

Forest Service, USDA

§219.5

tribes, Alaska Natives, or local government personnel, or other interested or affected people consistent with applicable laws.

(d) *Key elements.* The planning cycle begins with the identification and consideration of issues and concludes with the monitoring and evaluation of results. Based upon the scope and scale of issues, planning includes one or more of the following key elements:

- (1) Identification and consideration of issues (§219.4);
- (2) Information development and interpretation (§219.5);
- (3) Proposed actions (§219.6);
- (4) Plan decisions (§219.7);
- (5) Amendment (§219.8);
- (6) Revision (§219.9);
- (7) Site-specific decisions (§219.10); and
- (8) Monitoring and evaluation for adaptive management (§219.11).

§219.4 Identification and consideration of issues.

(a) *Origination of issues.* Issues may originate from a variety of sources including, but are not limited to: inventories, assessments, analyses, monitoring and evaluation of projects; discussions among people and proposals by organizations or governments interested in or affected by National Forest System management; Presidential, Departmental, and Forest Service conservation leadership initiatives; cooperatively developed landscape goals (§219.12(b)); evaluation of sustainability (§219.9(b)(4)); enactment of new laws; policies such as the Forest Service national strategic plan; and applications for authorization for occupancy and use of National Forest System lands.

(b) *Consideration of issues.* The responsible official has the discretion to determine, at any time, whether and to what extent an issue is appropriate for consideration.

(1) In making this determination, the responsible official should consider:

- (i) The scope, complexity, and geographic scale of potential actions that may address an issue;
- (ii) Statutory requirements;
- (iii) Organizational and community capabilities and available resources, in-

cluding current and likely Forest Service budgets;

(iv) The scientific basis and merit of available data and analyses;

(v) The relationship of possible actions to the Forest Service national strategic plan, other existing plans, adopted conservation strategies, biological opinions, or other strategies applicable within all or a portion of the plan area; and

(vi) The opinions of interested or affected individuals, organizations, or other entities and the social and cultural values related to an issue.

(2) The responsible official should consider the extent to which addressing the issue relates to or provides:

(i) Opportunities to contribute to the achievement of cooperatively developed landscape goals;

(ii) Opportunities for the national forests and grasslands to contribute to the restoration or maintenance of ecological sustainability, including maintenance or restoration of watershed function, such as water flow regimes to benefit aquatic resources, groundwater recharge, municipal water supply, or other uses, and maintaining or restoring ecological conditions needed for ecosystem and species diversity;

(iii) Opportunities for the national forests or grasslands to contribute to social and economic sustainability;

(iv) Opportunities to recover threatened or endangered species and maintain or restore their habitat;

(v) The potential for negative environmental effects, including human health, economic and social effects, upon minority and low income communities;

(vi) Opportunities to maintain or restore ecological conditions that are similar to the biological and physical range of expected variability (§219.20(b)(1)); and

(vii) Opportunities to contribute to knowledge about and preservation of historic and cultural resources.

§219.5 Information development and interpretation.

If the responsible official determines an issue should receive consideration, the responsible official should review relevant information such as inventories, broad-scale assessments, local