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Date: June 19, 2008

Route To:

Subject: Environmental Management System Implementation

To: All Employees

On July 1, 2008, we will implement a national environmental management system (EMS) on all administrative units. EMS provides us with a disciplined framework in which to practice adaptive management and meet our stated environmental policy, which is to comply with applicable legal and other requirements, prevent pollution and practice continual environmental improvement ([FSM 1331.03](#)).

Both Executive Order 13423 and the 2008 Planning Rule require establishing an EMS. The EMS is the tool the Federal Government is using to identify and achieve key environmental objectives, monitor the environmental impacts of our operations, and modify our environmental practices over time.

In this first year, I want all of us to learn more about what an EMS is and how it works by focusing on fleet management and reducing our fuel consumption. With fuel prices now averaging over \$4 per gallon nationally, there are compelling economic and environmental reasons to reduce our fuel consumption. Our goal is to reduce fuel consumption by two percent every year through 2015. The monitoring and accountability offered by the EMS will help us reduce fuel use because we will more conscientiously apply fleet management and vehicle operation practices such as proper maintenance, ride sharing policies and ecodriving tips. The EMS will show us if and how these practices need to be improved over time.

Our approach to EMS reflects lessons learned from pilot testing on 19 national forests and grasslands across the Nation in 2006. We learned a great deal. We need to start small and grow the EMS within our budget and capacity. I want our EMS to work for us rather than us working for the EMS. We will learn as we go, and use existing practices, procedures, and documentation as much as possible. I am committed to integrating EMS with existing management systems or modifying existing systems to be consistent with EMS in order to minimize additional processes. As our capacity to apply EMS to more complex issues grows, the focus of EMS will expand beyond fleet management.

The success of our EMS depends on each one of us learning and applying the principles of EMS. To provide you with a basic awareness of EMS and how the work you do each day fits within the EMS, your local unit EMS representative will be providing a 30-minute informal training (EMS 101). EMS 101 is also available on the EMS area of the FSWeb Portal (<https://fs.usda.gov/wps/myportal/>).

The concept of sustainability is embedded in the Forest Service mission to “sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the Nation’s forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations.” I fully support our goals for sustainable operations, and I believe our national EMS will be a solid tool to help us on that journey. I’m counting on your support and participation.

/s/ Abigail R. Kimbell
ABIGAIL R. KIMBELL
Chief

