

US Forest Service Climate Change Mitigation Team Charter March, 2009

The Climate Change Mitigation team is appointed by the Climate Council and works under their guidance. The Strategic Framework for Responding to Climate Change and related documents serve as the guide for actions implemented by the Mitigation team.

The main charge for the team is implementation of Goal 3 – Mitigation and recommended actions.

In addition, Goal 4 – Policy, also contains actions that address mitigation and those actions should be included in the Mitigation team's work. Coordination and consultation with the other chartered Framework teams, especially the Adaptation Priorities team, are essential to avoid duplication and maximize effectiveness.

The Mitigation team is to provide a plan of work consistent with the Strategic Framework. Development of a consistent approach to protocols for carbon accounting should be a top priority in the plan of work. The team is chartered through FY 2010. Extension or modification of the team's charter must be approved by the Climate Council.

Background

Mitigation strategies include energy conservation; alternative fuels (including energy from wood); clean energy; and product substitution for more energy-intensive materials. All of these strategies can cumulatively contribute to a significant decrease in emissions.

Climate change mitigation actions seek to reduce emissions and enhance **sinks** of greenhouse gasses, so as to reduce the impacts of climate change. Effective mitigation requires balancing carbon sequestration with other ecosystem services. Actions to mitigate climate change must be developed and implemented in a manner that contributes to the long-term sustainability and health of forests and grasslands, conserves water and wildlife habitat and other ecosystem services, and provides renewable energy and support biodiversity. Adaptation and mitigation must complement each other.

Roles and Responsibilities

The initial scope of work for the team includes: protocol development for carbon accounting; policy analysis and development; providing technical expertise to managers and policymakers; facilitating the synthesis of climate change mitigation science; development and design of climate change mitigation actions; economic analysis; education and technology transfer; coordination of actions authorized in the 2008 Farm Bill and other relevant statutes; maintaining strategic alliances at the international, national, regional, and state levels; and providing recommendations for ecosystem services demonstration and pilot projects for mitigation.

The plan of work should include an estimate of costs (money and people) for accomplishing each priority. Designs for systems should be effective and cost efficient.

The team is to consult and coordinate with the other chartered Framework teams to avoid duplication and maximize effectiveness. The team will also consult with other experts and users during their work.

The team is also expected to provide regular progress reports.

Team Operations

Team members will carry out these roles in conjunction with the duties of their current position. Additional task teams and support staff from the Washington Office and the field can be requested as needed through the Climate Council, appropriate Directors and line officers. Mitigation team members may seek some relief of their current duties to meet limited duration high priority assignments if approved by the employee's Director or line officer and recommendation of the Climate Council Executive Sponsor, Dave Cleaves.