

§219.11

characteristics of ecosystem diversity in the plan area.

(2) *Species diversity.* If the Responsible Official determines that provisions in plan components, in addition to those required by paragraph (b)(1) of this section, are needed to provide appropriate ecological conditions for specific threatened and endangered species, species-of-concern, and species-of-interest, then the plan must include additional provisions for these species, consistent with the limits of agency authorities, the capability of the plan area, and overall multiple use objectives.

§219.11 Role of science in planning.

(a) The Responsible Official must take into account the best available science. For purposes of this subpart, taking into account the best available science means the Responsible Official must:

(1) Document how the best available science was taken into account in the planning process within the context of the issues being considered;

(2) Evaluate and disclose substantial uncertainties in that science;

(3) Evaluate and disclose substantial risks associated with plan components based on that science; and

(4) Document that the science was appropriately interpreted and applied.

(b) To meet the requirements of paragraph (a) of this section, the Responsible Official may use independent peer review, a science advisory board, or other review methods to evaluate the consideration of science in the planning process.

§219.12 Suitable uses and provisions required by NFMA.

(a) *Suitable uses.* (1) *Identification of suitable land uses.* National Forest System lands are generally suitable for a variety of multiple uses, such as outdoor recreation, range, timber, watershed, and wildlife and fish purposes. The Responsible Official, as appropriate, shall identify areas within a National Forest System unit as generally suitable for uses that are compatible with desired conditions and objectives for that area. Such identification is guidance for project and activity decisionmaking, is not a permanent land

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designation, and is subject to change through plan amendment or plan revision. Uses of specific areas are approved through project and activity decisionmaking.

(2) *Identification of lands not suitable for timber production.* (i) The Responsible Official must identify lands within the plan area as not suitable for timber production (§219.16) if:

(A) Statute, Executive order, or regulation prohibits timber production on the land; or

(B) The Secretary of Agriculture or the Chief of the Forest Service has withdrawn the land from timber production; or

(C) The land is not forest land (as defined at §219.16); or

(D) Timber production would not be compatible with the achievement of desired conditions and objectives established by the plan for those lands.

(ii) This identification is not a final decision compelling, approving, or prohibiting projects and activities. A final determination of suitability for timber production is made through project and activity decisionmaking. Salvage sales or other harvest necessary for multiple-use objectives other than timber production may take place on areas that are not suitable for timber production.

(b) *NFMA requirements.* (1) The Chief of the Forest Service must include in the Forest Service Directive System procedures for estimating the quantity of timber that can be removed annually in perpetuity on a sustained-yield basis in accordance with 16 U.S.C. 1611.

(2) The Chief of the Forest Service must include in the Forest Service Directive System procedures to ensure that plans include the resource management guidelines required by 16 U.S.C. 1604(g)(3).

(3) Forest Service Directive System procedures adopted to fulfill the requirements of this paragraph shall provide public involvement as described in 36 CFR part 216.

§219.13 Objections to plans, plan amendments, or plan revisions.

(a) *Opportunities to object.* Before approving a plan, plan amendment, or plan revision, the Responsible Official must provide the public 30 calendar