



**File Code:** 2300/7310

**Date:** January 26, 2007

**Subject:** Recreation Site Facility Master Planning Public Participation Review Team Formation

**To:** Regional Foresters

Today I am appointing a National Review Team to examine public involvement used in the Recreation Site Facility Master Planning (RS-FMP) process. When the review concludes, we will employ the team's recommendations and broaden the process, which has received significant public attention. Our aim is to raise the standard for participation and strengthen our work with the public. Working with citizens, we can collectively determine the needs for forest recreation facilities to meet future demands—all with a goal to improve the recreation experience.

As one of my last acts as Chief, I want to again emphasize the importance of recreation to American people and our quality of life. Our goal is to provide sustainable, well managed outdoor recreation for the health and well-being of individuals, families, and communities. By necessity, how we achieve this goal will change as the needs of the recreating public change. RS-FMP is one tool that will help us meet this goal on an ongoing basis. It helps identify the recreational opportunities people seek from their national forests, as well as keep track of how those needs are changing. RS-FMP compares facilities that people want with our existing facility inventory, while it considers what it takes to operate at a quality standard. Let me be clear, however, that RS-FMP is not a decision process, but rather it is an analysis that encourages dialogue on how demands for services are changing and what options may exist for responding to those changes. This analysis will inform and affect subsequent budget requests, not the reverse. Open dialogue with communities is an essential aspect in each step of the process.

The Forest Service has a long and proud tradition of offering recreational opportunities and honoring the attachments people have to the special places we manage. This must not change. Executed properly, the RS-FMP process will help us live up to that tradition.

Deputy Regional Forester Beth Pendleton, of the Pacific Southwest Region, will lead the Public Participation Review Team. Under her direction, the team will begin today assessing public participation activities, methods, products, and results from a cross section of national forests. The Review Team will submit their findings and recommendations to Deputy Chief Joel Holtrop by March 30. We will prepare an action plan and implement by April 30. In the meantime, national forests and grasslands will not make any decisions that are based on RS-FMP analysis. If Forest Supervisors require additional time to ensure effective public involvement, they have flexibility to extend deadlines through RS-FMP Regional Coordinators and the Implementation Team.



RS-FMP is an excellent analysis tool to help provide the recreational opportunities our visitors desire. Its success depends on transparent and effective public participation. We look forward to the Review Team's assessment and recommendations.

*/s/ Dale N. Bosworth*

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Chief