



SOCIAL IMPACT ANALYSIS (SIA): PRINCIPLES AND PROCEDURES TRAINING COURSE (1900-03)

AUDIENCE:

The course is designed for USDA Forest Service employees at the forest and district levels, who may not have formal social science training, but do share Interdisciplinary Team (IDT) responsibility for SIA. While some interest and/or background in the social sciences would be useful, basic concepts and methods for SIA work can be learned and applied. Prior completion of the 1900-01 Forest Plan Implementation course is a required prerequisite because of the extensive/integral linkage of the SIA course to 1900-01 and the NEPA process.

COURSE GOALS INCLUDE:

- To identify, analyze, and document social issues surrounding agency proposed actions.
- To inform the decision makers and public of the social effects of proposed agency actions.
- To incorporate SIA into the interdisciplinary process of preparing environmental documents.

COURSE PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE:

The student will be able to conduct a social impact analysis (SIA) as an integral part of the NEPA process by using social science methods and tools to record, organize, and analyze data.

LENGTH:

The course is two days in length with preferred scheduling on Wednesday-Thursday to avoid weekend travel.

CLASS SIZE:

Class size of 24 will allow participants to function as 5-6 member teams to work through case study exercises. Instructors will facilitate team discussion and analysis.

INSTRUCTORS:

A cadre of three instructors will teach the course. These staff instructors will have completed one to two training sessions for proficiency in course content, process, and delivery methods.

COURSE CONTENT:

Presented as an iterative and integral part of the NEPA process, to be done in context of full IDT participation, the course design integrates the human dimension and projection of social and economic effects into the other dimensions of environmental analysis. A basic premise is that most all physical and biological issues we deem important have social effects; students will learn how to identify these linkages, yet remain focused on those effects that are important to the Decision. The instructional units follow the NEPA process and are closely linked to the IDT approach and content of the 1900-01 course. Each unit builds upon the previous units to take students through the process of conducting a site-specific SIA using

a Forest Service case study. While the emphasis is on project, skills have application to NEPA work for the Forest plan as well as to the broader assessment work in early stages of planning.

INSTRUCTION METHODS:

Methods include lecture, discussion, practice exercises, and case study. Each student will be provided a notebook containing content handouts, resource aids, and key reference material for doing and/or properly contracting out an SIA back on the job. Visuals and class interaction will be heavily used to communicate key concepts and the analysis process.

OVERALL INTENT:

To equip participants with skills to apply principles and procedures of social impact analysis (SIA) to Forest planning and decisionmaking under ecosystem management in an IDT setting.

DESIGN:

The user-friendly approach is designed specifically for Forest Service staff who may not be trained in the social sciences, but who may have SIA responsibility. Presented as an integral part of the NEPA process, it integrates the human dimension and projection of social and economic effects into the other elements of environmental analysis. Consistent with the Social and Economic Handbook (FSH 1909.17), it provides a conceptual framework and hands-on tools to operationalize handbook guidance. The course is highly interactive. Students work as teams to apply concepts and skills to the course's case study and examples.

UNIT DESCRIPTIONS

PART I

The instructional units in Part I set the stage for doing the social analysis.

UNIT 1 - INTRODUCTION AND COURSE OVERVIEW

This unit begins with a Town Hall Meeting, and moves on to cover introductions/expectations, course themes, course performance objective and course goals, student notebook organization, distinguishing SIA and public involvement, and review and summary.

UNIT 2 - SOCIAL ASSESSMENT AND SOCIAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

Unit covers introduction, defining social assessment and social impact analysis, using social assessments in social impact analysis, identifying scales of assessment and analysis, case study exercise, and review and summary.

UNIT 3 - SOCIAL VARIABLES AND DATA

Unit covers introduction, defining the social environment, data types and sources, data collection strategies, data interpretation and organization, case study exercise, and review and summary.

PART II

The units in this part focus on doing the social impact analysis

UNIT 4 - SCOPING AND ISSUES IDENTIFICATION

Unit covers introduction, scoping (and the SIA "fit"), driving the proposed action to its social effects, identifying significant social issues, case study exercise, and review and summary.

UNIT 5- ISSUES MATRIX AND ALTERNATIVES

Unit covers introduction, determining the stakeholders and their positions, selecting possible measures using the Stakeholder Issues Matrix, case study exercise, and review and summary.

UNIT 6 - PROJECTING EFFECTS

Unit covers introduction, overview of projection techniques, doing the projections, using a Stakeholders Alternatives Matrix, case study exercise, and review and summary.

UNIT 7 - MONITORING IN A CHANGING SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

This unit covers introduction, why we monitor social issues, how we monitor social issues, criteria for selecting units of measure to monitor, case study exercise, and review and summary.

UNIT 8 - SUMMARY AND WRAP-UP

This unit will summarize the course, revisit the course performance objective, present some unique challenges to the SIA process, address follow-up and course evaluation, and present student certificates.

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