3)).

(ii) Identifies the environmental issues (40 CFR Parts 1500.4(g)) that are truly significant to the action in question. Uses the issues to identify and assess the reasonable alternatives to the proposed action that will avoid or minimize adverse effects on the quality of the human environment. Encourages a comparison of the affects on environmental issues against affects on meeting Forest Plan management goals and objectives.

More detailed and site specific decisions for oil and gas leasing shall be prepared in accordance with specific regulations for those resources. These decisions shall be in conformance with the Forest Forest Plans under the provisions of this part.

(iii) Determines if the proposals, as appropriate, comply with the requirements to:

(A) Ensure that the a proposed site is suited or not suited for timber harvest 16 U.S.C. 1604(k) (36 CFR 219.14 (a)).

(B) Determine that when timber is harvested using an even-aged management system, the system is appropriate to meet the management direction in the Forest Plan 1604 (g)(3)(F)(i) and (ii).

(C) Determine that when timber is harvested where clearcutting is to be used, it must be determined to be the optimum method to meet the Forest Plan's goals and objectives.

(D) Comply with the seven requirements in 36 CFR 219.27 (b) when proposals involve vegetation manipulation of tree cover.

(iv) Forest Plan implementation decisions or finding of consistency will be tier to the Forest Plan (40 CFR Parts 1508.28) and FEIS to concentrate on the issues specific to the proposed action.

(3) DEFINITIONS: ADD TO 36 CFR 219.3

(1) FOREST PLAN IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE:

A schedule of management practices that are projected to be implemented over the plan period by management area. At the minimum, this schedule will include timber practices needed to meet the timber resource sale schedule (36 CFR 219.16). The timber practices will estimate the possible acres to be treated by vegetative type and silvicultural method, including the amount of openings estimated to be created by even-aged management.

(11) PROJECT:

One or more management practices proposed for implementation in a site specific NEPA decision document.

(111) MANAGEMENT AREA:

An area of land, as mapped in the Forest Plan, where a management prescription applies.

(b) RESPONSIBILITIES.

(1) FOREST SUPERVISOR. The Forest Supervisor has overall responsibility for implementing and amending the Forest Plan. These decisions will be disclosed in appropriate NEPA documents. Approval of amendments will be effective when NEPA procedures (40 CFR 1505.2) are met.

The Forest Supervisor is also responsible for the preparation of Forest Plan revisions per (36 CFR 219.10 (g), (h)).

(2) REGIONAL FORESTER. The Regional Forester shall establish Regional policy for involvement in reviewing revisions of Forest Plans. After review, the Regional Forester will approve all revisions.

(c) PUBLIC REVIEW OF FOREST PLAN AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT.

A draft and final environmental impact statement shall be prepared for a proposed or revised Forest Plan. The public review period will comply with NEPA procedures (40 CFR 1505.2).

(d) FOREST PLAN APPROVAL.

The Regional Forester shall review the proposed Forest Plan or revision before approval.

Approval of the Forest Plan by the Regional Forester shall comply with NEPA procedures (40 CFR 1505.2). The approved Forest Plan shall not become effective until at least 30 days after publication of the notice of availability of the final environmental impact statement in the Federal Register, to comply with 16 U.S.C. 1604(d) and 1604(j).

(e) PUBLIC APPEAL OF APPROVAL DECISIONS.

The provisions of 36 CFR part 217 apply to any NEPA decision for Forest Plan approval, amendment, revision or implementation decision on a management practice.

Preliminary administrative, budget or planning decisions made during the development of the Forest Plan amendments, revisions, or implementation, including monitoring or evaluation are not subject to administrative appeal.

(f) FOREST PLAN IMPLEMENTATION.

Forest Plan implementation consists of several different administrative activities. These activities include identifying the location of possible management practices, selecting a proposed action, meeting NEPA requirements, and making a decision to proceed. Implementation also includes budgeting and execution of all administrative activities necessary to manage National Forest System lands, as well as monitoring and evaluation. Based on authorized budgets, administrative activities are executed consistent with the Forest Plan.

(1) IDENTIFICATION.

Management practices identified in the Forest Plan are programmatic in nature. During implementation, these must first be located within a unique part of a management area based on the resource opportunities available and the management direction in the plan. The purpose of these identified practices is to work toward the desired future condition of the management prescription necessary to contribute to the level of multiple-use goods and services estimated by the plan. The result is a determination of a proposed action that is tentatively consistent with the plan.

(2) DECISION.

A decision on management practices, or other proposals for use or occupancy of National Forest System lands, will be made using the requirements of NEPA. The purpose and need for the proposed action will be based on the long and short range goals, objectives of the Forest Plan, and the existing conditions of the land or resources.

NEPA scoping (1501.7), with the public being involved, will determine the significant environmental issues (1501.7 (2) associated with the proposed action. Environmental issues that are not significant (1501.7 (3) will be eliminated from detailed study (1500.1 (b),(c).

The environmental issues considered in detail will be the basis for a reasonable range of alternatives. Other resource information necessary to make an informed decision on the purpose and need will be discussed under the comparison of alternatives and in the decision document. If amendments are needed (including variances from the standards and guidelines for a management practice that may be necessary to implement the decision), they must be described by each alternative for which they apply, and the effects on the affected resource discussed as appropriate.

Management practices not scheduled in the Forest Plan are authorized when they contribute to meeting management direction. When decisions are made on management practices in a NEPA decision document, the Forest Plan's implementation schedule is amended with the additional practice.

(3) CONSISTENCY.

Management activities on, or use or occupancy of, National Forest System Lands must be consistent with the plan. The determination of consistency with the plan is a continuous process. It begins by determining that an identified management practice be compatible with the management direction of the Forest Plan. When a decision on a proposed action is made, a tentative finding of consistency is also made. During design of a project the management direction is reviewed and, before execution, a finding of consistency with the plan and a review of any new environmental information is documented.

If new information causes a decision to have environmental consequences not considered, the information will be supplemented to the original analysis file and reviewed to determine if a new or modified decision is warranted.

Consistency findings are not appealable under 36 CFR 217.

Selected projects are monitored to see if the results were as estimated. Periodically, these findings are evaluated by the Forest Interdisciplinary Team to see if there is a need to amend the Forest Plan.

Existing conditions that are not consistent with the Forest Plan or its amendments will be brought into conformance as opportunities arise through the implementation of new management practices or made compatible as soon as practical based upon authorized budgets.

Resource analysis procedures to determine whether a possible management practice is consistent with the Forest Plan will be prepared in an integrated manner and included in Forest Service Manual 1926.

If a natural catastrophe changes the land to the extent that management direction cannot be met during the planning period, a variance from standards and guidelines may be required or the Forest Plan may be amended.

The Forest Supervisor will assure that subject to valid existing rights, all outstanding and future permits, contracts, cooperative agreements, and other instruments for occupancy and use of affected lands are consistent with the Forest Plan. Where not consistent a schedule of conformance will be developed in relationship with projected budgets.

The long-term relationships and trends between levels of multiple-use goods and services projected in the Forest Plan will be monitored. The evaluation will determine if there is a need to amend or revise the plan. This evaluation will be conducted at least 5 years after plan approval.

(4) A record of the analysis and consistency finding shall be maintained, as appropriate, for implemented projects.

(5) PUBLIC REVIEW.

Forest officers are encouraged to inform and involve the public during implementation of Forest Plans. The public will be provided a opportunity to become involved at several points in the process.

The public may become involved when possible management practices are located. When management practices are selected following Nepa procedures, the public must have an opportunity to provide input. When a decision document is signed on the implementation of a proposed action or the amendment of the Forest Plan, the public will be notified of their appeal rights (36 CFR 217).

At least annually the Forest Supervisor will summarize the results of monitoring and evaluation in a report available to the public.

At least annually the public will be notified of possible management practices and probable projects that are intended to be implemented. This public notification will include management practices where the NEPA procedures are pending and projects where decisions to implement have been made. Management Practices and projects will be listed for at least three years in the future, as practicable, and be available for public review. These public notification documents will be updated as required by appropriated budgets, or as new management concerns or resource opportunities arise.

(6) BUDGET.

Subsequent administrative activities, including budget estimates, will be based on the Forest Plan. Annual changes in budgets will not be considered amendments to the Forest Plan unless the implementation schedule or the total budget for the plan period is exceeded.

The Forest Supervisor will establish multi-year budget strategies for the plan period to work toward the Plans management direction in relationship to the current budget. These strategies shall be updated annually to reflect the differences between appropriated funds, current management considerations and Forest Plan projection of goods and services.

(g) AMENDMENT.

The Forest Supervisor will make amendments, including variances, to the Forest Plan and maintain the plan and planning record. Amendments only apply to the decisions made in the Forest Plan (36 CFR 219.10 (a)). They are appealable under the requirements of 36 CFR 217. The Forest Plan is kept current through the amendment process. Maintenance of the Forest Plan and planning record is a continuous process not subject to NEPA or appealable.

(1) AMENDMENT.

Amendments can be made to change any decision in the plan as long a revision is not required. Amendments include changes that apply to the entire Forest Plan or management area direction or variances from the standards and guidelines for an individual proposed action. If amendments or variances are made in association with a proposed action, the amendment will be described in the disclosure document and the rationale placed in the decision document. Amendments can be based on monitoring and evaluation or a determination of a need to change a decision on a proposed action. They can be implemented as soon as the NEPA and appeal process is complete.

(2) MANAGEMENT PRACTICE VARIANCE.

A variance from a standard and guideline in the Forest Plan can be made when selecting a proposal through the NEPA process. The purpose is to recognize the inherent differences in the physical, biotic, social and economic characteristics of a unique area of land while still attempting to achieve the management direction of the Forest Plan. A variance will be less restrictive than the standard. More restrictive standards can be identified as mitigation measures in the NEPA decision.

The difference between applying the standard and guideline and varying the guideline will be disclosed in the NEPA document, and the rationale for selection provided in the decision document. The variance will only apply to the individual proposed action and will not be considered an amendment to the entire management prescription. In either case, variances or mitigation measures are appealable under 36 CFR 217.

(3) MAINTENANCE.

Forest Plans and planning records shall be maintained as necessary to reflect changes in data or inventory, minor clarifications or descriptions of process. Such maintenance is limited to further refining previously approved decisions made in the Forest Plan, or monitoring and evaluation information in the planning record useful for possible amendment or revision. Maintenance shall not result in expansion in the scope of the Forest Plan's management direction or change the decisions (36 CFR 219.10 (a)(1)) of the approved plan. Maintenance is not considered a Forest Plan amendment and shall not require formal public involvement and interagency coordination, nor the preparation of an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement.

(h) REVISION.

A Forest Plan may be revised at any time to make significant change (16 U.S.C. 1604 (4)) but shall be revised on a ten year cycle or at least every fifteen years (16 U.S.C. 1604 (5)). During revision, a determination of a need to change management direction is made (36 CFR 219.12 (e) (4)).

These changes will normally be a major change in the management prescription or their allocation, and the associated potential level of goods and services. This determination will be made through the evaluation of the results of monitoring. At a minimum, this determination will be made after the 5 year review.

Revision offers the opportunity to fully review the Forest Plan, updating its direction only where needed in recognition of existing commitments to social and economic values inherent in establishment of the current plan.

(1) DETERMINE A NEED TO CHANGE.

The determination of a need to change will be based on the analysis required in 36 CFR 219.12(e) and the resulting findings.

(2) 5 YEAR REVIEW.

After five years of plan implementation, a determination will be made through the evaluation of the results of monitoring whether a plan needs to be amended or revised. This determination will depend on the degree of change that is necessary. If management prescription direction or allocations are deemed adequate, and the level of goods and services estimated by the plan will not be exceeded, no change is necessary. If management prescription direction and allocation are adequate, but there is a need to increase the level of goods and services, an amendment is appropriate. If major changes to management prescription direction or allocations are made and the level of goods and service increases or decreases below a reasonable range, a revision is required.

(3) APPROVAL.

The Regional Forester approves revisions to the Forest Plan. The Forest Supervisor will be responsible for recommending and preparing the revision. Preparation of an environmental impact statement is mandatory. The revised Forest Plan will not go into affect until 30 days after approval, to comply with 16 U.S.C 1604(d) and 1604(j).

(END.....1/23/90, /s/ Jim Hagemeyer

5 YEAR REVIEW

Current Situation:

"The Forest Supervisor shall review the conditions on the land covered by the plan at least every 5 years to determine whether conditions or demands of the public have changed significantly." 36 CFR 219.10(g). Revisions may be made by the Forest Supervisor in the event of significant changes in conditions or demands as covered by the Forest Plan; or significant effects upon forest level programs. Ib.

The current status of National Forests' 5 Year Review is as follows:

ROD'S SIGNED, 5 YEAR REVIEW START DATE, AMENDMENTS TO DATE

<u>National Forest</u>	<u>ROD</u>	<u>Start Date</u>	<u>Amendments</u>
1. Flathead NF	Jan 22, 1986	Feb, 1991	13
2. Lolo NF	April 8, 1986	May, 1991	3
3. Beaverhead NF	April 9, 1986	May, 1991	0
4. Helena NF	May 28, 1986	June, 1991	1
5. Lewis & Clark NF	June 4, 1986	July, 1991	3
6. Custer NF	June 10, 1987	July, 1992	2
7. Kootenai	Sept 14, 1987	Oct, 1992	2
8. IPNF	Sept 17, 1987	Oct, 1992	0
9. Deerlodge NF	Sept 23, 1987	Oct, 1992	0
10. Gallatin NF	Sept 23, 1987	Oct, 1992	0
11. Clearwater NF	Sept 23, 1987	Oct, 1992	0
12. Bitterroot NF	Sept 30, 1987	Oct, 1992	0
13. Nez Perce NF	Oct 8, 1987	Nov, 1992	8

BASED ON THE 5 YEAR REVIEW, THE FORESTS SHOULD DETERMINE IF THERE IS A NEED TO AMEND OR REVISE THE PLAN.

Currently, there is no language within the 1920 manual that specifically addresses the 5 Year Review. The following is PROPOSED DRAFT LANGUAGE for 36 CFR 219.10, addressing REVISION and 5 YEAR REVIEW:

(h) REVISION

A Forest Plan may be revised at any time to make significant change (16 U.S.C 1604 (4)) but shall be revised on a ten year cycle or at least every fifteen years (16 U.S.C. 1604 (5)). During revision, a determination of a need to change management direction is made (36 CFR 219.12 (e)(4)).

These changes will normally be a major change in the management prescription or their allocation, and the associated potential level of goods and services. This determination will be made through the evaluation of the results of monitoring. At a minimum, this determination will be made after the 5 year review (emphasis added).

(next page)

Revision offers the opportunity to fully review the Forest Plan, updating its direction only where needed in recognition of existing commitments to social and economic values inherent in establishment of the current plan.

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(2) 5 YEAR REVIEW

After five years of plan implementation, a determination will be made through the evaluation of the results of monitoring whether a plan needs to be amended or revised. This determination will depend on the degree of change that is necessary. If management prescription direction or allocations are deemed adequate, and the level of goods and services estimated by the plan will not be exceeded, no change is necessary. If management prescription direction and allocation are adequate, but there is a need to increase the level of goods and services, an amendment is appropriate. If major changes to management prescription direction or allocations are made and the level of goods and service increases or decreases below a reasonable range, a revision is required.

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Recommended Strategy:

1. Do not start 5 Year Reviews until 5 years of monitoring and evaluation data is available (note: 5 Year Review will display where you are in comparison to your projected plan).
2. Develop a consistent Regionwide approach to accomplishing and displaying the 5 Year Review report. Keep our supply studies up to date to show we are aware of the current situation.
3. Keep plans current through amendments. Initiate action to make amendments where agreements have been rendered with appellants or as agreed to in responsive statements or based on Chief's decision.

5 YEAR REVIEW AND NEED TO CHANGE THE ASQ

Current Situation:

Changing the ASQ could have a significant affect on other resources requiring an revision. " Revisions are not effective until considered and approved in accordance with the requirements for the development and approval of a forest plan." 36 CFR 219.10(g). In other words, at this time, NFMA regulations requires repeating all the planning steps when plans are revised.

At present, many are concerned that the allowable sale quantity (ASQ) is too high based upon sale program performance. In most cases the sale program is below projections and revisions are being contemplated.

However, any change to the ASQ will require repeating the analysis process as outlined in 36 CFR 219.12, which includes a zero based planning approach. This potentially opens all issues and could require the formulation of a full range of allocations. Additionally, adjustments to the ASQ would require FORPLAN runs as well as all associated economic analysis. In all likelihood, the costs could exceed the past round of planning. The recent Tongass National Forest experience in incorporating the "state of the art" analysis technology has exemplified this scenario.

The Chief's recent decisions have indicated that while the ASQ is a level we expected to achieve it is not a target for any given year. In fact the number projected in our Plans is the high level of the ASQ. In actuality, the ASQ is a projected range of timber outputs that could vary downwards based upon the site specific application of practices consistent with the plan and other legal requirements. Thus, the forest plan ASQ is a ceiling and it is our intent to meet this ceiling. However, it is not a mandated target and subsequent timber sale offerings resulting in less than the projected forest plan ASQ does not require plan revision.

The use of the ASQ as a target in the budgeting process must be changed unless that level is attainable. The point of decision for the timber program is when we submit our out-year timber program proposal. It must reflect what the Region can realistically produce based on site specific analysis considering all factors.

Recommended Strategy:

1. Ensure that our high increment proposal in our out-year program budget is attainable. (Should be two years ahead in timber sale prep)
2. Postpone any revision or significant amendment effort until the 10 year update is required. 36 CFR 219.10(g). The exception would be where a Forest intended to raise the ASQ based on the monitoring and evaluation process.
3. Develop a document that explains our current understanding of what decisions were made in the Forest Plan and those that will be made during implementation.

Explain that based upon the Chief's decisions on appeals (i.e. Flathead, etc.) the ASQ is the "high range" of the program. Further, explain that the program could vary downwards based upon the application of unevenaged or shelterwood techniques. Such silvicultural techniques and other environmental concerns would not be determined until a site specific analysis was conducted at the project level.

Is our mission impossible?

The major accomplishment of Forest Planning was to establish land-use allocations and to define the standards and guidelines to be used during implementation. Since we have said that Plans are dynamic documents that are subject to change, some of you have asked "why don't we get on with the obvious and change things that need fixing - i.e, cumulative effects due to accelerated harvest on intermingled private lands; inclusion of new grizzly bear guidelines, revised old-growth standards, etc?" If these changed conditions are true, they will be evaluated during monitoring and evaluation and be incorporated into the Forest Plans in an orderly manner. However, we should not cry wolf until we have made an effort to fully implement our Plans. There are enough people trying to tear the Forest Plans apart to serve their special interest - they don't need our help!

What now?

We realize that our strategy for producing the decadal outputs, especially the ASQ, is dependent upon a scenario where all the stars and planets in heaven line up in some miraculous fashion. It will be a lot easier at the beginning of the ten year Forest Planning horizon than it will be towards the end of the decade. Changes will be made in all Forest Plans, but there is a series of hoops that we must go through before we can make the changes and maintain credibility with our publics. We must give it a good try, after all they are our Forest Plans! The graphic below should help to separate fact from fiction as we get on with developing our timber resource strategies:



FACT: Upper limit.
Best estimate.

PP&B tool.
Updated annually

Commitment.
Attainment target.

FICTION: A decision.
A contract.

Mission impossible!

Negotiable.
Not critical.

Forest Plan Resource Strategies for R-1

JOHN M. HUGHES, DEPUTY REGIONAL FORESTER

Why do we need a strategy?

Congress has asked the Chief and the Regional Foresters to develop budget requests based on Forest Plan needs. Much of the emphasis and debate in the Northern Region has been concentrated on timber; however, we have also been asked to prepare budget requests and strategies to fully implement all resource outputs identified in the Forest Plans.

What are the expectations?

Most of our publics expect that we, the Forest Service, have prepared valid Forest Plans and that we fully intend to implement them. Those who depend upon the timber industry for their economic well being, have the expectation that the ASQ is a production target that the Forest Service is obligated to produce. In actuality, the allowable sale quantity (ASQ) is an upper limit that cannot be exceeded in the 10 year planning period. We must not confuse target attainment with ASQ expectations. Once we have prepared budget requests we have started the process of establishing a program level for any given year. When financed, these program levels become attainment targets for which we are held accountable for. It is the Regional Forester's expectation that each Forest will commit to target attainment when preparing the out-year program development and budget requests. It is too late to wait until the year of budget execution to agree on attainment targets.

Are our Forest Plans Broke?

We need to recognize that our Forest Plans are mandated by law and are the "only game in town". They are intended to be dynamic documents, and the NFMA provides a process for amending, revising and up-dating Forest Plans. It is unacceptable for any of us to take a position that the Forest Plans are wrong until we have made a good faith effort to implement them as written. In the meantime, we will develop logical strategies and incorporate them into the program development and budgeting process. Monitoring and evaluation must take into account the lessons we learn as we proceed through implementation. The Forest Planning process provides for amending plans and a five year review is required. It is important to keep in mind what the Chief told us - "Forest Plans did not make site-specific decisions, and the Forest Service will utilize the two-step, NEPA decision-making process to make on-the-ground decisions."

Monitoring and evaluation results will be used as the basis for determining a need to change Forest Plans.