

USDA Forest Service Land Management Planning Rule Status and Highlights

Randall Hayman, Forest Planner and Tribal Liaison

Boise National Forest

USDA Forest Service, Intermountain Region

1249 S. Vinnell Way, Suite 200

Boise, Idaho 83709

Phone: 208-373-4157

Email: rhayman@fs.fed.us

On January 26, 2012 the USDA released the final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) for the National Forest System Land Management Planning Rule. The PEIS includes the USDA's preferred alternative for a final rule. A decision on the final planning rule will be made not less than 30 days following publication of the notice of availability of the PEIS in the Federal Register on February 3, 2012.

A planning rule is a statutory requirement that outlines the procedures to amend, revise and develop land management plans as set out in the National Forest Management Act of 1976. Each land management plan establishes a framework to guide all natural resource management activities on a national forest or grassland. Just as a planning rule establishes requirements and constraints for land management planning, individual land management plans establish requirements and constraints for on-the-ground management decisions within a planning unit.

The preferred alternative includes components and requirements to:

- Restore and maintain forests and grasslands;
- Maintain or restore watersheds, water resources, water quality, and the ecological integrity of riparian areas;
- Provide habitat for plant and animal diversity and species conservation such that common species remain common and such habitat contributes to the recovery of ESA listed species, conserves proposed and candidate species, and protects species of conservation concern;
- Provide for multiple uses, including outdoor recreation, range, timber, watershed, wildlife and fish;
- Provide opportunities for public involvement and collaboration throughout all stages of the planning process;
- Provide opportunities for tribal consultation and coordination with state and local governments and other federal agencies
- Use best available science;
- Provide a more efficient and adaptive process that responds to changing conditions.