



Redesign Components: STAFFING & ORGANIZATION



Staffing for Success

The Redesign approach to State and Private Forestry (S&PF) gives states and geographic regions tremendous flexibility to invest available resources in ways that will maximize the delivery of public benefits from forests in their particular jurisdiction. This flexibility may result in the identification of previously unknown, or unconsidered, needs and opportunities in terms of technical assistance and staffing.

Current S&PF staffing, at both the state and federal levels, has evolved over time in response to changing conditions. State and Private Forestry program direction assumes the need for a consistent level of certain types of staffing across the country. While useful during S&PF's capacity building phase, this model may no longer be serving the best interests of states and will not likely be nimble enough to adapt to new needs identified through the Redesign process.

The effective delivery of a redesigned S&PF will require that our current approach to staffing and organization be reviewed to ensure that the right resources and personnel are in place to support the needs identified through the national assessment, state forest resource assessments and state response plans.

Staffing Review Framework -- The Redesign Board recommends the following framework be used to review and adapt agency staffing, through an ongoing process, to most effectively achieve desired outcomes on the ground.

- Each USFS Region / Area will work collaboratively with their state forestry partners to develop a Federal Staffing Response Plan (FSRP) using the results of the national assessment and individual state assessments. The FSRP is essentially a business plan that outlines staffing and program needs, including budget projections. Elements of the FSRP will include:
 - Identification of USFS staff needed to meet the basic administrative needs (such as grants management) related to implementing S&PF goals. This will hereafter be referred to as “infrastructure staffing.”
 - Assessment of state forestry capacity to facilitate desired outcomes with existing staff.
 - Assessment of current USFS capacity to meet priority technical and specialized assistance needs at a multi-state or regional level.
 - Evaluation of the state and federal ability to participate effectively in the state and national assessment processes.
 - Consideration of alternative delivery mechanisms for achieving desired outcomes associated with staff (federal, state, local, private).
 - Staffing allocation plan based on the results of the aforementioned elements.
 - Identification of unmet staffing needs within each state and across the Region / Area.
- Prior to the completion of State Assessments, each Region / Area will use the best available information to assess priorities for technical/specialized staff that can most effectively support the states in maximizing outcomes that address the national themes.

- As an initial test of this concept, each USFS Region / Area should work with their states to specifically assess overall capacity to develop the State Assessments included in the Redesign approach. The preliminary (“pilot”) FSRP should identify a role that USFS staff can play to support the development of the assessments and complement the skills available in the various states.
- States will assess their own staff as part of their State Assessments. This information will feed into the FSRPs as they are developed and revised over time to reflect changes in priorities and capacity.
- As part of their FSRP, each Region/Area will identify opportunities to most effectively meet both “infrastructure staffing” needs and technical/specialist staffing needs across multiple regions or nationally. USFS WO and NASF review of the Region/Area FSRP’s will be done with the intent to also identify multi-region or national opportunities.

Timeline -- Each Regional Forester/Area Director will engage the State Foresters in their Region / Area by March 2008 to produce the initial pilot FSRP focused on state and regional capacity to support the development of State Forest Resource Assessments. Initial FSRPs should be completed by December 2008.

National direction will be provided regarding the development of subsequent FSRPs but it is anticipated that they will be produced on no longer than a five year time horizon.

Keys to Success -- For the Redesigned S&PF to maximize its success, future staffing must have the following attributes:

- **Flexible:** Each USFS Region / Area’s FSRP should be informed by national guidance and direction, but must meet the particular needs within that region. Work will sometimes be most effectively and efficiently performed across traditional jurisdictional and program boundaries. One size will not fit all!
- **Thematic:** Staffing within the states and USFS will be clearly linked to the three themes of the S&PF Redesign: conserving working forest landscapes, protecting forests from harm and enhancing public benefits from trees and forests.
- **Niche:** The USFS and each state will perform roles critical to the successful achievement of priority outcomes as identified in the state assessments and response plans. Their roles will not be redundant or superfluous; staff will be assigned to perform roles that complement one another. USFS staffing will be focused on roles that are not effectively or efficiently implemented by individual states.
- **Leverage:** The USFS and states will rely upon capabilities and interests of a broader array of partners to define outcomes, deliver results and leverage resources.
- **Adaptive:** FSRPs will change over time to reflect state needs and capacities as articulated in the state assessments and response plans of the S&PF Redesign.
- **Transparent:** FSRPs must be done transparently in order to cultivate buy-in from partner groups – a key ingredient in maintaining and improving support for S&PF activities at both state and federal levels.

Transition -- Effective staffing is critical to the success of S&PF programs, present and future. Given that staffing is not as fungible as money, care should be taken in implementing the changes identified through the Redesign process and the initial FSRPs. The Board recommends that transition plans be developed to facilitate the desired staffing shifts in a manner that supports the individuals affected by change.