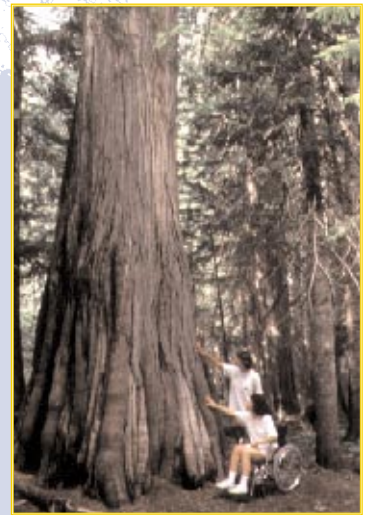


USDA Forest Service Strategic Plan (2000 Revision)



*Integrity and Accountability:
A Framework for Natural Resource Management*

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THE USDA FOREST SERVICE'S

Integrity and Accountability:

MISSION: TO SUSTAIN THE HEALTH, DIVERSITY AND PRODUCTIVITY OF THE NATION'S

GOALS

ECOSYSTEM HEALTH



Promote ecosystem health and conservation using a collaborative approach to sustain the Nation's forests, grasslands and watersheds.

MULTIPLE BENEFITS TO PEOPLE



Provide a variety of uses, values, products, and services for present and future generations by managing within the capability of sustainable ecosystems.

OBJECTIVES

Objective 1.a—Improve and protect watershed conditions to provide the water quality and quantity and the soil productivity necessary to support ecological functions and intended beneficial water uses.

Objective 1.b—Provide ecological conditions to sustain viable populations of native and desired nonnative species and to achieve objectives for Management Indicator Species (MIS)/focal species.

Objective 1.c—Increase the amount of forests and grasslands restored to or maintained in a healthy condition with reduced risk and damage from fires, insects and diseases, and invasive species.

Objective 2.a—Improve the capability of the Nation's forests and grasslands to provide diverse, high-quality outdoor recreation opportunities.

Objective 2.b—Improve the capability of wilderness and protected areas to sustain a desired range of benefits and values.

Objective 2.c—Improve the capability of the Nation's forests and grasslands to provide desired sustainable levels of uses, values, products, and services.

Objective 2.d—Increase accessibility to a diversity of people and members of underserved and low-income populations to the full range of uses, values, products, and services.

Objective 2.e—Improve delivery of services to urban communities.

STRATEGIC PLAN FRAMEWORK

A Framework for Natural Resource Management

FORESTS AND GRASSLANDS TO MEET THE NEEDS OF PRESENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS

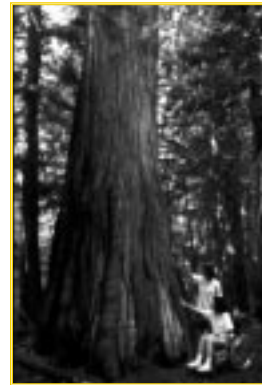
GOALS

SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE



Develop and use the best scientific information available to deliver technical and community assistance and to support ecological, economic, and social sustainability.

EFFECTIVE PUBLIC SERVICE



Ensure the acquisition and use of an appropriate corporate infrastructure to enable the efficient delivery of a variety of uses.

OBJECTIVES

Objective 3.a—Better assist in building the capacity of Tribal governments, rural communities, and private landowners to adapt to economic, environmental, and social change related to natural resources.

Objective 3.b—Increase the effectiveness of scientific, developmental, and technical information delivered to domestic and international interests.

Objective 3.c—Improve the knowledge base provided through research, inventory, and monitoring to enhance scientific understanding of ecosystems, including human uses, and to support decisionmaking and sustainable management of the Nation's forests and grasslands.

Objective 3.d—Broaden the participation of less traditional research groups in research and technical assistance programs.

Objective 4.a—Improve financial management to achieve fiscal accountability.

Objective 4.b—Improve the safety and economy of USDA Forest Service roads, trails, facilities, and operations and provide greater security for the public and employees.

Objective 4.c—Improve and integrate informational systems, data structures, and information management processes to support cost-efficient program delivery.

Objective 4.d—Improve the skills, diversity, and productivity of the workforce.

Objective 4.e—Ensure equal opportunity in employment practices.

Objective 4.f—Provide appropriate access to National Forest System lands and ensure nondiscrimination in the delivery of all USDA Forest Service programs.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service (USDA Forest Service) has significant authorities and responsibilities for stewardship of the Nation's forests and grasslands resources. The goals and objectives of the USDA Forest Service Strategic Plan (2000 Revision) will guide future agency actions. The development of this 2000 Revision includes consideration of science-based information from recent resource assessments, ideas and suggestions from the public, and other information.

The 2000 Revision focuses on outcomes or results to be achieved over a period of time. These outcomes will be achieved by managing the lands and resources of the National Forest System—in collaboration with the American public; interested organizations; private landowners; State, local and Tribal governments; Federal agencies; and others—delivering technical assistance through State and Private Forestry programs, making use of scientific information from Research and Development programs, and improving the management of, and accountability for, these activities. This focus on outcomes—or long-term results, such as the health of the land, the quality of water, and customer satisfaction—represents an important change in focus for the USDA Forest Service.

The four goals of the 2000 Revision address ecosystem health, multiple benefits for people, scientific and technical assistance, and effective public service. Associated with each goal are objectives, strategies to achieve the objectives, and measures of progress. Collectively, these components of the strategic plan provide purpose and context for future management actions and investments, as well as a set of milestones for evaluating progress toward the goals.

Separately, annual performance plans will address specific management actions and investments needed to ensure progress toward the goals and objectives of the strategic plan. Annual performance plans will reflect local needs identified in resource management plans for the national forests and grasslands, as well as plans for research and assistance to Tribal governments, States, and communities. Annual budget proposals will seek the funding needed to deliver the annual actions and investments.

The USDA Forest Service is committed to provide the best possible stewardship, benefiting current and future generations of the American people. The realities of diverse interests, finite budgets, and environmental considerations will each influence the choices to be made in the management of forest and grassland resources. Delivering on this commitment requires understanding of the public's interests through direct discussions and collaboration; financial support through Congressional appropriations, volunteers, partners, and user fees; development and use of scientific information; and broad support for the agency's long-term goals and objectives.

SECTION 1 – MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

Introduction

Nearly a century ago, President Theodore Roosevelt and Gifford Pinchot conceived of a system of forest reserves and fostered the first strategy for managing and protecting the Nation's forests. Today, the tradition of land stewardship continues with renewed vigor as we anticipate a new century with its promise and its challenges.

Many acts of Congress define and direct Forest Service management actions. See figure 1 for a summary of the principal laws whose provisions authorize and guide the mission programs and activities of the Forest Service. During the past decade, the United States has strengthened its commitment to sustainable forest management in response to an international consensus to link natural resource development and protection of the environment. Sustainability has been the essence of U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service (USDA Forest Service) land and natural resource management from the very beginnings of the National Forest System (NFS). The USDA Forest Service remains committed to managing the 191 million acres of the NFS in a sustainable manner in collaboration with the American public; interested organizations; private landowners; State, local and Tribal governments; Federal agencies; and others. The USDA Forest Service responsibilities associated with the NFS, Research and Development, and State and Private Forestry programs hold opportunities to pursue and achieve the promise of sustainable forest management.

The Government Performance and Results Act (Results Act) and the Chief Financial Officer's Act provide guidance that the mission should be accomplished in a business-like way. These acts are part of a suite of legislation passed in the 1990's that outline a performance-based management system for the Federal Government. Based on the intent of this legislation, the USDA Forest Service Strategic Plan (2000 Revision) outlines long-term goals and objectives that set the course and provide the guidance for the USDA Forest Service contribution to forests and grasslands sustainability in North America and around the world.

While the 2000 Revision of the strategic plan is focused on the future, efforts currently underway are expected to also contribute to our success in achieving the long-term goals and objectives of this strategic plan. These current efforts are consistent with the goals proposed in the 2000 Revision, and they specifically address several proposed long-term objectives associated with those goals. These efforts include the Natural Resource Agenda, the proposed Land and Resource Management Planning Rule for the NFS, the proposed Road Management Policy, and the proposed Roadless Area Conservation Rule.

The Natural Resource Agenda focuses on watershed health and restoration, sustainable forest management, the national forest road system, and recreation. The Land and Resource Management Planning Rule proposal calls for consideration of the relationship of possible actions to the goals and objectives in the strategic plan. The Planning Rule proposal has three key elements that are emphasized: collaboration with interested and affected parties; science-based assessments and planning; and ecological, social, and economic sustainability.

The Road Management Policy proposal also emphasizes extensive public involvement and analysis in order to provide a road system that is environmentally sound, safe, and efficient to manage. The proposed Roadless Area Conservation Rule will help the agency achieve several 2000 Revision goals and objectives that respond to concerns expressed by the public, such as clean water, natural resources sustainability, wildlife habitat, forest health, dispersed recreational opportunities, and other public benefits.

Figure 1: Principal Laws Governing Forest Service Mission, Programs, and Activities

Through the Organic Administration Act of June 4, 1897, (chapter 2, 30 Stat. 34-36) Congress authorized the creation of what is now the National Forest System “to improve and protect” Federal forests. To carry out this mission, the USDA Forest Service is vested with broad authority “to regulate [the Forests’] occupancy and use and to preserve the forests therein from destruction” (16 U.S.C. 551). In this act, Congress provided further direction and management authority for these forest reserves and reaffirmed its intent to provide for sustainable protection and use of these forest reserves. This law provided for the establishment of forest reserves “to improve and protect the forest within the boundaries, or for the purpose of securing favorable conditions of water flows, and to furnish a continuous supply of timber for the use and necessities of citizens of the United States...” (16 U.S.C. 475).

In the Multiple-Use Sustained-Yield Act of 1960 (MUSYA), Congress again affirmed the application of sustainability to the broad range of resources over which the USDA Forest Service has responsibility. MUSYA confirms the USDA Forest Service’s authority to manage the national forests and grasslands “for outdoor recreation, range, timber, watershed, and wildlife and fish purposes,” (16 U.S.C. § 528), and does so without limiting the USDA Forest Service’s broad discretion in determining the appropriate resource emphasis or levels of use of the lands of each national forest and grassland.

In the years following the passage of MUSYA, the public became increasingly concerned about environmental decline throughout the United States. Congress responded to this concern by enacting several laws directed toward protecting or improving the natural environment, conserving natural resources so as to meet the needs of the American people in perpetuity, and providing for greater public involvement in agency decisionmaking. Specifically regarding forest land and resource management, Congress enacted the National Forest Management Act of 1976 (NFMA) (16 U.S.C. 1660(6)). NFMA requires the USDA Forest Service to manage the National Forest System lands according to land and resource management plans that provide for multiple-uses and sustained yield in accordance with MUSYA (16 U.S.C. 1604(e) and (g)(1)). In developing and maintaining these plans, NFMA calls for “integrated consideration of physical, biological, economic and other sciences.” (16 U.S.C. 1604(b)).

Congress enacted the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.) “to promote efforts which will prevent or eliminate damage to the environment and biosphere and stimulate the health and welfare of man, [and] enrich the understanding of the ecological systems and natural resources important to the Nation” (42 U.S.C. 4321). Under NEPA, all USDA Forest Service proposals for major Federal actions significantly affecting the quality of the human environment must include detailed statements of the environmental effects and alternatives to proposals (42 U.S.C. 4332(C)).

In addition to NEPA, the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (ESA) also bounds the otherwise broad discretion that the USDA Forest Service has over land and resource management. One of the purposes of the ESA is “to provide a means whereby the ecosystems upon which endangered species and threatened species depend may be conserved...” (16 U.S.C. 1531(b)). The ESA requires Federal agencies such as the USDA Forest Service to “utilize their authorities in furtherance of the purposes of this [act] by carrying out programs for the conservation of endangered species and threatened species” in consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service (16 U.S.C. 1536(a)(1)).

Source: The Principal Laws Relating to USDA Forest Service Activities, USDA, 1993.

Mission Statement

The mission of the USDA Forest Service is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the Nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations.

The USDA Forest Service commitment to land stewardship and public service is the framework within which natural resources are managed. Implicit in this statement is the agency's collaboration with partners and the public.

As the lead Federal agency in natural resource conservation, the USDA Forest Service provides leadership in the protection, management, and use of the Nation's forest, rangeland, and aquatic ecosystems. Our ecosystem approach to management integrates ecological, economic, and social factors to maintain and enhance the quality of the environment to meet current and future needs. Through implementation of land and resource management plans, the agency ensures sustainable ecosystems by restoring and maintaining species diversity and ecological productivity that helps provide recreation, water, timber, minerals, fish, wildlife, wilderness, and aesthetic values for current and future generations of people.

Through technical and financial assistance, the USDA Forest Service assists States and private landowners in practicing good stewardship, promoting rural economic development, and improving the natural environment of cities and communities. The agency continues to develop and use the best available scientific information to facilitate achievement of our goals and objectives. Domestic and international activities are directed at developing values, products, and services in such a way as to maintain ecosystem health.

The Management Situation

The USDA Forest Service must comply with its legislated authorities and responsibilities, particularly concerning the water, air, and soils that sustain life on Earth. Specifically, the USDA Forest Service must work to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the Nation's forests and grasslands. The agency is equally required to conduct its business in the most effective and efficient manner possible, providing the best possible value for the American people.

The strategic plan is intended to be the keystone of the Forest Service management system, providing the context and purpose for agency actions. National resource assessments are produced under the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974 (Public Law 93-378) (RPA). Assessments are sources of information on the status and trends of renewable resources in the United States that are used to set the context for strategic planning. These National resource assessments have influenced the goals, objectives, and associated measures of the 2000 Revision.

Similarly, the 2000 Revision incorporates the priorities of the agency's Natural Resource Agenda, and information related to other program and unit plans. The Natural Resource Agenda focuses on watershed health and restoration, sustainable forest management, the national forest road system, and recreation. The strategic plan addresses principles and guidance from national policies such as the proposed Land and Resource Management Planning Rule for the National Forest System, the proposed Road Management Policy, and the proposed Roadless Area Conservation Rule.

Appropriately, the 2000 Revision also addresses current issues and areas of concern expressed by the public and looks to the future with a focus on long-term results to be achieved. The goals and objectives of this strategic plan will drive adjustments to, and development of, new programs and plans. As land and resource management plans are amended and revised and projects are proposed, local managers will look to the national strategic plan for guidance. Annual performance plans, including budget proposals, will be tied to the strategic plan as they provide the means for achieving the intended land health and other long-term outcomes.

The long-term goals and objectives in the 2000 Revision reflect consideration of science-based information from recent resource assessments, ideas and suggestions from the public, and professional judgments of how to best serve the needs of the American people, now and for generations to come.

The management situation of the USDA Forest Service is similar to that of many organizations today. Financial resources are finite and competition for them is strong. Operations are being transformed by new and emerging information technologies. Accountability (for monies spent and results achieved) is expected and closely monitored, from within and outside the agency. And, the results expected of the agency are as diverse as the public interests the agency must serve.

The model for how the USDA Forest Service manages its business has changed in response to the management situation and other factors. Consistent with requirements of the Government Performance and Results Act (Public Law 103-62), the new model provides for considering long-term as well as near-term objectives in an adaptive system with monitoring and evaluation of land and resource management plan implementation, financial performance, public perceptions, accomplishment of operational objectives, and achievement of long-term results. Full implementation of this model of management will facilitate USDA Forest Service accountability for actions taken and results realized.

The long-term goals and objectives of the USDA Forest Service, outlined in this 2000 Revision, are intended to guide near-term agency actions. Those actions include decisions on programs and plans associated with the national forests and grasslands, State and Private Forestry, Research and Development, Business Operations, and agency budget proposals. The role of the strategic plan is also to identify intended long-term outcomes and priorities. The strategic plan is designed to help us understand the importance of knowing where we want our journey to take us before we travel long distances. The intended outcomes described in the plan will guide decisions throughout the journey. As the strategic plan guides other plans, actions, and investments, it provides context and purpose that drive near-term choices essential to the achievement of intended long-term outcomes.

The USDA Forest Service is committed to providing the best possible stewardship of the Nation's forest and rangeland resources, benefiting current and future generations of the American people. The realities of diverse interests, finite budgets, and environmental considerations will each influence the choices to be made in the management of forest and rangeland resources. Delivering on this commitment requires understand-

ing of the public's interests through direct discussions and collaboration; financial support through Congressional appropriations, volunteers, partners, and user fees; development and use of scientific information; and broad support for the long-term goals and objectives of the USDA Forest Service.

In summary, the strategic plan is a keystone that, by itself, means little. However, in association with other components of the USDA Forest Service management model, the strategic plan plays a role just as a keystone in an arch provides integrity to the structure of the arch. The strategic plan outlines the purpose and context for agency actions, providing integrity for those near-term actions and monitoring how they affect progress toward long-term outcomes.

The Findings of the 2000 RPA Assessment

Introduction

The strategic plan objectives and anticipated outcomes must be examined within the context of existing resource conditions and resource demands, and some expectation of future trends. Assessments conducted under the RPA are one source of information on the status and trends of renewable resources in the United States that help to set the context for strategic planning.

This section describes some of the preliminary findings of the 2000 RPA Assessment, which is to be completed by December 2000. The 2000 RPA Assessment and the Montreal Process Criteria and Indicators for the Conservation and Sustainable Management of Temperate and Boreal Forests provide a framework for evaluating resource status and trends for U.S. forests and grasslands (see appendix C for a description of the criteria and their linkage to the goals and objectives in this strategic plan).

World growth in population and income has resulted in social, economic, and technological changes that profoundly affect the global management and use of natural resources. The world population will continue to grow, possibly from 5.9 billion in 1998 to 8.9 billion by 2050. The U.S. population also continues to grow, particularly in the southern and western regions, with a projected increase of about 50 percent by 2050. Increases in population and discretionary income will, in turn, increase demands for renewable resources. Demographic shifts, such as the aging of the population and increasing ethnic and racial diversity, will affect the patterns of demand for natural resources. Restoring and maintaining healthy ecosystems while meeting the multiple demands of people will provide difficult challenges for natural resource managers.

The Forest and Rangeland Resource Base

The area of forest land in the United States has been relatively stable since the 1920's. Estimated forest land area in 1997 was 748 million acres, showing a small increase since 1992. Losses of forest land to development and other land uses have been offset by afforestation and natural reversion of abandoned crop and pasture land to forest land. The Nation's forests are getting older in many areas of the country. This maturation will lead to increased diversity of forest structure, but the extent of some seral stages and forest types will likely decrease because later successional stages will continue to increase at the expense of earlier successional stages.

The forest land base is expected to remain relatively stable in the future, although expected population increases will lead to greater conversion of forests to developed uses. Also, subdivision of forest land into smaller parcels is expected to result in further declines in the average size of private forest holdings. From 1978 to 1994, the number of private forest land ownership units increased by over one-fourth, to nearly 10 million units. Much of this subdivision is likely to continue to occur in close proximity to public lands. For example, second home development near national forests is increasing in areas of the upper Midwest and the Western United States.

The rangeland base is more difficult to estimate. In the lower 48 States, total rangeland has been estimated at 630 million acres. The rangeland base is expected to continue declining slowly in the future. Two opposing forces of change are affecting rangeland. Like forest land, rangeland in close proximity to public lands is being subdivided into residential parcels. Simultaneously, some rangeland is being consolidated into more concentrated private holdings.

The condition of the forest and rangeland resource remains difficult to assess. Indicators and monitoring protocols are being developed and will eventually lead to a consistent evaluation of the condition of these resources. In the meantime, existing data suggest significant forest health problems in various parts of the United States.

In 1998, seven major pests and diseases affected over 54 million acres of forestland in the United States. For example, over 30 million acres in the Western States are affected by dwarf mistletoe; over 13 million acres in the South are infected with fusiform rust. Forests will continue to face threats from exotic diseases and insects. Some 19 of the 70 major insect pests found in the United States are exotics. A significant part of the total flora is composed of invasive plant species. For example, invasive plant species account for about 25 percent of the plant cover in California. Wildfire will also continue to be a threat in areas where fuel buildup has resulted from previous suppression efforts. Fire suppression has caused increased forest density and biomass, changes in forest composition, and the resulting increases in insect and disease susceptibility and mortality, as well as buildup of fuels.

Forest resources in urban areas have not been included in traditional forest inventories. Urban areas occupy 3.5 percent of the U.S. land area and have an average tree cover of 27 percent. Tree cover in urban areas provides recreation settings, wildlife habitat, energy conservation, flood control, and various other functions. Rapid urban expansion and increased levels of use by urban populations affect national forests. As urbanization continues to spread into less developed rural areas, a greater proportion of natural resources will become part of urban ecosystems.

Trends in Wildlife and Fish Populations

The United States has a great diversity of wildlife and fish species, but trend data are available for only a small portion of the total species. Nationally, most big game species have increased substantially since 1975, some to the point of becoming pests in certain areas of the country. One notable exception to this pattern is a generally declining trend in mule deer populations since the 1980's. Furbearers were estimated to be at or above carrying capacity in most States, reflecting improving habitat and declining harvest pressure.

Small game species associated with rangeland or agricultural habitats have been declining, although cottontail rabbits and pheasants have shown recent evidence of an upswing. Habitats associated with agricultural lands have declined since the 1960's as a result of larger field size; reduced crop diversity; and loss of fencerows, hedgerows, tree cover, and wetlands. The Conservation Reserve Program has had some effect on improving wildlife habitat in agricultural areas in the last decade. Grassland habitats have been negatively affected by agricultural development, fire suppression, and non-native species invasions. In addition to the decline in populations of small game species on these habitats, grassland nesting birds as a group showed a high proportion (44 percent) of species with declining population trends. Among birds, only those that nest in or around urban areas showed a higher proportion (54 percent) of declining species.

The historic loss of wetland habitats has affected a variety of species, particularly waterfowl. Wetland conversion has slowed in recent years, and the primary cause of conversion has shifted from agriculture to urban development. An increase in wetland habitats in breeding areas in the 1990's because of unusually wet conditions is believed to be a primary factor in the substantial increase in many duck populations in recent years. About 80 percent of goose and swan populations also seem to be stable or increasing. A contributory factor may be agricultural activities that provide wintering geese with waste grain near human-created open water habitats. Wetland and open-water-nesting species were among the groups of breeding bird species with the greatest proportion of increasing population trends.

Although many species are generally abundant and exhibiting stable trends, the number of species federally protected as endangered or threatened continues to increase. Additions to the list are occurring at a much faster rate than delisting of species for recovery. Endangered species are concentrated most heavily in 12 geographic areas of the country, including the southern Appalachians, coastal areas, and the arid Southwest.

Species that require large undeveloped landscapes or specialized habitats vulnerable to development pressures are most likely to be at risk in the future. Threatened and endangered plants are currently most heavily concentrated in peninsular Florida, the southern Appalachians and piedmont, and the central California coast. Threatened and endangered animal species are currently most heavily concentrated in the Southeastern United States, the central California coast, and the Washington-Oregon border. In the future, the occurrence of threatened and endangered plant species is likely to increase the most in desert areas of Texas and Nevada and along the southern California coast range and valleys. Projected areas for the greatest increase in occurrence of threatened and endangered animals include an extension of existing areas in the Pacific Northwest and the central California coast and interior valleys.

Human Uses of the Resource Base

The people of the United States derive a number of goods and services from private and public forests and grasslands. Demands for these goods and services are expected to continue increasing in the future, although the relative mix may change. To meet the projected demands of a growing population, more outputs will need to be produced from the available land base.

The recreational use of forests and grasslands has been increasing for decades, and is expected to continue to increase. Almost 95 percent of the U.S. population 16 years old and older, participate in some form of outdoor recreation. The most popular outdoor recreation activities (measured in number of days) are walking, nonconsumptive wildlife activities, biking, sightseeing, nonpool swimming, fishing, family gathering, and picnicking. The five fastest-growing outdoor recreation activities (measured in number of days) through the year 2050 are projected to be visiting historic places, downhill skiing, snowmobiling, sightseeing, and participating in nonconsumptive wildlife activity.

Although total participation in hunting has been stable or declining since 1975, it remains an important recreational use, particularly on national forests and other public lands. For example, the Rocky Mountain assessment region, which has the highest concentration of national forest lands, is projected to experience a significant increase in hunting participation through 2050. Other regions are projected to have significant decreases (Southern and Pacific coast) or remain approximately stable (North). Also, while total hunting participation has declined, big game hunting has increased in every survey period since 1955, and more days are now spent hunting big game than any other category of hunting.

The resource base and facilities for recreation appear to be keeping pace with population growth in most regions of the country. Exceptions are primarily related to water-based recreation resources, including beaches, coastal areas, and Federal developed water sites. The availability of private land for public recreation has declined over the last 20 years, and is expected to continue to slowly decline. This trend has the potential to reduce some recreation opportunities, especially in the Eastern United States.

The demand for most forest and range products will increase in the future. Per capita use is increasing for some products such as paper and paperboard, while remaining stable or declining for other products. The United States has one of the highest per capita uses of wood and paper products in the world. Compared with rising per capita consumption, per capita harvest of timber has been relatively stable or has been declining in the last few decades as a result of increases in recycling and efficiency in production. Overall demand, particularly for smaller diameter trees, will increase as a result of increasing population and a relative shift toward paper product manufacturing. Total growing stock on timberland is expected to increase for both hardwoods and softwoods. The United States will continue to rely on domestic sources to meet most of its fiber needs. Private lands in the Eastern United States will be the main source of domestic timber; harvest from the public lands is expected to remain stable at recent levels. Plantations in the South will be the most important source of increased softwood harvest.

The amount of land available for forage production is expected to decrease in all regions of the country. Range forage demand is likely to decline in the future, particularly in the western and northern regions. One exception to the trend is the likely increase in the use of sheep and goats for brush and weed control. Technologies to improve the productivity and use of grazed forages may play a role in meeting forage demand for domestic livestock, although the role of the public lands in providing forage

for domestic livestock is likely to decline. Wildlife use of grazing lands is expected to increase in all regions, and forage supplies appear to be sufficient to meet those needs.

The per capita consumption of many metallic minerals is expected to decline or remain stable, but increased population will lead to net increases in total consumption by 2050. Domestic sources will remain important for some minerals, such as coal, gold, and lead. International prices will remain a major determinant of the level of exploration and development on both public and private lands. Rising oil prices could lead to renewed domestic exploration.

Improved efficiency, new technology, and increased competition have all contributed to a decline in per capita for water use in the United States. Between 1990 and 1995, total withdrawals declined, even though population increased 16 percent. Water use in the United States is expected to increase only 7 percent between 1995 and 2040, while population is projected to increase 49 percent. However, several regions of the country will experience potential water shortages, particularly in arid regions of the West. An increase in conflicts between off-stream and in-stream uses is also likely, especially in water-short regions.

Potential changes in the climate in the United States and around the world could influence the supply of goods, services, and amenities from forests through changes in forest area, productivity, and species composition. Forest productivity may benefit in the short term from changes in climate. However, long-term changes will likely influence species distributions and the duration, frequency, and intensity of forest disturbances such as fire, insects, disease, drought, and storms.

Conclusions

Demands for, and supplies of, renewable resources from the Nation's forests and grasslands will continue to change over time in response to changing preferences, new technology, and new information. The future will bring increasing populations, which will result in growing urban areas and increased fragmentation and parcelization of private lands. As a result, most extensive tracts of intact ecosystems will be on public lands. The public lands will be under increasing pressure to meet varying, and sometimes conflicting, demands. Working in partnership with other public and private land managers will be essential to developing management strategies to ensure a sustainable flow of goods and services from the forest and rangeland resources of the United States.

SECTION 2 - GENERAL GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service (USDA Forest Service) Strategic Plan (2000 Revision) is mission-driven. The strategic goals set forth in this plan are responsive to the mission: ***“to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the Nation’s forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations.”***

This section describes each of the four long-term goals of the 2000 Revision. Associated with each mission-related goal are objectives, strategies to achieve the objectives, associated land health and other outcome measures for the major functions of the agency, and priorities for accomplishments linked to costs, outputs, results, and benefits. Collectively, these components of the 2000 Revision provide purpose and context for future management actions and investments, as well as a set of milestones for evaluating progress toward the goals.



USDA Forest Service Goals

Goal 1: Ecosystem Health

Promote ecosystem health and conservation using a collaborative approach to sustain the Nation’s forests, grasslands, and watersheds.



Goal 2: Multiple Benefits to People

Provide a variety of uses, values, products, and services for present and future generations by managing within the capability of sustainable ecosystems.

Goal 3: Scientific and Technical Assistance

Develop and use the best scientific information available to deliver technical and community assistance and to support ecological, economic, and social sustainability.



Goal 4: Effective Public Service

Ensure the acquisition and use of an appropriate corporate infrastructure to enable the efficient delivery of a variety of uses.

Introduction

The 2000 Revision encompasses the roles and responsibilities of the agency and incorporates the long-term priorities of the agency. This introduction discusses generic aspects of the plan and its relationship to other planning actions by different levels of the Forest Service.

The goals and objectives set out in the 2000 Revision provide the broad view of what outcomes the agency plans to pursue. The strategies under each objective provide key approaches on how to achieve the stated goals and objectives. Priority setting is expressed by how resources—human and financial—are allocated to the goals and objectives in the future, affecting investments and land management actions.

Full implementation of the requirements of the Government Performance and Results Act (Results Act) will significantly improve the agency's accountability, particularly with regard to two important aspects of the Results Act. One is that the agency will identify how priorities are set for the investments to be made, large or small. Two is that mission investments, large or small, will be accomplished in a business-like way.

This brings the magnifying glass of accountability to bear. How is the agency accomplishing its priorities? (For example, what is the outcome of watershed improvements? Are water quality and quantity trends improving or degrading?) Success, or failure, will be evaluated based on results of long-term trend analysis, percentage changes for selected measures, or changes in proportions of land in better (or worse) condition. Section three of the Results Act prescribes the requirements of an agency's strategic plan.

Relationship Between the Strategic Plan and Annual Performance Plans

Sections three and four of the Results Act prescribe how the priorities of the strategic plan are translated into annual performance plans, providing a basis for agency budget requests. The annual performance plan for a particular year establishes annual goals and objectives for what must be done in the near term in order to make progress toward the long-term outcomes articulated in the strategic plan. The fundamental relationship is that the 2000 Revision outlines where we are going (a destination outcome or result) and the associated annual performance plans address what we must do in a particular year to move toward the destination set forth in the strategic plan.

The goals and objectives of the 2000 Revision are outcome focused, identifying results that will be achieved over a period of time, typically longer than 1 or 2 years. The 2000 Revision includes strategies for each long-term objective that point to the types of actions the Forest Service must pursue in order to achieve the objective. In this manner, the strategies provide a bridge or direct link to the annual goals and objectives of the annual performance plans.

While annual performance plans must first relate to the goals and objectives of the strategic plan, annual plans may also include initiatives addressing contemporary needs and opportunities. Initiatives must be fundamentally consistent with the overall direction of the strategic plan and may provide direction on priorities for agency programs and units.

In each of the strategic plan and annual performance plans, accomplishments must be measured to provide a basis for accountability, both for near-term accomplishments

and long-term results. Typically, strategic plan measures will include trends over time associated with resource conditions, such as trends in acres at extreme risk of fire, insects, diseases, and invasive species in regard to improving ecosystem health. Related to this, the annual performance plan may address one or another management action or land treatment intended to reduce such risks, such as measuring the acres treated by prescribed fire or mechanical removal. The agency's annual performance report will include information on what was accomplished relative to annual performance measures and the status of progress toward strategic plan objectives, based on multiyear trends.

Baseline Data for Long-Term Measures and Milestones

The availability of reliable baseline data for long-term measures is essential to successful implementation of the agency's strategic plan and ultimate accountability for the expected results. At this time, existing information sources provide indicators and a baseline quantity for a few of the long-term measures in the 2000 Revision. In many cases, the data necessary for the agency to benchmark and measure its performance directly on those goals and objectives are lacking. In many instances, no data currently exist to establish baselines or measure the agency's performance on a number of strategic goals and objectives.

The Forest Service is committed to establishing baseline information as quickly as possible for each of the long-term measures and to initiating actions to ensure timely collection of such information in the future. To establish baselines, fill data gaps, remedy data deficiencies, and validate performance-related data on an ongoing basis, the agency will need to prioritize and redirect budgetary and staff resources. The Forest Service, working in conjunction with other natural resource and land management agencies, State and Tribal governments, and partners, will work to identify the data sources and establish the baselines needed to fully comply with the Government Performance and Results Act by:

- Determining baseline information for at least half of the strategic plan measures by December 2000 and for the remainder by July 2001.
- Establishing—in Annual Performance Plans beginning in FY 2001—performance goals to identify data needs, sources, and baselines for tracking progress toward meeting the long-term goals and objectives.
- Beginning in FY 2001, establishing performance goals to identify data needs, sources, and baselines for tracking progress toward meeting the long-term goals and objectives in annual performance plans.
- Continuing the efforts to establish agency-wide data quality standards, consistent with good statistical practice, that are available for use by natural resource management agencies outside the Department and for reference by the public.

IMPORTANT NOTICE: The information should be noted with respect to the goals and objectives in this strategic plan.

See Appendix E for available baseline information.

GOAL 1: ECOSYSTEM HEALTH

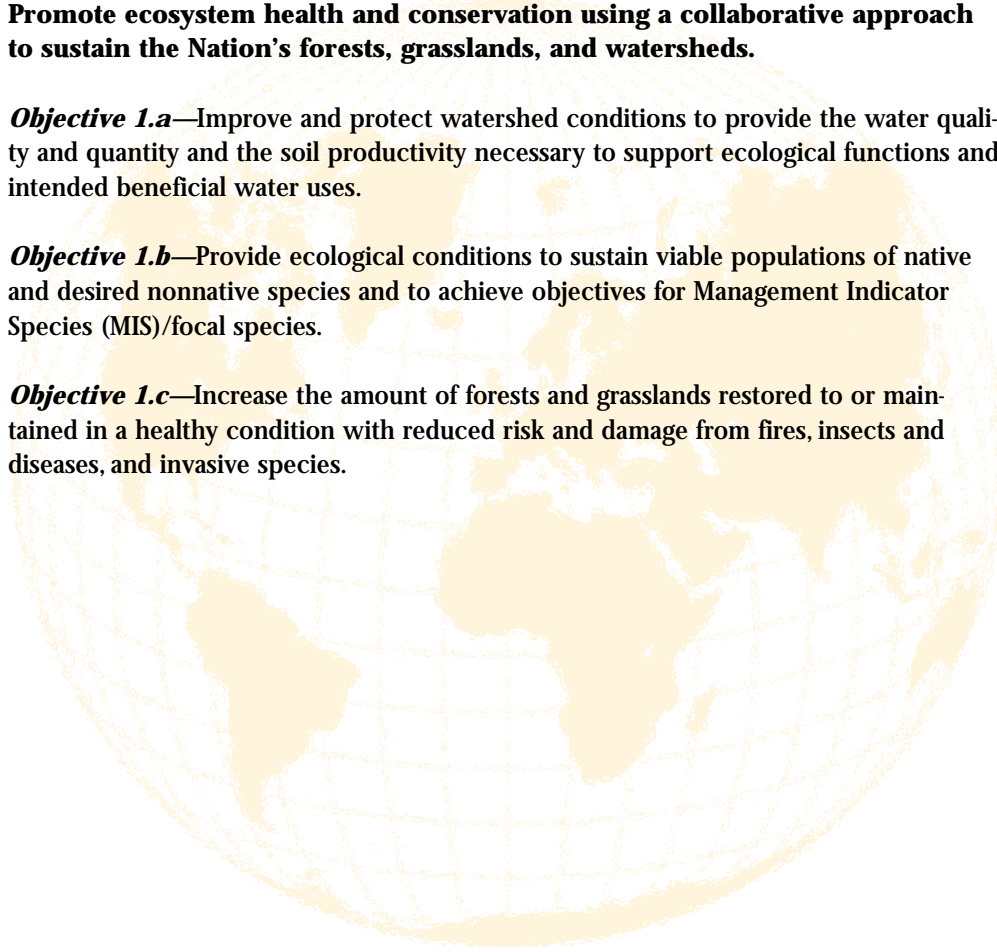


Promote ecosystem health and conservation using a collaborative approach to sustain the Nation's forests, grasslands, and watersheds.

Objective 1.a—Improve and protect watershed conditions to provide the water quality and quantity and the soil productivity necessary to support ecological functions and intended beneficial water uses.

Objective 1.b—Provide ecological conditions to sustain viable populations of native and desired nonnative species and to achieve objectives for Management Indicator Species (MIS)/focal species.

Objective 1.c—Increase the amount of forests and grasslands restored to or maintained in a healthy condition with reduced risk and damage from fires, insects and diseases, and invasive species.



OBJECTIVE 1.a

Improve and protect watershed conditions to provide the water quality and quantity and soil productivity necessary to support ecological functions and intended beneficial water uses.

Strategies To Achieve the Objective

We will ...

- Maintain the integrity of roadless watersheds through implementation of a roadless area conservation policy.
- Use collaborative techniques in planning and stewardship of the national forests and grasslands to cooperatively resolve natural resource issues.
- Implement a system with national standards for assessing watershed conditions by 2001.
- Complete assessments, plans, and projects for watersheds identified as priority for treatment through the Clean Water Action Plan in collaboration with Federal, State, Tribal, and private landowners.
- Design projects to achieve soil and water quality protection and watershed restoration with emphasis on transportation and livestock grazing systems.
- Ensure the continued availability of water to meet purposes for which National Forest System (NFS) lands were established and to sustain ecological functions.
- Provide research results and tools to support the sustainable management, protection, and restoration of watersheds.
- Increase the number of abandoned mines and contaminated sites treated.

Measure

Trends in watersheds having improved watershed conditions.

FY 2006 Milestone

An increase of 20 percent in the number of watersheds having restored or improved watershed conditions.

Key External Factors

The Clean Water Act, Federal Water Pollution Control Act, and other Federal and State water quality laws and regulations have been enacted to protect the environment from pollution. As public awareness increases, the trend will be toward even greater protection of the environment, including, if necessary, more regulation. Continued degradation of environmental quality, together with rising costs of remediation, will drive concern for active prevention and interest in greater application of restoration and protection measures.

Not all collaborators are interested in working together to resolve natural resource issues. When the outcome of collaboration is different from what a participant wants, they often distrust the USDA Forest Service and choose not to participate in future collaborative efforts. The responsible USDA Forest Service official may provide early and continuous opportunities for collaborative participation in the planning process, without effectively resolving issues.

OBJECTIVE 1.b

Provide ecological conditions to sustain viable populations of native and desired nonnative species and to achieve objectives for Management Indicator Species (MIS)/focal species.

Strategies To Achieve the Objective

We will . . .

- Identify species, habitats, and ecological conditions to serve as indicators for ecosystem health and conservation.
- Develop priority conservation strategies and agreements in cooperation with Federal, State, Tribal, and other partners and private landowners. Implement those conservation strategies on NFS lands.
- Establish measurable objectives in land and resource management plans for populations, habitats, and/or ecological conditions to provide for viability of listed threatened and endangered species and species at risk, as well as objectives for other MIS/focal species.
- Establish scientifically credible monitoring programs, develop survey protocols, and initiate baseline and trend surveys for populations, habitats, and/or ecological conditions to provide for viability of threatened and endangered species, species at risk, and other MIS/focal species.
- Reduce the potential impacts from roads on ecological conditions through implementation of a roadless area conservation policy.
- Implement habitat restoration and management activities for species with viability concerns, focal species, and ecosystems at risk.
- Research the effects of sustainable forest and grassland management on selected aquatic and terrestrial animal and plant species.

Measure

Status and/or trends in populations, habitats, and ecological conditions for selected species.

FY 2006 Milestones

- 100 percent of national forests and grasslands have established measurable objectives and monitoring programs for populations, habitats, and/or ecological conditions for threatened and endangered species, other species for which there are viability concerns, and other MIS/focal species, and are achieving objectives at rates consistent with timeframes identified in land and resource management plans.

- Selected species populations and habitats representing land and resource management plan objectives that will be tracked to measure progress toward the milestone include:

Species Populations To Be Tracked:	Representative of:	
	Ecosystem	Geographic Area
Red-cockaded woodpecker Golden-winged warbler Cerulean warbler	Long-leaf & Short-leaf pine Early successional deciduous forest Mature deciduous forest	Southeast
Goldenseal Eastern brook trout Cerulean warbler	Mesic deciduous forest Perennial streams Mature deciduous forest	Northeast
Black-tailed prairie dog	Mid- and short-grass prairies	Northern Great Plains
Grizzly bear Bull trout	Mixed conifer forest Perennial streams & lakes	Northern Rockies
Aspen	Aspen forest	Southern Rockies & Great Basin
Sage grouse Lahontan cutthroat trout	Sagebrush-steppe Perennial streams & lakes	Great Basin
Northern spotted owl	Douglas fir/mixed conifer late seral/old growth forest	Pacific Northwest
Mexican spotted owl Loach minnow, spokedace Willow flycatcher	Mixed conifer forest Desert streams Riparian areas	Southwest
California spotted owl Sierra Nevada bighorn Red-legged frog	Sierra Nevada conifer forests Alpine and subalpine Riparian & aquatic ecosystems	California

Key External Factors

Successful implementation on non-NFS lands must include achieving coordination of activities with the landowner for adoption of conservation strategies and agreements.

Data are readily available for most national forests, but accuracy and reliability of the available data are poor to good. Also, obtaining reliable data from some non-NFS lands may be difficult.

It may take many years to distinguish trends that result from management actions and those related to population fluctuations from trends that result from climatic or other influences.

OBJECTIVE 1.C

Increase the amount of forests and grasslands restored to or maintained in a healthy condition with reduced risk and damage from fires, insects and diseases, and invasive species.

Strategies To Achieve the Objective

We will ...

- Identify priority health restoration needs through national and regional environmental monitoring and ecological risk assessments that include social and economic factors.
- Research ecosystems (composition, structure, and process) and the role of disturbance processes.
- Focus agency resources to:
 - Reduce fire hazards, especially in urban/wildland interface areas.
 - Prevent the spread of invasive species.
 - Minimize insect and disease problems.
- Prepare fire management plans tiered to land and resource management plans.
- Place high priority on fuel reduction activities in short interval, fire-adapted ecosystems (fire regimes I and II), emphasizing condition classes 2 and 3.
- Develop a national and ecoregional ecological integrity rating system to improve the ability to assess ecological conditions and trends.
- Increase wildland fire protection capabilities to provide for firefighter and public safety.

Measure

Trends in acres at extreme risk from fire, insects, diseases, and invasive species.

FY 2006 Milestones

- A 5-percent decrease in acres at extreme risk from insects and diseases.
- Reduce the proportion of acres in short-interval, fire-adapted ecosystems (fire regimes I and II) in condition classes 2 and 3 compared to condition class 1 by 20 percent.
- The rate at which acres infested with targeted invasive species remains unchanged or is diminished.
- A 10-percent increase in firefighting production capability.

Key External Factors

Baseline data on acres at risk were collected in an inconsistent manner in the past. Well-defined methods of data collection and storage are being developed.

Fires, insect and disease epidemics, and other unplanned large natural disturbances can radically alter the landscape and rapidly change management strategies, priorities, and budget allocations.

Another Federal agency, the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), has the primary responsibility for preventing the introduction and initial spread of nonnative invasive species in the United States.

Local jurisdictions regulate homebuilding. As development extends into wildlands, areas can experience higher intensity fires that increase risks to human life and property and contribute to the spread of invasive species.

GOAL 2: MULTIPLE BENEFITS TO PEOPLE



Provide a variety of uses, values, products, and services for present and future generations by managing within the capability of sustainable ecosystems.

Objective 2.a—Improve the capability of the Nation’s forests and grasslands to provide diverse, high-quality outdoor recreation opportunities.

Objective 2.b—Improve the capability of wilderness and protected areas to sustain a desired range of benefits and values.

Objective 2.c—Improve the capability of the Nation’s forests and grasslands to provide desired sustainable levels of uses, values, products, and services.

Objective 2.d—Increase accessibility to a diversity of people and members of underserved and low-income populations to the full range of uses, values, products, and services.

Objective 2.e—Improve delivery of services to urban communities.

OBJECTIVE 2.a

Improve the capability of the Nation's forests and grasslands to provide diverse, high-quality outdoor recreation opportunities.

Strategies To Achieve the Objective

We will...

- Research methods for estimating recreation capacity and demand using ecological capabilities and social factors.
- Focus recreation management, maintenance, and development activities where demand is currently exceeding or is expected to exceed capacity on NFS lands.
- Maintain the integrity of roadless areas for dispersed recreation opportunities through implementation of a roadless area conservation policy.
- Manage recreation areas and programs on NFS lands to levels compatible with ecosystem sustainability objectives by:
 - Working with communities to help determine recreation opportunities and priorities.
 - Redirecting opportunities and use.
 - Improving management of facilities and special places.
 - Increasing environmental education and interpretation.

Measure

Trends in user satisfaction by use and geographic region.

FY 2006 Milestone

- A 5-percent increase in user satisfaction with recreation programs and facilities.

Key External Factors

The physical settings, facilities, and direct programs that take place on the national forests will be the focus of measured satisfaction. However, satisfaction is also influenced by many external factors. External factors include gasoline prices, road conditions, the economy, weather, and highway congestion. The USDA Forest Service has little direct influence on such factors.

OBJECTIVE 2.b

Improve the capability of wilderness and protected areas to sustain a desired range of benefits and values.

Strategies To Achieve the Objective

We will . . .

- Research the effects of human use, natural disturbances, and nonnative species on wilderness ecosystems.
- Establish baseline information and indicators for determining and maintaining wilderness quality in collaboration with other agencies.
- Focus agency resources on wilderness and protected areas where human use and ecological concerns are greatest.
- Ensure agency activities meet the best available pollution control measures to protect sensitive wilderness areas.
- Establish or update memoranda of understanding with States to implement effective smoke management programs, the regional haze rule, and air quality monitoring programs.
- Develop and implement statewide USDA Forest Service smoke management plans.
- Ensure that all wilderness and other protected areas have management plans integrated into land and resource management plans, and have associated standards and practices in place.

Measure

Trends in user satisfaction by use and geographic region.

FY 2006 Milestone

- A 5-percent increase in user satisfaction with wilderness experiences and opportunities.

Key External Factors

Achieving progress in air quality depends on effective coordination and cooperation among States and other agencies.

Revised Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) air quality standards will bring a greater number of NFS areas and agency activities under more stringent compliance regulations.

OBJECTIVE 2.C

Improve the capability of the Nation's forests and grasslands to provide desired sustainable levels of uses, values, products, and services.

Strategies To Achieve the Objective

We will ...

- Expand research and apply methods and technology to improve efficiency of processing, use, and reuse of natural resources.
- Finalize and implement cost recovery to improve management of special use programs.
- Acquire land or interest in land through purchase, exchange, and conservation easements to enhance long-term management and protection of NFS resources.
- Improve legal public use of NFS lands by acquiring rights-of-way for roads and trails and by clearly identifying NFS boundaries.
- Implement a science-based road policy by using scientific information and the increased understanding of the ecological and social impacts associated with roads and related management activities.
- Focus agency resources for permit, lease, and contract administration where needs or opportunities exist for achieving or restoring ecosystem integrity.
- Assist State, Tribal, and other governmental agencies and private landowners to achieve sustainable forest and grassland management.
- Assess the potential economic value of botanical resources and other special forest products being provided by the Nation's forests and grasslands.
- Develop information needed to determine sustainable production levels of the wide variety of goods and services provided by national forests and grasslands.

Measure

Trends in the quantity or value of selected goods and services provided from the Nation's forests and grasslands.

FY 2006 Milestones

- Make information available for determining sustainable quantities of goods and services for the Nation's forests and grasslands.
- Maintain trend in acquisition of rights-of-way for roads and trails acquired for access to NFS lands.
- Make significant progress toward reaching sustainable quantities of the listed goods and services indicators.

Indicator Category	2000 Revision Indicator
Recreation	Recreation Use (MM* visits) Wildlife / Fish (MM visits) Wilderness Use (MM visits)
Range	Permitted Grazing (MM aum**)
Timber	Harvest Volume (MMBF***)
Mineral	Total Mineral Operations Administered to Standard
Special Uses	Receipts (\$)
Botanical Resources / Special Forest Products	Receipts (\$)
Lands	Land Exchanged (acres) Land Acquired (acres) Land in Conservation Easements (acres)

* = millions

** = animal unit months

*** = million board feet

Key External Factors

Obtaining information on quantities and values for some of the goods and services needed to determine sustainable levels involve non-NFS lands where obtaining reliable information may be difficult.

Actual demand for goods and services as influenced by the state of the national, international, and/or local economies may affect the quantities of goods and services reported as consumed or used despite the quantities that are made available. For example, all timber offered may not be sold.

The acquisition of rights-of-way often involves compliance with, and negotiations among, private landowners and political, legal, regulatory, and environmental agencies at the Federal, State, and local levels. This can be a lengthy and costly process.

OBJECTIVE 2.d

Increase accessibility to a diversity of people and members of underserved and low-income populations to the full range of uses, values, products, and services.

Strategies To Achieve the Objective

We will . . .

- Create and institutionalize delivery systems that are more responsive to a diversity of people and members of underserved and low-income populations.
- Enhance broader public accessibility through partnerships and contracts with Federal, State, and Tribal governments and other entities.
- Broaden understanding of public preferences for uses, values, products, and services.
- Establish communication networks—rural and urban—that increase accessibility.
- Identify data sources(s), collect data, and establish baseline indicators by FY 2003 that support the measurement of progress toward the objective.

Measure

Trends in increased accessibility.

FY 2006 Milestones

- A 5-percent increase in the number of diverse and underserved and low-income people and communities expressing satisfaction with availability of uses, values, products, and/or services.
- A 5-percent increase in number of partnerships and contracts that include Federal, State, and Tribal governments and other entities.

Key External Factors

The demographics of areas where USDA Forest Service facilities are located can affect our capability to increase partnerships and contracts with diverse and underserved and low-income communities.

OBJECTIVE 2.e

Strategies To Achieve the Objective

Improve delivery of services to urban communities.

We will ...

- Assist State forestry agencies, local governments, and cooperators in protecting and increasing forest cover and green space in urban communities.
- Research the relationships between urbanization and forest cover and green space to develop tools and techniques for improving livability.
- Support and participate with partners to provide educational opportunities for maintaining and increasing forest cover and green space in selected urban communities.
- Build cooperative relationships with communities close to national forests to facilitate management and public support for natural resource management.
- Increase assistance to selected cities and communities to improve livability.

Trends in percentage of forest cover in selected urban areas.

- A 5-percent increase in green space within selected urban areas.

Measure

FY 2006 Milestone

Comprehensive data from State and local agencies may not be available.

Key External Factors

Since 1970, 86 percent of the total U.S. population growth has taken place in the suburban areas. This movement has led to an accelerating decrease in forest cover in urban and suburban areas in many parts of the country.

One of every seven Americans lives within a 2-hour drive of a national forest, contributing to an annual use of about 82 million visitor days. This number has been increasing over the last several years, with increasing environmental and physical impacts to the national forest lands and facilities as appropriated funds continue to decrease.

GOAL 3: SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE



Develop and use the best scientific information available to deliver technical and community assistance and to support ecological, economic, and social sustainability.

Objective 3.a—Better assist in building the capacity of Tribal governments, rural communities, and private landowners to adapt to economic, environmental, and social change related to natural resources.

Objective 3.b—Increase the effectiveness of scientific, developmental, and technical information delivered to domestic and international interests.

Objective 3.c—Improve the knowledge base provided through research, inventory, and monitoring to enhance scientific understanding of ecosystems, including human uses, and to support decisionmaking and sustainable management of the Nation's forests and grasslands.

Objective 3.d—Broaden the participation of less traditional research groups in research and technical assistance programs.

OBJECTIVE 3.a

Better assist in building the capacity of Tribal governments, rural communities, and private landowners to adapt to economic, environmental, and social change related to natural resources.

Strategies To Achieve the Objective

We will ...

- Conduct research on the capacity of Tribal governments, rural communities, and/or private landowners to respond to changes in natural resource conditions and uses.
- Increase technical assistance and technology transfer in dealing with economic, environmental, and social changes related to natural resources to—
 - Tribal governments.
 - Rural communities.
 - Private landowners.
- Focus increases in technical assistance toward Tribal governments, rural communities, and private landowners in those areas where the greatest difference exists between the demands for uses and products and their availability are expected to occur.
- Increase the effectiveness of information and technology transfer to improve the application of resource management practices on nonindustrial private forestland.

Measure

Trend in rural communities working under broad-based local strategic plans.

FY 2006 Milestone

- A 25-percent increase in rural communities working under broad-based local strategic plans.

Key External Factors

Successful accomplishment of this objective is directly related to the ability of rural communities to leverage their limited resources and to increase local leadership, planning, and implementation capacity.

The USDA Forest Service does not control the top-down programming of other agencies that may conflict with or redirect local planning efforts.

Neither the USDA Forest Service nor rural communities control the legal challenges and special interests that may interfere with developing sustainable local and regional solutions to resource-based issues and opportunities.

OBJECTIVE 3.b

Increase the effectiveness of scientific, developmental, and technical information delivered to domestic and international interests.

Strategies To Achieve the Objective

We will ...

- Use public feedback information and performance results to evaluate the effectiveness of scientific, developmental, and technical information.
- Focus attention on those domestic and international areas of interest identified in the Resources Planning Act and other pertinent sources.
- Diversify delivery mechanisms for scientific, developmental, and technical information.
- Encourage NFS, State and Private Forestry, Research and Development, and International Programs to establish their respective baselines for the delivery of scientific, developmental, and technical information.

Measure

Trends in user satisfaction with the quality and effectiveness of scientific, developmental, and technical information delivered.

FY 2006 Milestone

- Quality and effectiveness of scientific, developmental, and technical information is reflected by increased user satisfaction and application.

Key External Factors

As a greater awareness of environmental issues and concerns by communities develops, there will be an increasing demand for scientific, developmental, and technical information to help address local environmental needs and livability concerns.

A number of international programs and projects are supported by or are in coordination with U.S. Agency for International Development and the Department of State. If their priorities and funding changes, our priorities may also change.

OBJECTIVE 3.C

Improve the knowledge base provided through research, inventory, and monitoring to enhance scientific understanding of ecosystems, including human uses, and to support decisionmaking and sustainable management of the Nation's forests and grasslands.

Strategies To Achieve the Objective

We will ...

- Implement inventory and monitoring systems to provide scientific information and decision support across all land ownerships.
- Develop and implement a comprehensive expert review process for the Research and Development program.
- Expand the annual Forest Inventory and Analysis and Forest Health Monitoring programs to all 50 States and U.S. territories, including grassland and aquatic ecosystems and urban areas.
- Implement an integrated approach to detect the presence and spread of invasive species and establish a monitoring program.
- Provide research results and tools through technology transfer that support effective management, protection, and restoration of ecosystems.
- Incorporate/integrate the best available science in all broad-scale assessments and land and resource management plan revisions.
- Provide social science research to understand the interactions between humans and ecosystems.

Measure

Trends in expert review results and customer satisfaction with relevance, quality, and timeliness of research, inventory, and monitoring products and services.

FY 2006 Milestones

- An expert review process for the Research and Development program is developed and implemented by September 30, 2004.
- A review process for broad-scale assessments and land and resource management plan revisions is developed and implemented.
- Protocols for implementation of the Inventory and Monitoring Framework are in place by September 30, 2002.
- A 10-percent increase in customer satisfaction with:
 - Research and Development products and services;
 - Inventory and Monitoring products and services.

Key External Factors

The virtually instantaneous public knowledge of current issues and events increases the expectation for an immediate Government response to requests for information and assistance.

OBJECTIVE 3.d

Broaden the participation of less traditional research groups in research and technical assistance programs.

Strategies To Achieve the Objective

We will...

- Complete an assessment of research institutions and organizations participating in Research and Development programs and identify the potential to diversify the research capability that can be tapped.
- Use these assessment findings to enrich research, USDA Forest Service programs, and technical assistance.
- Expand and strengthen relationships with ethnically identified institutions in order to increase research capacity and to contribute to technical and community assistance to underserved and low-income populations.
- Conduct and apply social science research related to—
 - Demographic changes.
 - Cultural differences.
 - Effectiveness of service delivery.
 - Communication strategies.
 - Use of traditional knowledge.
- Develop and implement plans that broaden information sharing and provide technical assistance to underserved and low-income populations.

Measure

Trends in opportunities for participation in research and in technical assistance programs.

FY 2006 Milestones

- A 5-percent increase in opportunities for participation of ethnically identified institutions and organizations in research and in technical assistance programs.
- Protocols for identification of a broader array of less traditional groups are in place by 2002.
- An assessment of less traditional groups that participate in Forest Service research/development and technical assistance activities is completed by September 2002.
- By September 2001, a relational data base for current baseline information is in place.

Key External Factors

Choices of groups and/or institutions that are characterized as being “less traditional” can choose research unrelated to the Research and Development opportunities offered by the agency. Such groups and/or institutions may have research priorities that do not include a focus on natural resources-related issues and concerns.

GOAL 4: EFFECTIVE PUBLIC SERVICE



Ensure the acquisition and use of an appropriate corporate infrastructure to enable the efficient delivery of a variety of uses.

Objective 4.a—Improve financial management to achieve fiscal accountability.

Objective 4.b—Improve the safety and economy of USDA Forest Service roads, trails, facilities, and operations and provide greater security for the public and employees.

Objective 4.c—Improve and integrate informational systems, data structures, and information management processes to support cost-efficient program delivery.

Objective 4.d—Improve the skills, diversity, and productivity of the workforce.

Objective 4.e—Ensure equal opportunity in employment practices.

Objective 4.f—Provide appropriate access to NFS lands and ensure nondiscrimination in the delivery of all USDA Forest Service programs.

OBJECTIVE 4.a

Improve financial management to achieve fiscal accountability.

Strategies To Achieve the Objective

We will...

- Provide leadership in financial management to promote effective and efficient management of resources and assets.
- Deliver quality, cost-effective public service by creating partnerships and by streamlining processes and organization.
- Establish a knowledgeable, skilled workforce and empower employees to manage their work and make responsible decisions.
- Create a framework of secure, integrated, user-friendly financial systems using cross-functional system design teams that include customers and users.

Measure

Receive and maintain an unqualified audit opinion on financial statements.

FY 2006 Milestones

- Unqualified audit opinion for FY 2001 and each fiscal year thereafter.
- Removal of agency financial management from General Accounting Office (GAO) “high-risk” area designation in FY 2003.

Key External Factors

Numerous USDA Office of Inspector General, as well as GAO, audits have reported on serious accountability issues in the USDA Forest Service. Additionally, GAO has designated the USDA Forest Service’s accounting and financial reporting as a high-risk area because of vulnerability to waste, fraud, abuse, and mismanagement. For removal from this designation, the USDA Forest Service will need to demonstrate sustained financial accountability. At a minimum, the agency will need to obtain an unqualified opinion on its financial statements for 2 consecutive fiscal years. To obtain an unqualified opinion, the agency will need to correct previously identified financial management deficiencies and implement key accounting and financial reporting requirements that became effective in fiscal year 1998.

According to the report by the National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA, 1999), “There is a fundamental disconnect between the current budget structure and the work the USDA Forest Service actually undertakes.” Until the agency and Congress develop a budget structure that reflects the multiuse work actually performed, an appropriate corporate infrastructure will not be completely effective as a tool for achieving the objective of fiscal accountability.

OBJECTIVE 4.b

Improve the safety and economy of USDA Forest Service roads, trails, facilities, and operations and provide greater security for the public and employees.

Strategies To Achieve the Objective

We will ...

- Improve education and awareness of wildland fires, abandoned mines, illegal activities, and other potential safety hazards.
- Complete and maintain inventories and condition surveys of roads, trails, and facilities.
- Reduce the number of identified safety hazards related to roads and trails, wildland fire management activities, and facilities.
- Develop and implement a national infrastructure management strategy to meet safety standards and reduce the maintenance backlog.
- Increase law enforcement capability to provide for public and employee safety.

Measure

Trends in infrastructure, services, and operations meeting public service safety standards.

FY 2006 Milestones

- Eliminate 95 percent of identified safety concerns with roads and trails posing immediate threats to users.
- A 10-percent increase in the number of facilities maintained and meeting safety standards.
- A 20-percent reduction in the number of violations against persons and incidents of destruction of natural resources.

Key External Factors

The facilities maintenance needed on the NFS is so great that historical funding levels are insufficient to reduce this backlog. Inclement weather and increasing recreation use significantly affect the rate of deterioration of roads, trails, and buildings. In addition, there are ongoing requirements, for example, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (as amended) and energy conservation regulations, that require additional investment in all facilities.

OBJECTIVE 4.C

Improve and integrate informational systems, data structures, and information management processes to support cost-efficient program delivery.

Strategies To Achieve the Objective

We will ...

- Develop and manage a standardized, integrated resource information environment that supports agency programs and facilitates cooperation and coordination with other land management partners.
- Establish baseline data for informational services and structures.
- Develop web-monitoring tools that provide information on the annual number of users accessing the Forest Service Internet and Intranet home pages.
- Create network monitoring tools that provide:
 - An annual index reflecting system availability and performance as experienced by the average visitor of the Forest Service Internet site.
 - The average amounts of information available online to the Forest Service Intranet users and to visitors of the Forest Service Internet site.
- Develop an annual survey tool to measure the usefulness of agency informational services and structure to the average system and Internet user.

Measure

Trend in accessibility and usefulness to users of USDA Forest Service informational services and structure.

FY 2006 Milestones

- A 50-percent increase in percentage of USDA Forest Service information services and data structures that are accessible by employees and the public.
- A 50-percent reduction in information system downtime.

Key External Factors

The USDA Forest Service does not control all the factors necessary to achieve integrated information systems and processes. Other Federal and State agencies collect and store data with systems that are not compatible with those of the USDA Forest Service.

OBJECTIVE 4.d

Improve the skills, diversity, and productivity of the workforce.

Strategies To Achieve the Objective

We will...

- Use agency-wide techniques, such as the Continuous Improvement Process (CIP) survey, to identify critical skill, diversity, and technology needs to help improve productivity.
- Implement recommendations from surveys and reports, such as the CIP, and the Forest Service Workforce Management Plan.
- Recruit and retain a workforce reflecting the diversity of the Nation.

Measure

Trend in accomplishment of the objectives stated in the agency's Workforce Management Plan.

FY 2006 Milestone

- Selected objectives and recommendations stated in the NAPA report entitled "U.S. Forest Service Workforce Management Plan" are accomplished on schedule, particularly including:
 - Recruitment of high-quality minority, women, and disabled applicants for key line and staff occupations.
 - Development of strategies for assessing skill needs for recruiting and hiring a diversity of occupations.
 - Implementation of a corporate training plan that meets the requirements for technical and nontechnical defined occupation competencies.

Key External Factors

The U.S. Department of Labor's "Workforce 2000" report indicates that by the year 2000:

- The number of available workers will decrease.
- The average age of the population and the workforce will rise.
- The pool of young workers entering the labor market will shrink.
- The number of less educated people in the workforce will increase.

OBJECTIVE 4.e

Ensure equal opportunity in employment practices.

Strategies To Achieve the Objective

We will ...

- Provide timely, effective responses to all internal complaints.
- Provide basic civil rights training to all employees.
- Improve data collection and maintenance with the creation of a relational data base management system by 2001.

Measure

Trends in the resolution of complaints at the lowest level of the organization.

FY 2006 Milestone

- A 15 percent increase in resolution of internal EEO complaints at the unit level by September 2005.

Key External Factors

The potential for passage of new or revised laws and the creation of new case law as a result of court decisions may redefine training and complaints management.

Resolution rates may be affected by actions of other Federal organizations, such as the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and the U.S. Merit System Protection Board.

OBJECTIVE 4.f

Provide appropriate access to NFS lands and ensure nondiscrimination in the delivery of all USDA Forest Service programs.

Strategies To Achieve the Objective

We will ...

- Ensure that all USDA Forest Service assistance programs (for example, Forest Stewardship and Urban and Community Forestry) are available to all segments of the population.
- Continue to ensure that NFS lands and USDA Forest Service programs and facilities are accessible to all Americans, per the requirements of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (as amended).
- Create culturally sensitive training, communication processes, and information systems that support employees' capabilities to reach broader, more diverse audiences in more effective ways.
- Use special emphasis program managers and liaisons to advise and support delivery of services to underserved and low-income populations.

Measure

Trends in public and administrative access to NFS lands and USDA Forest Service programs.

FY 2006 Milestones

- A 10-percent increase in diversity of the public participating in USDA Forest Service programs and using NFS lands, programs, and USDA Forest Service facilities.
- A 20-percent increase in accessibility of lands, programs, and facilities in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (as amended).

Key External Factors

The potential for passage of new or revised laws and the creation of new case law as a result of court decisions may redefine the management of program delivery.

Ensuring that all NFS lands and USDA Forest Service programs and facilities are accessible consistent with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (as amended) is likely to occur more slowly when linked with facilities maintenance, which has insufficient funding levels to reduce the maintenance backlog.

SECTION 3 – PROGRAM IMPLICATIONS

Outcome Measures To Be Developed

Long-term land health and other outcome measures were identified during the development of the U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service (USDA Forest Service) Strategic Plan (2000 Revision). These measures will provide better information on which to base management decisions. However, some additional work is needed to define these measures and establish baseline information for them.

- Objective 1.c—Future Measure: *Trends in Ecological Integrity Ratings by ecoregion.*

Action Needed: *Develop and implement an ecological integrity rating system to improve the ability to monitor ecological conditions and trends by ecoregion.*

- Objective 2a—Future Measure: *Trends in utilization of recreation capacity.*

Action Needed: *Research methods for estimating recreation capacity and demand based on ecological capabilities and social factors.*

- Objective 4.f—Future Measure: *Trend in the number, diversity, and net benefits from partners.*

Action Needed: *Ensure that USDA Forest Service assistance programs are available to all segments of the population.*

Program Evaluations

The Government Performance and Results Act requires a description of program evaluations used in establishing the strategic plan goals and objectives and a schedule for future program evaluations. Program evaluations can provide important information about needs and opportunities the agency should address, as well as why a program did or did not succeed and suggest ways to improve it.

The USDA Forest Service plans to adopt the following approach and schedule for future evaluations of progress toward strategic plan goals and objectives.

Identify Data Needs and Sources

For each objective, the agency will collect information based on agreed-upon established protocols, review historical or benchmark data, and analyze the most recent program data on indicator measures.

Conduct Analysis

A systematic analysis of trends versus expectations will be conducted based on established criteria. Results of the analysis of each long-term measure will be reported to the Chief and the USDA Forest Service Leadership Team in November of each year along with recommendations for actions to be taken.

In addition to the approach outlined above, the following evaluations, now underway, will be helpful in evaluating our strategic goals and objectives.

Title	Objective	Estimated Completion Date
Urban Forest Assessment	Assess status and trends in the extent, condition, and management of urban forests.	October 2000
Range and Timber Resource Assessments	Assess status and trends in the extent, condition, and management of rangeland timber resources in the United States.	December 2000
National Survey of Recreation and the Environment	Assess trends, current situation, and likely futures of outdoor recreation and wilderness demand and supply.	Mid-2001

Numerous evaluations and analyses have helped shape the 2000 Revision. Although there are far too many to list individually, the following represent the significant sources of information used:

- *Renewable Resources Assessment* – Prepared by the USDA Forest Service, this periodic report examines status and trends for natural resources and their management on all forests and rangelands in the United States, as required by the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974 (RPA) (Public Law 93-378). The 2000 edition of the RPA Assessment will be published in the fall of 2000. This report can be used to identify needs and opportunities for USDA or others to take action to strategically address concerns about the Nation’s natural resource situation, which is evaluated within the framework of an internationally accepted set of criteria and indicators of sustainable resource management. The technical documents supporting the RPA Assessment are also broadly used to track trends in the extent and condition of forest and rangelands and in renewable resource supply and demand. These documents contain detailed assessments of specific resource areas or topics, such as recreation, water, wildlife, fisheries, range forage, timber, minerals, and resource statistics.
- *Climate Change Impacts on the United States* – Issued in June 2000 by the U.S. Global Change Research Program, this Federal report contains projections of the likely effects of global warming over the next century. This executive branch initiative, also known as the national global change assessment, incorporates work by several USDA and other Federal agencies and the Smithsonian Institution. It addresses forests, grasslands, freshwater, and coastal and marine resources and will be used to understand and plan for the effects of climate change.

**Program Evaluation
Schedule**

- Each year, analyze long-term measures to determine—
 1. If they are, in fact, appropriate indicators of success.
 2. Whether or not the information is valid.
 3. Whether or not the trend matches the anticipated result.
- Every 10 years, with interim updates as needed, use results of the RPA Assessment to verify and validate annual evaluations of long-term results.
- As needed, conduct additional studies and evaluations as directed by agency leadership and report results in the Annual Performance Report.

**Possible Agency
Leadership Actions**

The Chief and the USDA Forest Service Leadership Team will determine the need to make changes in policy as a result of the evaluation data and information. The Strategic Planning and Resource Assessment (SPRA) Staff will evaluate if adjustments are needed in the long-term goals and objectives. The SPRA Staff will then notify the Chief Financial Officer and agency leaders of the need to modify annual performance plans.

**Program Budget by
Goals and Objectives**

The results that the USDA Forest Service is able to achieve are directly influenced by budget-related decisions. A table displaying the relative proportions of the fiscal year (FY) 1999 final budget appropriations broken down into the set of goals and objectives from the 2000 Revision is included below.

**Relative Budget Priorities of Goals and Objectives
Using FY 1999 Final Appropriations as a Baseline**

Goals	Objectives	Percent Share of Total	
		FY1999	FY2006 (proposed)
1.	Ecosystem Health		
	1.a Watershed Health	4.0	6.0
	1.b Species Habitat	2.6	4.0
	1.c Risk Management	33.2	33.2
	Goal Subtotal	39.8	43.2
2.	Multiple Benefits to People		
	2.a Quality Recreation	11.3	12.1
	2.b Wilderness	.9	1.1
	2.c Multiple Benefits	16.0	12.0
	2.d Underserved Publics	.5	.5
	2.e Urban Green Spaces	.9	1.0
	Goal Subtotal	29.6	26.7
3.	Scientific and Technical Assistance		
	3.a Rural Community Adaptability	8.2	8.0
	3.b Scientific/Technical Assistance	.4	.8
	3.c Scientific Information	10.2	11.8
	3.d Underserved Research	.3	.4
	Goal Subtotal	19.1	21.0
4.	Effective Public Service		
	4.a Financial Management	1.8	.8
	4.b Public Safety	5.2	5.2
	4.c Information Management	2.0	1.0
	4.d Workforce Capability	.2	.3
	4.e Equal Opportunity Employment	.4	.3
	4.f Nondiscrimination Access	1.9	1.5
	Goal Subtotal	11.5	9.1
	Totals	100.0	100.0

**Major Management
Challenges**

In addressing how the USDA Forest Service will achieve the goals and objectives in the strategic plan, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has directed agencies to address mission-critical management problems or challenges that may impede accomplishment. "Agencies should include a brief description of steps being taken to resolve mission-critical management problems. For an agency, a mission-critical problem poses a realistic and prospective impediment to carrying out the agency's mission or achieving the general goals and objectives during the strategic plan timeframe (see also subsection 220.11(e))" (OMB, 1998).

In January 1999, the U.S. General Accounting Office, placed the USDA Forest Service (financial) management on a list of Federal agencies whose operations were at risk for waste, fraud, and abuse. The USDA Forest Service—

- Has not obtained fair market value for its goods or recovered costs for its services.
- Cannot accurately account for significant amounts of its assets and expenditures.
- Has unreliable financial statements.
- Has weak contracting practices.

The immediate USDA Forest Service challenge is to improve management and be removed from the list of agencies at risk.

The critical first step is to implement a sound financial accounting system. On October 1, 1999, the USDA Forest Service implemented the Foundation Financial Information System (FFIS), the USDA standard general ledger compliant accounting system.

The USDA published a draft set of cost recovery regulations in November 1999. The cost recovery regulations, when final, will provide the USDA Forest Service with the ability to exercise existing statutory authority to assess, collect, process, and monitor fees for special use authorizations. Language currently in Section 328 of the FY 2000 House Appropriations Bill for Interior and Related Agencies would authorize the agency's expenditure of these fees at the time of their collection.

The 2000 Revision incorporates goals and performance measures for obtaining fair market value. During the 5-year life of the strategic plan, the USDA Forest Service will evaluate each fee system to determine if fair market value for goods or services has been achieved.

The USDA Forest Service issued the "Internal Control Plan for Acquisitions," effective in August 1999. The USDA delivered a certifying officer's representative qualifications system prior to FY 2000. Implementation of the USDA certification program will enable the USDA Forest Service to monitor and conduct reviews of the contracting process on an annual basis for compliance with the "Internal Control Plan for Acquisitions."

The USDA Forest Service has worked with USDA, OMB, and Congress to revise the agency's once-cumbersome budget structure. The revised structure is the basis of the FY 2001 budget submission. The functions funded under the new budget structure reflect the priority goals and objectives stated in the long-term strategic plan. Subsequent budget distribution will include specific performance measures. The production of budget requests and performance measures, under strategic priorities, also address a longstanding criticism of the USDA Forest Service for reducing or removing measurable objectives from the planning process.

Coordination of Cross-Cutting Functions

USDA Forest Service management requires consultation and collaboration with other Federal, State, Tribal, local, and private land managers. This is consistent with the OMB, which says, "Strategic plans of agencies participating in a cross-cutting program should each describe the interface between their related programs, and outline how individual agency efforts synergistically support common endeavors" (OMB, 1998).

The following are examples of key national, ongoing, cross-cutting coordination efforts by the USDA Forest Service with other Federal agencies. A complete list of cross-cutting functions and coordinating agencies is located in the Appendix B matrix.

Endangered Species Management and Conservation Planning

National forest and grassland ecosystems provide habitat for 2,500 sensitive species that require protection and management to ensure their viability and/or recovery, maintain their role in ecosystem function and productivity, and prevent the need to list them or facilitate delisting under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). Some 360 species of plants and animals that are listed under the ESA as threatened or endangered have habitat on the National Forest System (NFS) or are affected by NFS management. Providing for the protection and recovery of these species and the ecosystems upon which they depend is a biological and legal imperative.

Conservation planning involves identifying species recovery and habitat restoration needs through recovery plans and conservation strategies. It also involves adopting and implementing management and research tasks that will contribute to species recovery and ecosystem conservation. There are two components to conservation planning: recovery of species listed under the ESA and provision for the viability of at-risk species that are not yet listed under the ESA. Both components are directly linked to and dependent upon ecosystem conservation. The USDA Forest Service is working with other Federal, State, and Tribal agencies to establish an integrated approach for developing, adopting, and implementing conservation plans for many of these species, groups of species, and ecosystems of concern. Working proactively with other agencies, governments, landowners, nongovernmental organizations, and the public to develop, adopt, and implement conservation strategies provides benefits by minimizing costs and maintaining local management flexibility, while assuring that species and ecosystems are protected and restored.

Federal agency cooperators in these efforts include the USDA Forest Service and Natural Resources Conservation Service; the Department of the Interior Bureau of Land Management, Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Indian Affairs, National Park Service, Bureau of Reclamation, and U.S. Geological Survey; the Department of Commerce National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and National Marine Fisheries Service; the Department of Defense; and the Environmental Protection Agency. Examples of ongoing efforts include Lynx Conservation Assessment and Strategy, Prairie Dog and Grassland Ecosystem Strategy, sage grouse and sagebrush steppe conservation planning, the Northwest Forest Plan, the Sierra Nevada Framework, the Southwest Strategy (Interagency Natural Resource Conservation and Sustainable Development), and the Interior Columbia Basin Ecosystem Management Project. The implementation actions in these conservation plans will be incorporated into national forest plans.

Sustainable Forest Management	<p>In 1992, the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro focused world attention on the importance of sustainable forest management. In 1993, representatives of 12 countries met in Montreal, Canada, to consider ways of evaluating the status of forest sustainability and to develop national criteria and indicators for measuring sustainability of temporal and boreal forests. In 1998, the USDA Forest Service called senior governmental and nongovernmental officials to a Roundtable on Sustainable Forests to promote shared leadership and responsibility in contributing toward sustainable forests on public and private lands throughout the United States. At this meeting, the attendees pledged to work together to define responsibilities for measuring national progress toward sustainable forest management using a common set of measures.</p>
Forest Inventory and Analysis/Forest Health Monitoring	<p>The Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA) Program conducts and maintains continuous inventory of the Nation's forests on all ownerships. The Forest Health Monitoring (FHM) Program provides baseline and trend information needed to protect the health of the Nation's forests. The FHM Program is built on a strong partnership between the National Association of State Foresters, the Bureau of Land Management, and the USDA Forest Service. In 1999, the program was expanded to include 33 States covering 70 percent of the forested land in the contiguous United States. The FIA and FHM Programs will be the principal data sources for reporting on the Montreal Process for sustainable forest management.</p>
Invasive Species	<p>The USDA Forest Service is a member of the National Council on Invasive Species, which was created to address the problem of nonnative invasive insects, pathogens, and plants. These organisms are among the greatest threats to forests, grasslands, and riparian and aquatic ecosystems in the United States. Members include most Federal and State organizations. Council organizations provide leadership in the identification of key species; discussion of common problems; development of integrated approaches for detection, monitoring, assessment, and control of invasive species; and clarification of agency responsibilities. The USDA Forest Service provides leadership to the council's organizations in research, monitoring, technical assistance, and education.</p>
Clean Water Action Plan	<p>The Clean Water Action Plan is a new collaborative effort by Federal, State, Tribal, and local governments and the public. The plan is designed to sustain healthy conditions where they exist, as well as to restore watersheds not meeting clean water, natural resource, and public health goals. The Federal Government will support locally led partnerships to meet clean water goals; increase financial and technical assistance to States, Tribes, local governments, farmers, and others; and help States and Tribes restore and sustain the health of aquatic systems on a watershed basis. Of the 111 action items identified in the Clean Water Action Plan, the USDA Forest Service is either in a leadership or shared leadership role for 20 items. These items range from multiownership of watershed assessments to restoration of aquatic systems at risk.</p>
Interagency Wildland Fire Policy	<p>The Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy and Program Review was chartered by the Secretaries of Interior and Agriculture to ensure that Federal policies and programs are uniform, cooperative, and cohesive. For the first time, one set of Federal fire policies will enhance effective and efficient operations across administrative boundaries to improve the capability to meet challenges posed by current wildland fire conditions.</p>

Response to the
Wildfires of 2000

The USDA Forest Service, as a member of the policy review team, reexamined the role of fire in ecological processes and the costs associated with fighting fire. The result—an interagency product—has produced changes in terminology, funding, agency policy, and analysis of ecological processes.

In 2000, wildfires burned over 7 million acres of land, mostly in the Western States. The total acreage burned was three times the 10-year average.

On September 8, 2000, the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture delivered a joint report to the President entitled “Managing the Impact of Wildfires on Communities and the Environment: A Report to the President in Response to the Wildfires of 2000.” The President asked for recommendations as to how best to respond to the effects of the severe fires, how to reduce the effects of wildland fires on rural communities, and how to ensure sufficient firefighting resources in the future.

A “National Fire Plan” has been prepared, and implementation has begun, to address the recommendations accepted by the President. The “National Fire Plan” sets forth goals and objectives to address:

- Agency firefighting capacity.
- Restoration of damaged watersheds.
- Hazardous fuels reduction.
- Economic assistance to communities.
- Reduction of fire hazards and restoration of landscapes in communities.

The USDA Forest Service, along with several U.S. Department of the Interior agencies, received an increase in funding to implement the “National Fire Plan.” While the goals and objectives of the “National Fire Plan” are broadly addressed in the 2000 Revision, a shift in emphasis and supporting funding is occurring now and has implications for emphasis in the strategic plan and for how quickly some of the objectives in the strategic plan will be achieved.

In the context of the 2000 Revision, we will evaluate the implications of the “National Fire Plan” on the strategic goals and objectives of the agency and make adjustments, as appropriate.

APPENDIX A GLOSSARY

Conservation Agreement	A formal agreement between the USDA Forest Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and/or National Marine Fisheries Service identifying management actions necessary to prevent the need to list species under the Endangered Species Act (<i>Proposed Planning Rule, Section 219.36, August 2000</i>).
Desired Nonnative Species	Those species of plants or animals that are not indigenous to an area but valued for their contribution to species diversity or their high social, cultural, or economic value (<i>Proposed Planning Rule, Section 219.36, August 2000</i>).
Ecological Conditions	Components of the biological and physical environment that can affect the diversity of plant and animal communities, including species viability and the productive capacity of ecological systems. These could include the abundance and distribution of aquatic and terrestrial habitats, roads and other structural developments, human uses, and invasive and exotic species (<i>Proposed Planning Rule, Section 219.36, August 2000</i>).
Ecological Sustainability	The maintenance or restoration of the composition, structure, and processes of ecosystems, including the diversity of plant and animal communities and the productive capacity of ecological systems (<i>Proposed Planning Rule, Section 219.36, August 2000</i>).
Focal Species	Focal species are surrogate measures used in the evaluation of ecological sustainability, including species and ecosystem diversity. The key characteristic of a focal species is that its status and trend provide insights to the integrity of the larger ecosystem to which it belongs. Individual species, or groups of species that use habitat in similar ways or which perform similar ecological functions, may be identified as focal species. Focal species serve an umbrella function in terms of encompassing habitats need for many other species, play a key role in maintaining community structure or processes, are sensitive to the changes likely to occur in the area, or otherwise serve as an indicator of ecological sustainability. Certain focal species may be used as surrogates to represent ecological conditions that provide for viability of other species, rather than directly representing the population dynamics of those other species (<i>Proposed Planning Rule, Section 219.36, August 2000</i>).
Green Space (Green Infrastructure)	Refers to the integrated network of watersheds, airsheds, woodlands, wildlife habitats, greenways, parks, working farms, ranches, forests, urban trees and parkways, and other open spaces that when incorporated into local and regional plans, policies, and practices provide vital services that sustain and ensure the quality of life (<i>From Executive Summary of Green Infrastructure Training Program Work Session, National Conservation Training Center, WV, August 4–5, 1999</i>).
Invasive Species	An alien species whose introduction does or is likely to cause economic or environmental harm, or harm to human health. An alien species includes, with respect to a particular ecosystem and species, its seeds, eggs, spores, or other biological material capable of propagating that species that is not native to that ecosystem (<i>Executive Order #13112</i>).

Low-Income Population	Any readily identifiable group of low-income persons who live in geographic proximity to—and, if circumstances warrant, migrant farm workers and other geographically dispersed/transient persons who will be similarly affected by—U.S. Department of Agriculture programs or activities (<i>Environmental Justice, USDA Department Regulation 5600-2, December 15, 1997</i>).
Native Species	Species of the plant and animal kingdom indigenous to the plan area or assessment area (<i>Proposed Planning Rule, Section 219.36, August 2000</i>).
Outcome	The impact on a resource or landscape of program activities (for example, water quality changes and improved habitat condition).
Output	A unit of production for project work. The unit of production may be, or is related to, the annual performance measure upon which budgets are built and performance is evaluated.
Properly Functioning Condition	Ecosystems at any temporal or spatial scale are in a properly functioning condition when they are dynamic and resilient to perturbations to structure, compositions, and processes of their biological or physical components. Risk refers to situations in which the outcome is not certain, but the chance of system degradation beyond the point of resiliency and sustainability can be estimated (<i>October 23, 1998, Properly Functioning Condition, Rapid Assessment Process, Intermountain Region, USDA Forest Service</i>).
Species	Any member of the animal or plant kingdom that is described as a species in a peer-reviewed scientific publication and is identified as a species by the responsible official pursuant to a plan decision—must include all species listed under the Endangered Species Act as threatened, endangered, candidate or proposed for listing by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service or National Marine Fisheries Service (<i>Proposed Planning Rule, Section 219.36, August 2000</i>).
Species at Risk	Federally listed threatened, endangered, candidate or proposed species and other species for which loss of viability, including reduction in distribution or abundance, is a concern within the plan area. Other species-at-risk may include sensitive species and State listed species. A species-at-risk also may be selected as a focal species (<i>Proposed Planning Rule, Section 219.36, August 2000</i>).
Species Viability	A species consisting of self-sustaining and interacting populations that are well distributed through the species' range. Self-sustaining populations are those that are sufficiently abundant and have sufficient diversity to display the array of life history strategies and forms to provide for their long-term persistence and adaptability over time (<i>Proposed Planning Rule, Section 219.36, August 2000</i>).

**Sustainable Forest
Management**

Sustainable forest management is the forest component of sustainable development—“development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” (*The Bruntland Commission Report, Oxford University Press, 1987, p.43*). Taken together, the Montreal Process Criteria and Indicators (see Appendix C) taken together also provide an implicit definition of what is meant by sustainable forest management at the national level.

Underserved

Underserved means “ ... all potential customers [should have] full access to all USDA programs and services,” including women, minorities, and limited-resource customers (*Secretary’s memorandum creating the Office of Outreach*).

APPENDIX B

COORDINATION OF CROSS-CUTTING FUNCTIONS

The following is a list of Federal agencies with which the United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service is actively engaged in coordination of interagency functions. The following pages contain a matrix of the specific agencies that are working together on specific programs. *

Acronym	Agency
ACE	Army Corps of Engineers (Department of Defense)
APHIS	Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service
ARS	Agricultural Research Service (Department of Agriculture)
BIA	Bureau of Indian Affairs (Department of the Interior)
BLM	Bureau of Land Management (Department of the Interior)
BOR	Bureau of Reclamation (Department of the Interior)
CEQ	Council on Environmental Quality
DEA	Drug Enforcement Agency (Department of Justice)
DOD	Department of Defense
DOE	Department of Energy
DOJ	Department of Justice
ED	Department of Education
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration (Department of Transportation)
FWS	Fish and Wildlife Service (Department of the Interior)
HUD	Department of Housing and Urban Development
MMS	Minerals Management Service (Department of the Interior)
NASA	National Aeronautics and Space Administration
NMFS	National Marine Fisheries Service (Department of Commerce)
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (Department of Commerce)
NPS	National Park Service (Department of the Interior)
NRCS	Natural Resources Conservation Service (Department of Agriculture)
NSF	National Science Foundation
ONDCP	Office of National Drug Center Policy
OSM	Office of Surface Mining (Department of the Interior)
SMITHSONIAN	Smithsonian Institution
TVA	Tennessee Valley Authority
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development
USBP	U.S. Border Patrol (Department of Justice)
USCS	U.S. Customs Service (Department of Treasury)
USGS	U.S. Geological Survey (Department of the Interior)

*The Forest Service works with other organizations on cross-cutting issues, including State, Tribal, and local governmental entities. The Government Performance and Results Act requires that coordination with other Federal Agencies be cited in the strategic plan.

Coordination of Cross-cutting Functions

Program	Federal Agency	USGS	USCS	USBP	USAID	TVA	SMITHSONIAN	OSM	ONDCP	NSF	NRCS	NPS	NOAA	NMFS	NASA	MMS	HUD	FWS	FHWA	FEMA	EPA	ED	DOJ	DOE	DOD	DEA	CEQ	BOR	BLM	BIA	ARS	APHIS	ACE	
Clean Water Action Plan		●				●																												
Invasive Species											●																						●	
Recreation Fee Demonstration																																		
Interagency Wildland Fire												●																						
EPA Liaison														●																				
Road Maintenance/Reconstruction																																		
TEA-21/NEPA																																		
Abandoned Mine Cleanup																																		
Minerals Management																																		
Recreation Information																																		
National Scenic Byway																																		
Wilderness Management																																		
Wild and Scenic Rivers																																		
Tourism Planning																																		
National Recreation Reservation System																																		
Conservation Planning																																		
RecFish																																		
Watershed Protection and Restoration																																		
Ecological Monitoring																																		
Riparian Areas																																		
Wetlands																																		
Air Quality																																		
Stream Corridor Restoration																																		
Weather Equipment and Monitoring																																		
ECOMAP																																		

Coordination of Cross-cutting Functions (continued)

Program	Federal Agency	USGS	USCS	USBP	USAID	TVA	SMITHSONIAN	OSM	ONDCP	NSF	NRCS	NPS	NOAA	NMFS	NASA	MMS	HUD	FWS	FHWA	FEMA	EPA	ED	DOJ	DOE	DOD	DEA	CEQ	BOR	BLM	BIA	ARS	APHIS	ACE		
Burned Area Emergency Rehabilitation (BAER)																																			
Firewise																																			
National Atmospheric Deposition Monitoring																																			
Unified Federal Policy																																			
Drug Enforcement																																			
Law Enforcement Support																																			
Forest Inventory Analysis and Forest Health Monitoring																																			
State of Forests Chesapeake Bay Watershed																																			
Aldo Leopold Wilderness Research Institute																																			
Taskforce on Amphibian Declines and Deformities																																			
Committee on the Environment and Natural Resources																																			
Corporate Training																																			
Global Change Research Program																																			
Safe Drinking Water Review																																			
Long-Term Ecological Research Network																																			
Water Studies MOU																																			
Forest Health Protection																																			
Sustainable Forest Management																																			

APPENDIX C OUTCOME MEASURE DEVELOPMENT AND BASES

The U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service (USDA Forest Service) is committed to sustainable forest management, as evidenced in this strategic plan and other documents guiding the activities of the agency. At the national level, a framework for evaluating the sustainability of forest management is provided by the Montreal Process Criteria and Indicators for the Conservation and Sustainable Management of Temperate and Boreal Forests. This framework is being used by the USDA Forest Service in the development of the 2000 Resources Planning Act (RPA) Assessment. The RPA Assessment provides a comprehensive look at the natural resource situation for forests and rangelands in the United States and identifies management implications and concerns. The USDA Forest Service Strategic Plan is a tool to alert managers about these implications and concerns, and to identify the actions the agency will take to address the opportunities and problems identified in the RPA Assessment.

It is important that the strategic plan objectives and anticipated outcomes be examined within the context of existing resource conditions, supplies, and demands and with some expectation of future trends. The RPA Assessment is one source of information on the status and trends of renewable resources in the United States that can be used to set the context for strategic planning. The strategic plan is built on a broad information base established from the research findings in the RPA Assessment and from other sources. The strategic plan selects a “vital few” measures to track for management purposes.

In addition to the strategic plan, which tracks long-term commitments to sustainable resource management, the annual performance plan provides more detailed information on the activities contributing to achievement of long-term goals and objectives.

There are significant linkages from the USDA Forest Service Strategic Plan (2000 Revision) goals, objectives, and measures to the criteria and indicators identified in the Montreal Process, although not all of these indicators can be currently addressed due to lack of available data. The USDA Forest Service and other members of the Roundtable on Sustainable Forests are working together to improve their capability to utilize the indicators in measuring national progress toward achievement of sustainable forest management.

Relationship Between Montreal Process Criteria and the Strategic Plan Goals

The following is an example of the linkage to be found between the Montreal Process Criteria and the 2000 Revision goals.

<i>Montreal Process Criteria</i>	<i>Strategic Plan</i>
<i>Criterion 1:</i> Conservation of biological diversity, the elements of ecosystem diversity, species diversity, and genetic diversity.	Goal 1
<i>Criterion 2:</i> Maintenance of productive capacity of ecosystems.	Goal 1
<i>Criterion 3:</i> Maintenance of ecosystem health and vitality.	Goal 1
<i>Criterion 4:</i> Conservation and maintenance of soil and water resources.	Goal 1
<i>Criterion 5:</i> Maintenance of forest contribution to global carbon cycles.	Goal 1
<i>Criterion 6:</i> Maintenance and enhancement of long-term multiple socioeconomic benefits to meet the needs of society.	Goal 2
<i>Criterion 7:</i> Maintenance of legal, institutional, and economic framework for conservation and sustainable management.	Goals 3 and 4

The “indicators” in the Montreal Process provide a link between objectives and results-focused outcome measures. There are 67 indicators distributed across the 7 criteria. The indicators vary considerably in their level of specificity. In some cases, measures are clearly defined, and in others several measures may be used to define the indicator.

The following example should help clarify the relationship between the strategic plan goals, objectives, and measures and the Montreal Process “indicators.”

Example of the Relationship Between the Montreal Process and a 2000 Revision Goal and Objective

Criterion 1—Conservation of biological diversity

Indicator—Status of forest-dependent species at risk of not maintaining viable breeding populations, as determined by legislation or scientific assessment.

USDA Forest Service Strategic Plan (2000 Revision)

Goal 1—Promote ecosystem health and conservation using a collaborative approach to sustain the Nation's forests, grasslands, and watersheds.

Objective 1.b—Provide ecological conditions to sustain viable populations of native and desired non-native species and to achieve objectives for Management Indicator Species (MIS)/focal species.

Measure—Status and/or trends in populations, habitats, and ecological conditions for selected species.

FY 2006 Milestones

- 100 percent of national forests and grasslands have established measurable objectives and monitoring programs for populations, habitats, and/or ecological conditions for threatened and endangered species, other species for which there are viability concerns, and other MIS/focal species, and are achieving objectives at rates consistent with timeframes identified in land resource management plans.
- Selected species populations and habitats representing land resource management plan objectives that will be tracked to measure progress toward the milestone include—

Species Populations To Be tracked:	Representative of:	
	Ecosystem	Geographic Area
Red-cockaded woodpecker Golden-winged warbler	Long-leaf & Short-leaf pine Early successional deciduous forest	Southeast
Cerulean warbler	Mature deciduous forest	
Goldenseal Eastern brook trout Cerulean warbler	Mesic deciduous forest Perennial streams Mature deciduous forest	Northeast
Black-tailed prairie dog	Mid- and short-grass prairies	Northern Great Plains
Grizzly bear Bull trout	Mixed conifer forest Perennial streams & lakes	Northern Rockies
Aspen	Aspen forest	Southern Rockies & Great Basin
Sage grouse Lahontan cutthroat trout	Sagebrush-steppe Perennial streams & lakes	Great Basin
Northern spotted owl	Douglas fir/mixed conifer late seral/old growth forest	Pacific Northwest
Mexican spotted owl Loach minnow, spikedace Willow flycatcher	Mixed conifer forest Desert streams Riparian areas	Southwest
California spotted owl Sierra Nevada bighorn Red-legged frog	Sierra Nevada conifer forests Alpine and subalpine Riparian & aquatic ecosystems	California

APPENDIX D ECONOMIC EFFECTS

The U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service (USDA Forest Service) Strategic Plan (2000 Revision) provides long-term national guidance for the agency in managing forests and grasslands and producing resource outputs that provide a variety of goods and services for the American public. The economic effects of these goods and services can be described by several measures, each contributing unique information. This appendix presents two primary measures of the economic effects that are likely to occur: 1) net economic benefits and 2) economic contributions to the national economy. Each economic measure provides information about national-level effects of selected resource outputs. Net economic benefits are measured by an efficiency analysis that compares the future flow of benefits to agency costs. The contributions to the economy are measured as effects on employment and income.

Net Economic Benefits

An economic efficiency analysis was conducted to compare costs and benefits associated with the production of resource outputs from national forests and grasslands. Monetary estimates of benefits are available for recreation use, fishing, hunting, wildlife viewing, timber harvest, minerals production, domestic livestock grazing, commercial fish harvest, and lands leased for utility uses. Research and Development, State and Private Forestry, and other program areas are not included in the analysis, since comparable benefit measures from these programs are difficult to quantify in economic terms. Benefits from research discoveries and technical assistance programs were not estimated. Similarly, a variety of benefits from National Forest System (NFS) lands could not be included due to lack of monetary estimates or an inability to quantify the measures at the national scale. For example, nonuse and aesthetic values, protection for water quality, and the value of the forest for carbon storage could not be included as separate benefits. However, some of the aesthetic and water quality values are captured in the estimates of recreation use, fishing, hunting, and wildlife viewing benefits.

The economic analysis includes only NFS costs and the monetary benefits that stem directly from the production of resource outputs. The estimated value of resource outputs is priced "on-forest," (that is, the value of the good or service at the site). The 7-year analysis period is between 1999 and 2006. All costs and benefits are net of inflation and expressed in constant 1999 dollars. Two separate accounting stances for benefits were developed for comparison to agency costs: 1) agency receipts and 2) willingness to pay. Not all of the resource uses listed above had values for both accounting stances.

USDA Forest Service Receipts

This accounting stance measures the flow of benefits to the Government from the collection of fees for the use of NFS lands and resources. Fees are collected from the sale of forest products, the extraction of minerals, the use of some recreation areas, and issuance of permits for grazing and other special uses. The receipts are grouped into three categories for distribution and use: returns to the Federal Treasury, payments to States and counties, and deposits to working funds. The receipts reported here are the sum of all three and include additional receipts collected by other Federal agencies coordinating fee collection from mineral leases for energy on NFS lands. The projections of agency receipts for 2006 are based on current authorizations for fee collection and do not include potential revenues from proposed changes to laws and regulations.

Figure D-1 displays the percentage distribution of agency receipts attributed to specific resource uses. Overall, agency receipts decrease about 3 percent in constant 1999 dollars from approximately \$628 million to \$609 million between 1999 and 2006. USDA Forest Service receipts do not always keep pace with the general level of inflation since the agency authority to set fees does not include an inflation adjustment for all types of fees.

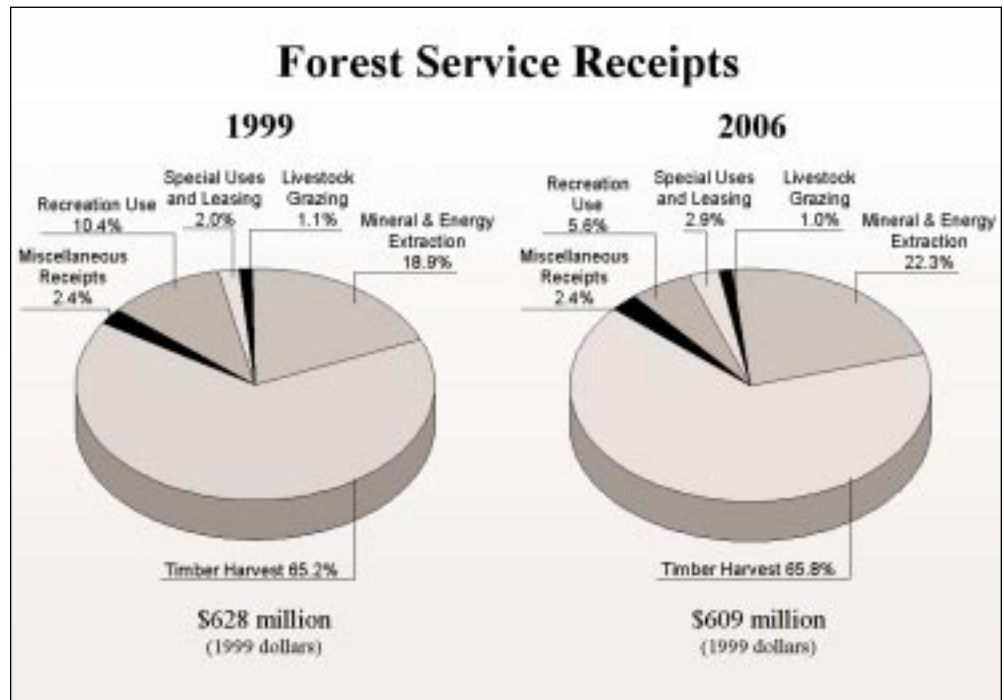


Figure D-1. *Percentage distribution across resource uses of agency receipts for 1999 and 2006.*

Timber sales account for 65 percent of the receipts in 1999, a share that is expected to remain nearly constant through 2006. The percentage of agency receipts attributed to recreation use drops by nearly 50 percent, due to the exclusion of fee demonstration revenue in 2006. In 1999, the USDA Forest Service collected approximately \$26 million in receipts from fee demonstration projects throughout the Nation. Because the authority does not extend through 2006, fee demonstration revenue was not included when estimating future recreation receipts. The value of receipts from mineral resource uses is expected to increase by 2006. A good portion of this increase is from modest real price increases in oil and natural gas and increased natural gas production. Receipts from special uses include fees collected from communication site leases and linear right-of-way uses. Overall, fees from these sources will increase through 2006, primarily from increases in the number of communication uses and changes in fee policy and schedules.

A portion of the receipts collected by the USDA Forest Service for the use of national forests and grasslands is returned to States for distribution to counties for their use in maintaining and improving roads and schools. Federal laws require the USDA Forest

Service to distribute 25 percent of the nonmineral revenues based on requirements specified in the Twenty-Five Percent Fund Act of 1908. Revenues from some mineral materials sales and some mineral leases also require payments at the 25-percent level. In 1999, the payments totaled \$208.3 million.

Willingness To Pay

Benefits in this accounting stance reflect estimates of the total economic value from production of resource outputs. It is a dollar measure of the benefits for the use of resource outputs. Willingness to pay includes the value of the market transaction and the value individuals place on access to forest resources over and above the amount typically captured in the market price. It provides a legitimate measure of total economic value from all resource uses, including those the USDA Forest Service prices at market value (such as timber harvest) and those priced below market value (such as recreation use). The willingness-to-pay benefits are valued at the same output levels as for the receipts accounting stance (that is, actual use level for 1999 and projected use for 2006). The largest share of willingness-to-pay benefits is associated with recreation use.

Figure D-2 shows the trend in aggregate willingness to pay between 1999 and 2006. The value of those benefits increases about 8.5 percent over the 7-year period to about \$15.8 billion dollars. This represents an aggregate measure of the value the Nation places on resources from national forests and provides a dollar measure of the uses, values, products, and services the USDA Forest Service is expected to sustain by meeting the objectives under goal 2 (Multiple Benefits to People) in the 2000 Revision.

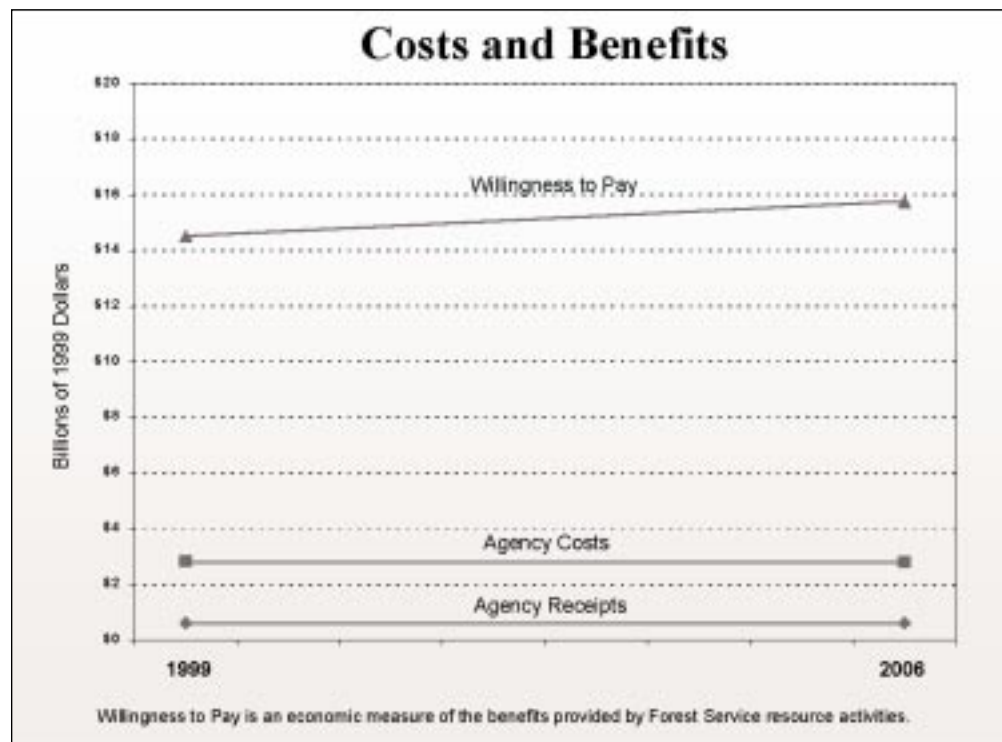


Figure D-2. Estimates of total USDA Forest Service receipts, willingness to pay, and costs associated with NFS resource uses for 1999 and 2006 (1999 Dollars).

The value of water flowing from NFS lands was not included as part of the estimates of willingness-to-pay benefits for the economic analysis. According to the January 2000 report, "Water & The Forest Service," by the USDA Forest Service Policy Analysis Staff, the instream and offstream value of water flowing from the national forests is approximately \$3.7 billion. The value of water for withdrawal to offstream uses was not considered directly comparable to the "on-forest" values estimated for the other resource uses. A large portion of the instream value is included in the analysis as part of the benefit estimates for recreation use.

Comparison of Benefits to Agency Costs

Present Net Value (PNV) was selected as one measure of comparing agency benefits and costs. PNV is the difference between the discounted dollar value of benefits from the production of resource outputs and the discounted costs of USDA Forest Service management and investment over the analysis period. The PNV calculation converts the flow of benefits and costs over time into a single number.

The costs incorporated in the analysis represent a subset of total USDA Forest Service budget costs. These include the direct costs of managing the national forests and grasslands for resource uses and associated costs for support and protection of those lands, such as for fire protection and forest pest management. Research and Development and State and Private Forestry costs were excluded.

Figure D-2 provides a visual perspective on the relationship between agency costs and benefits over the 7-year strategic planning period. Benefits are displayed for both the receipts and willingness-to-pay accounting stances. Essentially, receipts and costs are flat throughout, with costs exceeding the revenue from receipts each year. Willingness-to-pay benefits are substantially higher than costs, signifying that there is considerable value associated with the resource uses of NFS lands over and above the costs of management.

A PNV was calculated comparing benefits and costs for both the receipts and willingness-to-pay accounting stances. Benefits and costs accruing beyond 1999 are discounted using a 4 percent real discount rate. Investments made before 1999 are considered sunk costs and are not included in the analysis. Similarly, benefits from investments made in the analysis period that extend beyond 2006 are not included in the analysis. The PNV for the stream of receipts and costs displayed in figure D-2 is negative, estimated to be about \$-15.5 billion. In comparison, the PNV for willingness to pay versus agency costs yields net discounted benefits exceeding \$82 billion. For the 7 years covered by the 2000 Revision, the net benefits are about \$427 per acre across the 192 million acres managed by the USDA Forest Service.

Contributions to the National Economy

The economic activity supported by NFS resource outputs creates ripple effects throughout the economy with measurable impacts at local, regional, and national scales. Employment and income are often used to describe the economic activity sustained or maintained in the economy in association with NFS resource outputs. These measures provide information about the role or importance of USDA Forest Service programs to the national economy.

USDA Forest Service programs support economic activity from three components of agency operations: 1) production of resource outputs, 2) agency direct expenditures, and 3) distribution of agency receipts. The largest share of economic effects linked to USDA Forest Service operations stems from the production of resource outputs from national forests and grasslands. Recreation (including hunting and fishing) opportunities, timber harvest, grazing, and mining activities support production of goods and services in the economy. The nature and magnitude of the economic effects vary across resource uses depending on how individual outputs feed into the economy. Two other components of USDA Forest Service operations that sustain economic activity are agency expenditures and the transfer of a share of USDA Forest Service receipts to States and local governments. Agency expenditures include employee salaries and benefits and goods and services for day-to-day operations. Receipts are transferred to States and local governments as infrastructure support for schools and roads.

The economic effects that stem from resource production are defined as those that can be clearly associated with NFS outputs. For purposes of this analysis, effects are calculated only for immediate users of those resource outputs. Examples of immediate users are sawmills, ranchers, recreation visitors, and mining operations. Secondary users, such as purchasers of the refined products from sawmills, are not included in the analysis. The relative contribution of the NFS resource output to the value added by the secondary users is quite small and difficult to estimate. The value should be attributed to the secondary producers, not claimed by the agency.

The USDA Forest Service uses a model that captures the cumulative effects of production relationships associated with the immediate users of forest resources. These cumulative effects are composed of direct, indirect, and induced effects. Direct effects capture the economic stimulus of the immediate user of the forest resource. Indirect effects account for additional production by industries that supply the immediate user. Induced effects capture the economic activity of household spending resulting from increased jobs in the direct and indirect industries. This analysis includes the direct effects and the multiplier effects captured in the indirect and induced components.

Implementation of the 2000 Revision is expected to yield a mix of goods and services over the planning period. The model used to estimate the economic effects is national in scope. The analysis is intended to quantify the significance of USDA Forest Service operations as contributions to the national economy. It is a descriptive analysis. In comparison, economic impact analysis for forest or project planning traditionally focuses on impacts of forest activities on local communities. These analyses are often used to estimate the new dollars brought into communities located near national forests and grasslands. The national model is not limited to local community impacts, and, as a result, captures more economic activity.

Total Income Effects

The USDA Forest Service traditionally reports total income as the measure describing the income effects associated with agency operations. Total income reported here includes wage income (wages and salaries), proprietary income (self-employment income), and property income (for example, rents and stock dividends). It accounts for about 90 percent of the income included in Gross Domestic Product, which is the value of all final goods and services produced in the economy.

Table D-1 displays the total income and employment effects sustained in the national economy in association with agency operations. The economic effects are grouped by each of the three components (production of resource outputs, distribution of agency receipts, and agency expenditures) comprising the USDA Forest Service sources for the stimulus to the economy. The economic effects from production of resource outputs and the payment of a portion of agency receipts to States and counties are both directly dependent on resource-specific activities. The effects from these two components are displayed by individual resource use. The combined effects of agency spending on salaries and goods and services across all USDA Forest Service programs are included in the agency expenditures component.

Table D-1. Total Income and Employment Effects¹ Sustained in the Economy in Association with USDA Forest Service Activities.

Source of Economic Effects	Total Income Effects (MM Dollars, 1999)		Employment Effects (Jobs)	
	1999	2006	1999	2006
National Forest Resource Outputs				
Hunting, Fishing, and Wildlife Viewing	\$5,431	\$6,023	131,774	146,202
Livestock Grazing	\$327	\$319	10,949	10,702
Minerals & Energy Extraction	\$2,393	\$3,190	35,225	46,824
Recreation Use ²	\$21,104	\$22,785	519,524	560,901
Timber Harvest	\$3,567	\$3,642	66,694	68,088
Distribution of Agency Receipts				
Livestock Grazing	\$3	\$2	61	54
Minerals & Energy Extraction	\$86	\$98	1,976	2,258
Recreation Use	\$15	\$13	348	304
Special Uses and Leases	\$5	\$7	109	156
Timber Harvest	\$143	\$140	3,294	3,224
Agency Expenditures	\$4,618	\$4,664	136,078	137,920
Total Agency Effects	\$37,692	\$40,884	906,031	976,632

¹ Includes all economic effects (direct, indirect, and induced).

² Includes all recreation activities except hunting, fishing, and wildlife viewing.

The production of resource outputs stimulates the largest share of total income supported in the economy from the three sources of agency effects. It produces about 87 percent of the total income effects. Recreation use accounts for the largest share in 1999, sustaining about \$21.1 billion in total income activity across the country.¹ This

¹ Employment and income effects stimulated from recreation opportunities on national forests and grasslands are directly correlated to recreation use. For this analysis, estimates of use were obtained from a USDA Forest Service pilot study designed to develop a statistically sound methodology for measuring recreation participation at the national level. Recreation use was estimated with +/- 30 percent precision at the 80 percent confidence level. The economic effects and benefits are based on these estimates. Updated estimates of recreation use are expected in late 2000 after the first year of sampling from a 4-year project to estimate visitation for all of the NFS.

grows to about \$22.8 billion in 2006, primarily from a projected increase in recreation use of about 1 percent annually. Hunting, fishing, and wildlife viewing account for about \$6 billion in total income by 2006. Minerals resource uses show the largest proportional increase (33 percent) between 1999 and 2006. This is primarily from the oil and natural gas increases noted earlier.

The total income stimulated by the transfer to States of a portion of USDA Forest Service receipts is considerably smaller than the effects from resource output production. County spending on goods and services for maintaining and improving schools and roads supports about \$252 million in total income. This estimate includes the effects from revenues distributed by the USDA Forest Service and from revenues distributed by the Minerals Management Service for mineral leases on NFS lands. The proportion that is attributed to specific resource uses differs significantly from the distribution observed from the resource output effects. Over 56 percent of the effects are from timber harvest receipts, with most of the remainder from minerals uses.

Agency expenditures in table D-1 show relatively constant contributions to total income between 1999 and 2006. Agency spending was projected to be flat in constant 1999 dollars across the 7-year period covered by the 2000 Revision. About \$3.2 billion dollars in spending is associated with \$4.6 billion in total income effects throughout the economy. This category captures all USDA Forest Service spending for management of NFS resources and for the other agency programs and activities where the economic stimulus is not directly associated with resource outputs. Those include Research and Development, State and Private Forestry, and NFS programs grouped into support and protection functions. The economic activity supported by these latter programs is limited to agency expenditures. Because most of the outcomes and products from these programs are not easily quantified in economic terms that can be traced in the economy, the overall effects are underestimated.

Figure D-3 aggregates effects from all three sources and displays them by resource use. This provides a more complete picture of the total effects associated with each of the resource uses. The totals displayed in figure D-3 are less than the totals shown in table D-1 due to the exclusion of agency income effects that are not directly associated with NFS resource uses. (The difference in those effects stems from expenditures on Research and Development, State and Private Forestry, and other agency programs not directly linked with NFS uses.) Approximately 62 percent of the total income effects occur in association with recreation use. Recreation use stays relatively flat through 2006. Minerals uses and hunting, fishing, and wildlife viewing show increases in income effects, while timber harvest and livestock grazing show small decreases.

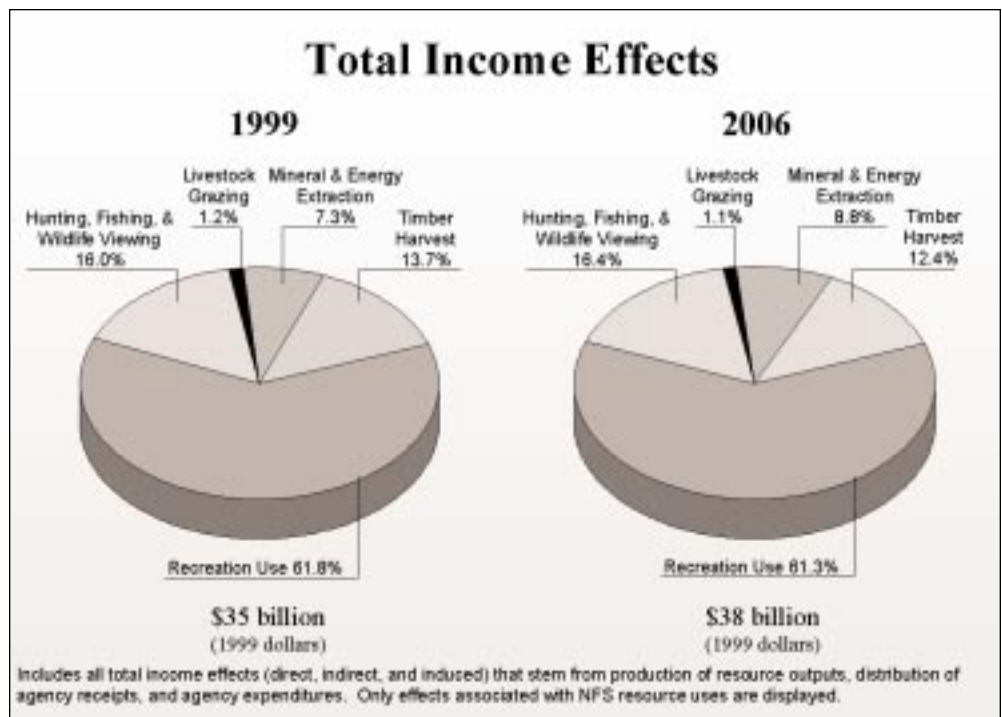


Figure D-3. Percentage distribution across resource uses of the total income sustained in the economy in association with NFS resource activities.

Employment Effects

The employment effects displayed in table D-1 are a measure of the jobs sustained in the economy in association with USDA Forest Service activities. The agency helps support over 900,000 jobs in the economy each year, of which 38,000 are associated with permanent or temporary employment by the agency. The total jobs are expected to grow about 1 percent annually to over 975,000 by 2006. NFS resource outputs account for 84 percent of the jobs. The majority of the employment occurs in association with recreation use related activities. Livestock grazing is the only resource use reporting smaller employment effects in 2006 than in 1999. The current trend of a gradual decline in permitted grazing is expected to continue at a 0.3 percent annual rate over the next 7 years.

The overall trends in employment effects from agency transfer payments (the distribution of receipts to States and counties for schools and roads) are identical to trends in total income effects. From 1999 to 2006, grazing, recreation use, and timber harvest show declines, while minerals and special use authorizations increase.

Aggregate employment effects across all sources (resource outputs, distribution of receipts, and agency spending) are displayed in relative terms by resource use in figure D-4. The percentage of total jobs associated with recreation use is nearly constant between 1999 and 2006 at about 65 percent. Hunting, fishing, and wildlife viewing use and minerals uses show increases from 1999 to 2006. The distribution of percentages across resource uses within and between years is very similar to the distribution reported for total income in figure D-3. Due to the exclusion of agency employment

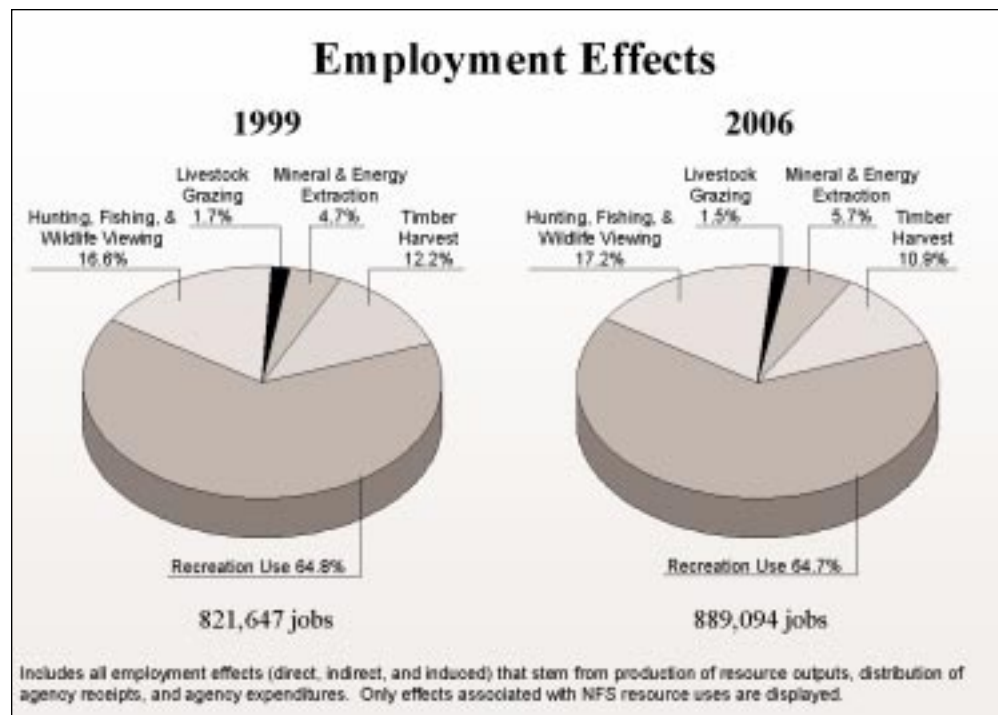


Figure D-4. *Percentage distribution across resource uses of the employment sustained in the economy in association with NFS resource activities.*

effects not directly associated with NFS resource uses, the totals displayed in figure D-4 are less than the totals shown in table D-1. (The difference in those effects stems from expenditures on Research and Development, State and Private Forestry, and other agency programs not directly linked with NFS resource uses.)

A useful way of comparing the relative employment effects across resource uses is to calculate average wage income per job. Wage income or employee compensation is the portion of total income returned to labor. Estimates of wage income were divided by the employment for each of the resource uses to place income on a per job basis. The wage income displayed in figure D-5 for timber harvest does not represent the wages of an employee at a sawmill. Rather, it is based on the average of all jobs and income stimulated (direct, indirect, and induced) by timber harvest throughout the economy. This interpretation holds for all resource uses. From a national perspective, mineral uses and to a lesser extent timber harvest support wage income on a per job basis at higher levels than the other resource uses.

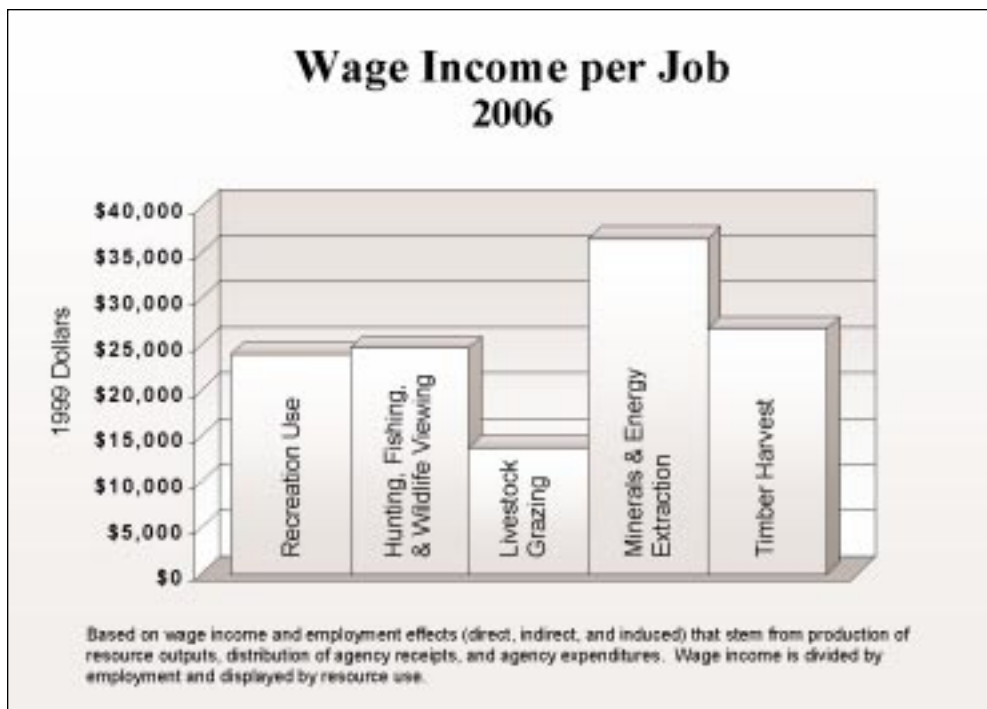


Figure D-5. Average annual wage income per job sustained in the economy in association with NFS resource uses.

Summary

Resource uses of the national forests and grasslands provide a mix of economic benefits to the American people and support significant levels of jobs and income in the economy. No single resource use dominates all results of the analysis presented here. Different measures of economic effects will tend to highlight the benefits of different resource uses. Also, alternative projections of future resource output levels would produce a different picture of the relative distribution of effects across resource uses. In combination, all uses are important to the provision of a variety of resource and economic opportunities to the Nation. Although not elaborated on in this section, there are significant roles the national forests and grasslands play in providing other types of benefits. Some of these benefits are not easy to quantify in monetary terms, but nonetheless are highly valued. These include the value of watersheds for maintaining high-quality drinking water and the value of forests for delivering a variety of ecosystem services.

APPENDIX E FY 1999 BASELINE INFORMATION

Baseline Data for Long-Term Measures and Milestones

The availability of reliable baseline data for long-term measures is essential to successful implementation of the agency's strategic plan and ultimate accountability for the expected results. At this time, existing information sources provide indicators and a baseline quantity for a few of the long-term measures in the 2000 Revision. In many cases, the data necessary for the agency to benchmark and measure its performance directly on those goals and objectives are lacking. In many instances, no data currently exist to establish baselines or measure the agency's performance on a number of strategic goals and objectives.

The Forest Service is committed to establishing baseline information as quickly as possible for each of the long-term measures and to initiating actions to ensure timely collection of such information in the future. To establish baselines, fill data gaps, remedy data deficiencies, and validate performance-related data on an ongoing basis, the agency will need to prioritize and redirect budgetary and staff resources. The Forest Service, working in conjunction with other natural resource and land management agencies, State and Tribal governments, and partners, will work to identify the data sources and establish the baselines needed to fully comply with the Government Performance and Results Act by:

- Determining baseline information for at least half of the strategic plan measures by December 2000 and for the remainder by July 2001.
- Establishing—in Annual Performance Plans beginning in FY 2001—performance goals to identify data needs, sources, and baselines for tracking progress toward meeting the long-term goals and objectives.
- Beginning in FY 2001, establishing performance goals to identify data needs, sources, and baselines for tracking progress toward meeting the long-term goals and objectives in annual performance plans.
- Continuing the efforts to establish agency-wide data quality standards, consistent with good statistical practice, that are available for use by natural resource management agencies outside the Department and for reference by the public.

IMPORTANT NOTICE: The information should be noted with respect to the goals and objectives in this strategic plan.

See Appendix E for available baseline information.

Goal 1
Objective 1.a

Baseline for Fiscal Year (FY) 1999

6,108 watersheds to be monitored.

(Note: the baseline number of watersheds will likely change for 2002 due to adoption of new national boundary delineation standards.)

22.3 percent of watersheds in condition class I (good condition).

77.7 percent of watersheds in condition class II & III (marginal and unsatisfactory condition).

(Note: the baseline percents will likely change for 2001 due to the adoption of national definitions for each condition class.)

Objective 1.b

Baseline for FY 1999

___ percent of national forests and grasslands that have achieved objectives for populations, habitat, and ecological conditions for threatened and endangered species, other species for which there are viability concerns, and Management Indicator Species MIS/focal species at a rate consistent with timeframes identified in land and resource management plans.

- ___ Red-cockaded woodpeckers
- ___ Golden-winged warblers
- ___ Cerulean warblers
- ___ Goldenseal populations
- ___ Eastern brook trout
- ___ Black-tailed prairie dogs
- ___ Grizzly bears
- ___ Bull trout
- ___ Acres of Aspen forest
- ___ Sage grouse
- ___ Lahontan cutthroat trout
- ___ Northern Spotted owls
- ___ Mexican Spotted owls
- ___ Loach minnows
- ___ Spikedace
- ___ Willow flycatcher
- ___ California Spotted owl
- ___ Sierra Nevada bighorns
- ___ Red-legged frogs

Objective 1.c

Baseline for FY 1999

_____ acres at extreme risk from insects and diseases

The following is the FY 1999 baseline in acres of fire-adapted ecosystems by condition class and fire regime:*

Fire Regime	CC1	CC2	CC3	FR Totals	CC2+3	Proportion CC2+3/CC1
I	20,251,491	32,324,176	28,589,236	81,164,903	60,913,412	3.00
II	2,072,688	5,790,593	316,539	8,179,820	6,107,132	
CC Totals	22,324,179	38,114,769	28,905,775	89,344,723	67,020,544	
FY 2006 Milestone	26,277,859				63,066,864	2.40

* Data Source: USDA Forest Service, Rocky Mountain Research Station, Fire Sciences Laboratory, Fire Modeling Institute, Missoula, Montana. November 1999.

Fire Regime Condition Class Definitions

Condition Class Interpretation

Condition Class 1
Low Risk Fire regimes are within a historical range. Vegetation attributes (species composition and structure) are largely intact and functioning within a historical range.

Condition Class 2
Medium Risk Fire regimes have been moderately altered from historical ranges. One or more fire return intervals may have been missed, resulting in moderate increases in fire sizes, intensities, severities, and coarser landscape patterns.
Or,
Fire frequency or intensities have been moderately altered (increased or decreased) due to the introduction and establishment of exotic plant species, introduced insects or disease, or past management activities.

Condition Class 3
High Risk Fire regimes have been significantly altered from historical ranges. Multiple fire return intervals may have been missed, resulting in dramatic departures from historical conditions, causing increased fire sizes, intensities, severities, and coarser landscape patterns.
Or,
Fire frequency or intensities have been highly altered (increased or decreased) due to the introduction and establishment of exotic plant species, introduced insects or disease, or past management activities.

Acres of each of the following targeted species:

- _____ acres of Gypsy moth
- _____ acres of Hemlock wooly adelgid
- _____ acres of Pine shoot beetle
- _____ acres of Pine pitch canker (CA)
- _____ acres of Port Orford cedar root disease
- _____ acres of Beech bark disease
- _____ acres of White pine blister rust
- _____ acres of Pink hibiscus mealybug
- _____ acres of Miconia calvescens
- _____ acres of Mile-a-minute weed
- _____ acres of Leafy spurge

9,714—Level of firefighting production capability (FY 2000 level, FY 1999 not available)

Baseline for FY 1999

Goal 2

Objective 2.a

Level of user satisfaction with recreation programs and facilities is:

- 84 percent for National Average (FY 1997 baseline)
- TBD percent for the Northeast United States.
- TBD percent for the Southern United States.
- TBD percent for the North Central & Midwest United States.
- TBD percent for the Intermountain United States.
- TBD percent for the Southwest United States.
- TBD percent for Alaska & the Northwest United States.
- TBD percent for the Pacific Southwest United States.

Objective 2.b

Baseline for FY 1999

Level of user satisfaction with wilderness experiences and opportunities is:

- TBD percent for the Northeast United States.
- TBD percent for the Southern United States.
- TBD percent for the North Central & Midwest United States.
- TBD percent for the Intermountain United States.
- TBD percent for the Southwest United States.
- TBD percent for Alaska & the Northwest United States.
- TBD percent for the Pacific Southwest United States.

Objective 2.c

Baselines for FY 1999

TBD Recreation Use (MM visits)
TBD Wilderness Use (MM visits)
109.6 Wildlife / Fish (MM visits)(FY 1996 base, FY 1999 projection)
8.15 Permitted Grazing (MM animal unit months) (FY 1998, FY 1999 not available)
2,939 Harvest Volume (MMBF)
79 percent of Mineral Operations Administered to Standard
\$ in receipts for Special Uses
\$2,760,762 in receipts for Botanical Resources / Special Forest Products
TBD of Land Exchanged (acres)
TBD of Land acquired (acres)
TBD of Land in Conservation Easements (acres)
TBD of rights-of-way for roads and trails acquired for access to NFS lands.

Objective 2.d

Baseline for FY 1999

_____ of diverse and underserved and low-income people and communities expressing satisfaction with availability of uses, values, products, and/or services.

_____ of partnerships and contracts that include Federal, State, and Tribal governments and other entities.

Objective 2.e

Baseline for FY 1999

27.1 percent of forest cover in selected urban areas.

Goal 3

Objective 3.a

Baseline for FY 1999

782 rural communities working under broad-based local strategic plans.

Objective 3.b

Baseline for FY 1999

_____ percent of customers having incorporated new scientific, developmental, and technical information in project design or implementation.

Objective 3.c

Baseline for FY 1999

_____ percent customer satisfaction with Research and Development products and services.

_____ percent customer satisfaction with Inventory and Monitoring products and services.

Objective 3.d *Baseline for FY 1999*
_____ opportunities for participation of ethnically identified institutions and organizations in research and in technical assistance programs.

Goal 4
Objective 4.a *Baseline for FY 1999*
Disclaimer of Opinion.
GAO “high-risk” area designation.

Objective 4.b *Baseline for FY 1999*
_____ identified safety concerns with roads and trails posing immediate threats to users.
_____ facilities maintained and meeting safety standards.
269,384 violations against persons.
_____ incidents of destruction of natural resources.

Objective 4.c *Baseline for FY 1999*
_____ percent of USDA Forest Service information services and data structures that are accessible by employees and the public.
_____ hours of information system downtime.

Objective 4.d *Baseline data for FY 1999*
_____ workforce management plan objectives accomplished.

Objective 4.e *Baseline for FY 1999*
_____ internal (Equal Employment Opportunity) complaints settled at lowest possible level.

Objective 4.f *Baseline for FY 1999*
Amount of diversity of the public participating in USDA Forest Service programs and using National Forest System lands and facilities.
_____ lands, programs, and facilities determined to be accessible per the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act.
_____ external complaints (program services) settled at lowest possible level.

APPENDIX F SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENT

Introduction:

The Content Analysis Report was prepared by the U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service (USDA Forest Service) Content Analysis Enterprise Team (CAET) following the conclusion of a 60-day comment period (November 30, 1999 - January 30, 2000) on the Draft USDA Forest Service Strategic Plan (2000 Revision). In the analysis 2,260 letters, e-mail, online comments, faxed materials, and comment forms (postcards or letters) were included. Letters and e-mails came from 45 States and Canada. Thirty-one responses came in a form that did not reveal geographic origin. Comments came from Federal, State, county, and Tribal Governments; preservation/conservation organizations; the wood products, mining, and oil industries and associations; utility companies; recreation groups and associations; multiple use groups; university and other national/international professional and research organizations; and interested American citizens.

Review of the Report:

Public/employee comments focused on—

- More on individual program issues and emphasis than on the draft 2000 Revision goals and objectives.
- A desire for greater specificity about long-term measures.
- Questions about planning processes at all levels of the agency, the Government Performance and Results Act, and the purpose of a strategic plan for the USDA Forest Service.
- Lack of balance in presenting four objectives to address the underserved publics vs. primary mission programs.
- The relationship of near-term initiatives, such as the Natural Resource Agenda, watershed restoration, roads, and revision of the National Forest Management Act rule, to the strategic plan.
- A need to clarify the laws that authorize the USDA Forest Service to do its business, especially in relation to the agency's mission and whether some laws are more important than others.
- Concern about the number of major program initiatives for which the USDA Forest Service was seeking input simultaneously.
- Request for clarification of terms, such as, "outcomes," "outputs," and "cross-cutting functions."
- Perceptions about what people thought should be in the draft 2000 Revision that wasn't there (for example, current or 2006 budget mix figures, baseline data for measures, economic analysis).
- Objections to paying fees for the use of USDA Forest Service facilities and programs.
- The use of "customers" rather than "owners" of national forests.

APPENDIX G

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