

FORSYTHE II PROJECT – MULTIPARTY MONITORING GUIDANCE

(Project documents can be accessed and downloaded at:

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/arp/landmanagement/projects/?cid=stelprd3846763>)

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Collaborative Implementation and Effectiveness Monitoring

Section 102(g)(5) of the HFRA instructs the USDA Forest Service to establish a collaborative multiparty monitoring, evaluation, and accountability process when significant interest is expressed in such an approach. The process will be used to assess the positive or negative ecological and social effects of authorized fuel-reduction projects. In addition, monitoring may be used to determine maintenance needs. The facilitated multiparty monitoring group will be comprised of a diverse group of interested stakeholders and agency personnel. The group will be formed after this decision is signed. This group will develop a monitoring plan that will describe what will be monitored, how to conduct the monitoring, how the monitoring results will be used, and who is responsible for each step in the process. Unit level prescriptions and design will be provided to the multiparty monitoring group prior to contract finalization and award.

The group will meet to review implementation and evaluate how the treatments are meeting the goals and objectives developed by the group. A conceptual framework for monitoring and adaptive implementation that illustrates what this approach may entail can be found in Appendix E of this Decision Notice. The primary goals of this group may include:

- ensure that implementation of treatments responds to dynamic, local on-the-ground conditions, new scientific information, and public input;
- help inform unit level treatment plans and implementation instructions to attain ecological and social objectives;
- demonstrate compliance with management direction specified in the EA and this decision;
- keep the public informed of and involved in treatment unit timing, design, and monitoring;
- ensure integrated engagement of interdisciplinary team members, field personnel, scientists, line officers and the public;
- focus on shared priorities and highlight local concerns related to selection and implementation of treatment units;
- conduct monitoring activities, interpret and share results, adapt implementation practices to
- improve results and better meet project objectives.

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A multiparty monitoring and adaptive implementation process will be organized to conduct monitoring and ongoing adaptive management for the Forsythe II Project. The purpose of multiparty monitoring is to engage all interested and affected parties in a transparent, structured process to assess implementation compliance and ecological effects of management actions in accordance with the Forsythe II Environmental Assessment (EA) and Decision Notice (DN). The process will be open to any member of the public, and will also involve USFS personnel and researchers, the Colorado Forest Restoration Institute (CFRI) at Colorado State University, and researchers from other institutions with relevant subject matter expertise.

Developing a clear concise plan for how monitoring will be conducted and how monitoring results will be used towards adaptive implementation and future decision-making is an essential part of any monitoring program. The monitoring group will establish monitoring indicators, measures, and methods based on the EA stated goals, objectives, management direction, and expected outcomes. A monitoring and adaptive implementation plan will help ensure that the data that is gathered is credible, useful, and meaningful. The primary goals of the multiparty monitoring and adaptive implementation plan are to:

- continue the public participation and collaborative learning that occurred during the planning phase, and encourage and support the continuation of collaborative efforts throughout implementation;
- help inform unit level treatment plans and implementation instructions to attain ecological and
- social objectives;
- conduct a transparent implementation process that keeps the public informed of and involved in treatment unit timing, design, and monitoring;
- ensure that implementation of treatments responds to dynamic, local on-the-ground conditions;
- demonstrate compliance with management direction specified in the EA/DN;
- ensure integrated engagement of interdisciplinary team members, field personnel, line officers and the public;
- assess the effects of treatments on ecological and social attributes; and
- conduct monitoring activities, interpret and share results, adapt implementation practices to improve results and better meet project objectives.