

**US Forest Service
Climate Change Education Team
Charter
March, 2009**

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

The Team is responsible for Action 6.3 – Build Environmental Awareness, knowledge and Skills. The Team is to coordinate existing efforts, identify and prioritize needs, and oversee development of tools and products for diverse audiences. The audiences for this action include: agency employees, private landowners, and communities; Tribes; educational institutions, non-governmental organizations (including youth groups); visitors to National Forests and Grasslands, the public, and the international community. Coordination and consultation with the other chartered Framework teams, especially Goal 1- Science, is essential to avoid duplication and maximize effectiveness.

The Education Team is chartered for one year. The Climate Council must approve extension or modification of the charter. The Team will provide a plan of work for their overall effort, deliver products and tools throughout the duration of the team, and develop implementation plans for communication and education efforts.

Background

Citizens knowledgeable about climate change and its impacts on ecosystems will be better prepared to participate in decisions and actions about their Nation's forests and grasslands. Environmental education builds knowledge and skills about climate change, forests and grasslands, sustainable management, and actions to promote sustainable consumption.

The Forest Service, in partnership with other organizations, is uniquely placed to provide high-quality, science-based education and outreach to employees and to the public on the role of forests and grasslands and the impacts of climate change. The Forest Service has a long tradition of building environmental awareness and understanding through multiple programs and disciplines. However, focused knowledge, skills, and experience about climate change - in the Forest Service and in society - are needed for meaningful participation in the decisions and actions the Forest Service and the Nation will need to take.

Roles and Responsibilities

The work of the team should:

- Identify existing efforts and actions.

- Coordinate with other agencies including USDA Extension and non-governmental organizations.
- Coordinate Forest Service climate change websites.
- Identify and prioritize needs.

Work with scientists, land and community managers, USDA extension agents, educators, and communications experts to translate climate change science into accurate, audience appropriate, easily accessible tools and information.

Oversee development of targeted, audience specific information and tools to meet the needs of:

- Agency employees
- Private landowners, and communities
- Tribes
- Educational institutions
- Non-governmental organizations (including youth groups)
- Visitors to National Forests and Grasslands
- International community
- Provide for coordination and dissemination of tools and products.

Identify and develop a range of climate change training courses for employees; where possible, deliver through existing training venues.

- Provide high quality, educational and professional training programs for educators and youth, in partnership with the Department of Education, other federal agencies, and environmental education organizations.
- Develop implementation plans for communications and education efforts.
- Design efforts to be effective and cost-efficient.
- Provide an estimate of costs (people and money) to implement these efforts.

In order to carry out the work listed above, the Team should consider:

Three workshops composed of scientists, communication experts, education experts, and users to:

- coordinate climate change websites
- identify needed communication tools
- develop common messages
- develop immediately needed communication tools
- identify education needs and actions

Workshops should be conducted as soon as possible.

Use information from the workshops to develop implementation plans for targeted, audiences, specific information, and for education efforts.

The team is to consult and coordinate with the other chartered Framework teams to avoid duplication and maximize effectiveness. The Team will consult with users and experts for advice, review, and feedback.

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. Education 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.