



## **Pacific Southwest Regional EADM Partner Roundtable**

**March 27, 2018**

**Rancho Cordova, California**

### **OVERVIEW**

#### **WHAT IS THE ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS AND DECISION MAKING CHANGE EFFORT?**

The USDA Forest Service (USFS) has launched an Agency-wide effort to improve processes related to Environmental Analysis and Decision Making (EADM). The goal of the EADM change effort is to increase the health, diversity, resilience, and productivity of National Forests and Grasslands by getting more work done on-the-ground through increases in efficiency and reductions in the cost of EADM processes. The USFS is working internally at all levels of the Agency and with its partners to thoroughly identify and consider areas of opportunity in the EADM change effort.

Internally, the Agency has identified a number of impediments to efficient and effective implementation of work on the ground, including lengthy environmental analysis processes, staff training and skill gaps, and workforce issues related to budget constraints and the increasing costs of fire response. As the USFS works to improve EADM, it will continue to follow laws, regulations, and policies and deliver high quality, science-based environmental analysis.

USFS has explored opportunities to improve EADM for over thirty years, and there are compelling reasons to act now:

- An estimated 6,000-plus special use permits await completion nation-wide, a backlog that impacts more than 7,000 businesses and 120,000 jobs.
- Over 80 million acres of National Forest System lands need cost-effective fire and disease risk mitigation.
- The non-fire workforce is at its lowest capacity in years.
- A steady increase in timelines for conducting environmental analysis, with an average of two years for an environmental assessment (EA) and four years for an environmental impact statement (EIS).

The USFS aims to decrease cost and increase the efficiency of EADM processes by 20% by 2019. In working toward this goal, actions may include:

- Training Agency subject-matter experts on contemporary approaches to implementing the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other environmental laws.
- Reforming compliance policies under NEPA and other laws by expanding use of categorical exclusions (CEs), capitalizing on process efficiencies, and enhancing coordination with other agencies.
- Standardizing approaches and electronic templates for CEs, EAs, and administrative records.

Leaders at all levels of the USFS are fully engaged in this effort and challenging USFS employees to be creative, design new ways to advance the USFS mission and embrace change while maintaining science-based, high-quality analysis that reflects USFS land management responsibilities. To this end, employees were recruited from all USFS levels to form EADM Cadres that are tasked with developing and implementing change efforts in each local USFS unit; within USFS regions, stations, and areas; and at USFS headquarters. The USFS is creating multiple collective learning opportunities to tap into the Cadres' knowledge, expertise, innovative ideas, and networks in support of these changes.

### **REGIONAL PARTNER ROUNDTABLES**

Within the EADM change effort, USFS leadership recognized that partners and the public can offer perspectives and lessons that complement the Agency's internal experiences—leading to greater creativity, cost-savings and capture of talent/capacity. To support this recognition, the USFS asked the National Forest Foundation (NFF) to assist in hosting ten EADM Regional Partner Roundtables across the country in February and March 2018 (see Appendix A for the schedule) with the objective of collecting diverse partner feedback to inform EADM processes on local, regional and national scales.<sup>1</sup> The NFF and USFS worked closely together to plan, coordinate, and facilitate the Roundtables. The NFF was charged with preparing a summary report for each Roundtable as well as one national report that synthesizes themes emerging from partner input at all of the Roundtables. These reports summarize partner-identified challenges and barriers, desired outcomes, and strategies and solutions for effective and efficient EADM processes.



The specific purposes of the Regional Partner Roundtables were to:

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<sup>1</sup> The National Forest Foundation (NFF) is a Congressionally chartered nonprofit organization dedicated to conserving and restoring National Forests & Grasslands, and supporting Americans in their enjoyment and stewardship of those lands. NFF is non-advocacy and non-partisan, and serves as a neutral convener and facilitator of collaborative groups engaging with Forest Service and also works with local nonprofits and contractors to implement conservation and restoration projects. To learn more, go to [www.nationalforests.org](http://www.nationalforests.org).



- Share why changes are important for achieving the USDA Forest Service’s mission
- Identify, discuss, and capture partner perceptions on barriers and solutions
- Explore what roles partners can play moving forward
- Support dialogue to strengthen relationships between partners and the USDA Forest Service
- Explain how partner inputs will be incorporated from the Roundtables and from participation in the formal rulemaking process.

The Roundtables are a major piece of USFS strategy to integrate the public and partners into its EADM effort. The Agency invited representatives of highly-engaged partner organizations, tribes, governmental entities and the business community to participate in the Roundtables. This report is a summary of activities and themes emerging from the **Pacific Southwest Regional EADM Partner Roundtable**, held in Rancho Cordova, California on Wednesday, March 27, 2018.

Additionally, the Pacific Southwest Region hosted two webinars after the Roundtable, one for tribal leaders and one for county representatives. These additional webinars are not addressed in this report.

In a separate avenue of public engagement, the USFS requested formal comments from all members of the public in response to an Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (ANPR) in January 2018 regarding the National Environmental Policy Act, and is working toward issuing a proposed rule in the summer of 2018 for additional comment. The USFS may choose to issue additional ANPRs or draft rules on other aspects of EADM as a result of the EADM change effort.

## **ROUNDTABLE MEETING DESIGN**

The USFS and the NFF hosted the Pacific Southwest Regional EADM Partner Roundtable at the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board. The Pacific Southwest Region developed a list of active, engaged partners from collaborative and other efforts, then refined it to achieve a balanced representation of interests for the invitation list. Participants included partners who regularly engage with the USFS in project design; comment formally and informally on policy, process, and projects; and/or bring a depth of understanding about the laws, rules, and regulations under which the USFS operates. The Pacific Southwest Region sent out 90 invitations, and 47 Partners participated. Please refer to Appendix B for a full list of participants.

Roundtable design included context-setting presentations ([click here for presentation](#)), question and answer sessions, and multiple small group discussion opportunities. Presentations were delivered by: **Barnie Gyant**, Deputy Regional Forester; **Jeanne Higgins**, National Policy Lead; **Mary Beth Hennessy**, Acting Regional Director of Ecosystem Planning;



Laura Hierholzer, Regional Environmental Coordinator; and Alan Olson, Acting Deputy Regional Forester for Fire and Aviation. The presentations provided participants with context to support small group discussions centered on EADM challenges and strategies for tackling them.

Throughout the Roundtable, the NFF provided neutral facilitation. USFS staff helped facilitate small group discussions, as well as record examples of ineffective or inefficient EADM shared by partners and the solutions offered during these discussions. The information generated by partners in the discussions provided the basis for the EADM Thematic Tables in this report.

The first facilitated small-group discussion focused on identifying challenges that partners face in EADM and provided participants with an opportunity to share their ideas of possible solutions for EADM.

Participants discussed and answered the following questions with others at their table.:

- *What do you see as barriers to efficient and effective environmental analysis and decision making by the Forest Service?*
- *What innovations or solutions could help improve the efficiency or effectiveness of the Forest Service's environmental analysis and decision making?*

USFS employees joined each table's discussion. As table hosts they then shared with the room 3-5 words or phrases that came up frequently or caught their ear during their table's discussion:

- Capacity, capability, programmatic analysis, landscape scale, invest in relationships locally
- Timelines, expense, fragmentation, reactive vs. proactive, landscape scale, priority setting, collaboration, don't re-invent the wheel, share knowledge
- Inconsistency between units, shifting priorities
- Collaborate, training, recruit youth, landscape approach, leaders need to lead
- Encourage business approach, timely, accountability, line officer support and mentoring

Participants were then asked to help address challenges identified in the earlier small-group discussions by breaking out in to small-groups themed on:

1. Recreation /Special Uses -- *How are our processes working? How could they be improved?*
2. Partnerships and Collaboration
  - *What are collaborative effort and partnerships accomplishing?*
  - *What are some key principles for effective collaboration?*
  - *How can we be more efficient and effective with collaboration?*
  - *How can the USFS achieve more social license to accomplish goals of ecological restoration?*
  - *How well do we incorporate public input into agency decision making?*
  - *How well are we reaching people not involved in collaboration?*
3. Vegetation Management and Wildlife Conservation Balance
  - *What approaches work best to resolve tensions between resources and vegetative management?*



- *How can the Forest Service achieve more successful landscape management? How might the USFS increase the pace and scale?*
- *How can Forest Service improve consultation under the Endangered Species Act (ESA)?*

#### 4. Organizational Challenges and Project Management

- *What processes are not productive or how could they become more productive?*
- *What is your perception of USFS performance in regard to project design and analysis? What steps can be taken to improve performance?*
- *How can the USFS strengthen accountability and maximize effectiveness as an organization?*
- *How can the USFS better use technology?*

#### 5. Policy (NEPA, Other regulations and EADM)

- *What regulatory reforms could improve the implementation of NEPA?*
- *Are there more effective and efficient ways to prepare an EIS and EA or to use Categorical Exclusions?*

The groups responded to three framing questions:

- (1) *What's working well?*
- (2) *What challenges or barriers do you see?*
- (3) *What do you see as solutions?*

Break-out group facilitators asked participants to consider challenges, desired outcomes as a result of change, and the strategies, tools, and resources needed to make the change needed in EADM processes. Over the course of discussion, the challenges inherent in USFS' multiple-use mission arose.



## **WHAT PARTNERS SHARED: THEMATIC TABLES OF EADM CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS**

Ideas captured in main-session and USFS unit-based small-group discussions during the Pacific Southwest Regional EADM Partner Roundtable are organized below by top themes.<sup>2</sup> These are presented in the tables below: (1) USFS Culture; (2) USFS Personnel Policies and Staffing Decisions; (3) USFS Capacity and Resources; (4) Forest and Community Collaboration and Partnerships; (5) Analysis Documents and Specialist Reports; (6) Scaling Environmental Assessment and Decision Making; (7) Research and Science; and (8) Resource Conflict.<sup>3</sup> See Appendix D for a full list of acronyms used in the report.

<sup>2</sup> The NFF organized information that emerged from all ten of the regional roundtables into major themes and the reports use a similar structure for easy comparison. The themes included in each report respond to the partner discussion at that particular roundtable.

<sup>3</sup> Please note that blanks or incomplete information in the table mean that no ideas were mentioned for that heading during the Roundtable.



## A. USFS CULTURE

The USFS was established in 1905 and since that time has developed cultural norms that guide how the Agency operates and how it relates with its public. The history of remote District Offices has led to persistent autonomy at the District and Forest levels despite changes in technology and current national directives. Both USFS leadership and partners spoke to an inconsistency in practice across the country. Partners described frustration with a lack of communication from the Agency regarding decisions, and a desire to see innovation, risk-taking and effective risk management rewarded and encouraged.

USFS CULTURE CHALLENGES		DESIRED OUTCOMES	USFS CULTURE SOLUTIONS	
Barriers	Evidence		Strategies	Tools and Needed Resources
USFS does not effectively convey the need for change within the Agency.	Desired EADM outcomes are not obvious to staff or public.	USFS is transparent throughout the process of EADM. Clear leadership vision leads to more implementation on the ground.	Clearly answer the question of “why” an action is being taken in terms everyone can understand.	
USFS staff lack a “can do” attitude.	Focus on barriers rather than solutions (e.g. visitor information at resorts).	Staff innovate to help project proponents accomplish forest goals.	Reward creativity among district staff that actively pursue solutions (e.g. getting a Special Use Permit (SUP) issued).	<u>Tool:</u> Performance awards.
Risk-adverse USFS staff. Fear of making decisions based on imperfect data.	Over-surveying before EADM.	USFS decision makers understand the risks inherent in making decisions with imperfect knowledge.	Train Line Officers (LOs) in how to weigh risk of imperfect knowledge when conducting EADM and know when they have enough information to make a firm decision.	
Staff are reluctant to give up control.	Duplication of effort on effects analysis (e.g. USFS and third-party version).	Trust in partners and/or third party contractors to produce quality analyses.	Enlist partner and contractor support in times of need for analyses.	<u>Resources:</u> Partners and contractors.



CONTINUED   USFS CULTURE				
CAPACITY AND RESOURCES CHALLENGES		DESIRED OUTCOMES	CAPACITY AND RESOURCES SOLUTIONS	
Barriers	Evidence		Strategies	Tools and Needed Resources
USFS resists change. Resistance to new technologies that make EADM more efficient.	Despite technological advancements (e.g. drones for surveying) and changing demographics, USFS does not adapt.	USFS develops a “business model” approach that inspires change to align with current trends.	Obtain and use Lidar data.	<u>Tool</u> : Avenza (geo-referenced maps).
Reactive versus proactive organizational culture.	Staff not able to organize, prioritize and perform EADM efficiently.	Analyses are scaled up to protect more resources with a single analysis; priorities are clearly communicated.	Train and mentor LOs to be more proficient in assessing opportunities for large-landscape NEPA landscapes.	<u>Tool</u> : Training.
Independent decision-making by District Rangers (DRs) is an ingrained part of USFS culture.		USFS has standardized decision-making, priority-setting, and approval processes for projects, contracting, and field work.	Standardize decision making (DM) and priority-setting approaches that DRs can adopt with comfort, allowing DRs to efficiently prioritize staff and contractor work.	<u>Tool</u> : DM checklist for DRs.
Staff personal interests bias the need for certain analyses.	“Species of Local Concern” more common now in specialist reports, which implicates third-party surveys and effects analyses.		Provide oversight to ensure personal biases are not impacting policy implementation.	



**B. USFS PERSONNEL POLICIES AND STAFFING DECISIONS**

The USFS has a long history of encouraging employees to change positions and move frequently to gain breadth and depth of experience, and to move up in responsibility. Aims of this policy include adequately preparing USFS employees to advance professionally; ensuring employees are able to make unbiased and professional decisions in managing public lands; and enhanced consistency and shared culture across the agency. While moving employees to different units can support a transfer of good practices and new ideas, it also means that employees are in a frequent learning curve to understand the relevant forest conditions, ecological systems, and community interests and dynamics. Often local relationships become fractured and have to be rebuilt, taking time and efficiency from EADM processes and frustrating local partners.

PERSONNEL POLICIES & STAFFING CHALLENGES		DESIRED OUTCOMES	PERSONNEL POLICIES & STAFFING SOLUTIONS	
Barriers	Evidence		Strategies	Tools and Needed Resources
Staff lack depth of knowledge and expertise needed for EADM.		Staff are trained in EADM so it is applied consistently and expertly across units.	Provide needed training. Hire USFS retirees under contract to conduct analyses reliant upon their experience.	<u>Tools:</u> Training. Contractors.
EADM skills of LOs are highly variable.	Shrinking agency means more LOs moving around, reinitiating learning curves.	Trained LOs who can efficiently manage programs, people, risk, and processes so that staff and contractors are trusted and work is delegated and accomplished.	Train LOs. Incentivize LO to stay in same location.	<u>Tools:</u> New training modules. Mentorship.
Rapid turnover undermines productivity of partner relationships, especially at the local level.	Many staff on details, and staff contacts of partners constantly change. USFS staff contacts disappear during fire season. Abundant Baby Boomer retirements.	USFS has earned the trust of partners and maintains relationships through time. USFS retains an anchored staff that accrues local knowledge.	Focus on maintaining partner relationships through USFS staff changes. Incentivize staff to stay in place. Use third-party NEPA contractors as much as possible and trust the results without excessive review.	<u>Tools:</u> Transition management processes.





CONTINUED   PERSONNEL POLICIES AND STAFFING DECISIONS				
PERSONNEL & STAFFING CHALLENGES		DESIRED OUTCOMES	PERSONNEL & STAFFING SOLUTIONS	
Barriers	Evidence		Strategies	Tools and Needed Resources
Short tenure of leadership staff limits their ability to apply local knowledge.		Leadership consistency achieved at the unit level.	Encourage longer tenure of staff in leadership positions. Recruit leaders who can manage a dynamic workforce and cultural change.	
Staff turnover and SUP skill set undermines implementation of approved SUPs.		Multi-year SUPs are not stalled by changing USFS staff. Trained personnel equipped to deal with safety and financial issues associated with special uses.		<u>Tools:</u> Certification program for permit administrators. Fire personnel training model.
Shuffling of staff in resource positions.	Loss of unit-based knowledge.	New staff effectively and contextually learn unique aspects of the forest and the project history.	Departing staff leave a legacy of better “track records.”	<u>Tool:</u> Handover memo.
Inadequate training in use of latest technologies.	Staff do not use available technologies for DxP (e.g. unlike timber truckers who download maps in their cabs).			<u>Tools:</u> Training. Technology apps to support field-based work.
IDTs are dispersed and lack focus on NEPA process required.	NEPA team members have differing degrees of risk tolerance and experience with NEPA decision-making.	Personnel assigned to NEPA tasks are focused on decision-making.	Deploy national teams with deep experience in forest planning to help IDTs with forest plans. Manage IDTs more “corporately,” keeping teams together for multiple projects.	<u>Tools:</u> National forest planning support teams. IDT with stable membership.



CONTINUED   PERSONNEL POLICIES AND STAFFING DECISIONS				
PERSONNEL & STAFFING CHALLENGES		DESIRED OUTCOMES	PERSONNEL & STAFFING SOLUTIONS	
Barriers	Evidence		Strategies	Tools and Needed Resources
Staff lack survey and analysis/ writing skills. Partner expertise is not utilized.	Preferential treatment of staff biologists when selecting surveyors.	USFS leverages partner knowledge and capacity to supplement internal capacity shortfalls.	Make it easy for third-party contractors to help with effects analyses. Use partner data and expertise.	<u>Resources:</u> Budget for third-party contractors. Model of Placer County funding third party NEPA.
Staff lack skills to conduct large-scale analysis.	Survey and analysis done for plantations may not meet contemporary standards (e.g. cultural, archeological, botany survey requirements).	Staff have the skills to conduct large-area analysis and access past surveys and analyses on large-scale land areas.	Include large-scale analysis as a topic of staff NEPA training. Make past survey and analysis records accessible to analysts.	<u>Tools:</u> Digitalization of past records. Training in large-scale analysis approaches.
Designation by Prescription (DxP) not always used, wasting staff time marking trees.	Loggers already select cut/not cut trees efficiently, meeting stand prescriptions without USFS marking crews.	Forest Products Modernization efforts underway recognize DxP as the most efficient approach.	Trust contractors to select cut/leave trees according to DxP; monitor their compliance.	<u>Tools:</u> Staff training in DxP.
Standards for USFS certification for timber sale administration and cruising are considered too stringent by some partners.	Standards deplete staff time and ability to prepare for timber sales.	Standards for certification are reconfigured to allow staff flexibility to make decisions and implement them at a faster pace.	Training, mentoring, and revision of standards.	<u>Tools:</u> Templates.



### C. USFS CAPACITY AND RESOURCES

Training in management, resource specializations, and EADM itself remains an unaddressed need throughout the USFS. Budget shortfalls and statutory mandates on funding for fire response combine with a shortage of trained employees in areas other than fire and/or a frequent diversion of staff to fire duty. This situation hampers the ability for the Agency to make progress on stewardship of important forest and grassland resources. Moreover, the complexity of landscape-scale approaches to ecological management of public lands demands a high level of expertise and a deep knowledge of forest conditions at the unit level.

CAPACITY AND RESOURCES CHALLENGES		DESIRED OUTCOMES	CAPACITY AND RESOURCES SOLUTIONS	
Barriers	Evidence		Strategies	Tools and Needed Resources
Reduced workforce capacity for EADM.	Not enough staffing to get needed work done. Partners paying for NEPA work (e.g. French Meadows Partnership).	Partnership agreements in place to supplant vacant/ needed staff positions with partner's human resources.	Increase capacity by sharing funds with partners to leverage their talents and gain efficiencies. Integrate Tribes in capacity-building efforts.	Tools: Participatory Agreements. Joint Powers Authority (e.g. with Angeles NF). CFLRP (e.g. Dinkey Collaborative). Master Stewardship Agreements (e.g. South Fork American River (SOFAR) Cohesive Strategy.
Funding not available for fuel reduction on an adequate amount of the landscape.			Subsidize co-generation plant processing of biomass to incentivize fuel reduction in forests.	<u>Resource</u> : CCI Forest Health Grant Fund.



CONTINUED   USFS CAPACITY AND RESOURCES				
CAPACITY AND RESOURCES CHALLENGES		DESIRED OUTCOMES	CAPACITY AND RESOURCES SOLUTIONS	
Barriers	Evidence		Strategies	Tools and Needed Resources
Rampant public misuse of Forest lands causing degradation and depleting budgeted funds for restoration.	A considerable amount of forest land is used to illegally grow cannabis. Recovery costs come from the forest's budget, on top of fire costs. Cannabis growers often abuse springs, an important cultural resource for tribes.	Misuse of public land is minimized. USFS has nurtured goodwill of forest community, which understands and uses USFS reporting procedures to assist in law enforcement.	Increase capacity for law enforcement in forests abused by cannabis growers. Reach out to the Forest community and equip community members with knowledge of reporting procedures.	<u>Tools:</u> Augment law enforcement. USFS partnerships with community members, local governments and organizations.
Loss of staff with institutional and landscape-scale knowledge.	USFS is short on planners that have integrated knowledge across landscapes. When staff retire or leave, their institutional knowledge on districts disappears.	Staff and partners have access to ecological, social, and historical context of local and landscape-scale management.	Use recorded webinars to preserve institutional memory or life of a project. Leverage previous NEPA surveying to inform upcoming NEPA process. Mandate LO orientation to context of their districts.	<u>Tools:</u> Webinars. Archived records. Orientation of new LOs.
Survey areas are not prioritized. Timing, flexibility of, and need for surveys not well understood.	Assumption of some staff is to re-survey during NEPA process, resulting in duplicative surveying.	USFS staff understand the geographic areas that are most critical to survey. Staff and partners are flexible and creative in using surveys to meet project goals, and assuming presence of resources when appropriate.	Strategically focus on surveys needed most for large-scale restoration work. Use Design Feature statements to target surveying efforts. Guide specialists in how to use laws and regulations to focus surveys.	<u>Tools:</u> Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E) surveys already completed for prescribed burns. Design feature statements.



**D. COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIPS**

In the last ten to fifteen years, the USFS has recognized the opportunities offered by the rise of collaborative groups in addressing resource management conflicts and building agreement in project design. Not all units, however, regularly welcome collaboration and partnerships, and stakeholders expressed frustration with an inconsistency in USFS transparency, skill, communications, and use of scientific and traditional knowledge contributed by the public.

COLLABORATION & PARTNERSHIP CHALLENGES		DESIRED OUTCOMES	COLLABORATION & PARTNERSHIP SOLUTIONS	
Barriers	Evidence		Strategies	Tools and Needed Resources
Collaboration efforts are lacking. USFS role in collaboration is unknown and untapped. Units are not consistent in how well they embrace collaboration.	EADM is not conducted collaboratively across much of USFS.	USFS collaborative efforts increase, time is invested to build relationships and trust. USFS decision makers are consistently supporting the same types of collaboration.	Combine meetings with individual stakeholders into larger meetings.	<u>Tools:</u> Open communications. Leadership intent and demonstration of support for collaboration. Consistent definitions of collaboration.
Partnerships are not prioritized at a leadership level.	USFS shifts focus when there is a change in Chiefs. Partners do not know where they stand and feel put off when partnerships are not a priority.	USFS considers partnerships critical and is committed to their success. USFS works closely with partners.	Message the priority of partnerships to external audiences.	<u>Tool:</u> Partnership Conferences led by the Chief.
Insufficient formal partnerships to get projects done.		USFS meets restoration goals by working with all types of partners.	Give partners the opportunity and notice to help implement work on-the-ground. Publicize the work partners are doing. Reduce the paperwork needed to establish a partnership.	<u>Tools:</u> Partnership agreements.



CONTINUED   COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIPS				
COLLABORATION & PARTNERSHIP CHALLENGES		DESIRED OUTCOMES	COLLABORATION & PARTNERSHIP SOLUTIONS	
Barriers	Evidence		Strategies	Tools and Needed Resources
Insufficient and inadequate communications undermine a common understanding about a project.		USFS and partners view and understand projects similarly.	Manage expectations. Use appropriate communication methods to reach the target audience (e.g social media for younger generations).	<u>Tools:</u> Communication vehicles and proper messaging. Photos and graphics. Social media.
Delayed collaborative involvement after the fact.	Projects are designed by USFS before shared with partners.	The USFS and communities work pre-NEPA to collaboratively design projects.	Design projects collaboratively, bringing partners to the table early in the planning process to design proposed action.	<u>Tool:</u> Model of the South Fork American River Cohesive Strategy. <u>Resource:</u> Facilitators for collaborative meetings.
Partners do not know when to engage in collaboration on NEPA processes.	Partners not engaging early on CFLRPs.	Partners and collaborative groups understand how and when to engage in NEPA processes.	Communicate public engagement opportunities clearly, using a variety of tools (more than the “newspaper of record”).	<u>Tool:</u> Provide NEPA training for partners. <a href="#">A Roadmap for Collaboration Before, During and After the Collaborative Process</a> (National Forest Foundation).
Perceived favoring of certain types or groups of partners.	Recreation outfitters constrained by SUPs while NGO partners not held to similar stringent standards. Bias shows up in NEPA documents and expired permits.	No bias and all treated equally. USFS partners with businesses to restore landscape before major wildfires.	Learn the ethics requirements and act accordingly.	<u>Tools:</u> Diversity training. Accessible inventory of collaborative groups and description of the goals/interest of each.



CONTINUED   COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIPS				
COLLABORATION & PARTNERSHIP CHALLENGES		DESIRED OUTCOMES	COLLABORATION & PARTNERSHIP SOLUTIONS	
Barriers	Evidence		Strategies	Tools and Needed Resources
Collaborative membership is unbalanced. USFS unable to efficiently consider all perspectives.	Stakeholder groups are not all represented in collaborative groups and partner-ships. Younger generations not engaged.	Collaborative efforts are evenly represented, without excessive redundancy of interests, and finding common ground early in EADM processes.	Foster a balanced level of control within the collaborative. Propose meeting times and communication avenues conducive to the participation of all groups. Give community a lead role in the collaborative, encouraging community members to ask others to participate.	<u>Tools:</u> Social media. Lessons learned and best practices shared by other collaborative groups and CFLRPs in CA.
EADM process timeline of inclusion excludes partner voices in decisions made.	In many cases, a proposed action presented is perceived to be already “decided.”	Partners are included in EADM processes and their input is included in a meaningful way. Public and partner input is considered before and during project planning.	Engage partners early in a project planning (pre-scoping meetings). Provide field tours.	<u>Tools:</u> Field trips. Pre-scoping meetings.
Private industry partners excluded; businesses not perceived as trusted partners.	Bias toward choosing non-profit NGO partners and against industry or recreation permittee partners.	USFS also partners with commercial organizations and for-profit businesses.	Find opportunities to increase efficiencies through partnerships with private industry. Clarify ethics rules.	<u>Tools:</u> Master Stewardship Agreements. Training on grants and agreements; peer learning sessions.



CONTINUED   COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIPS				
COLLABORATION & PARTNERSHIP CHALLENGES		DESIRED OUTCOMES	COLLABORATION & PARTNERSHIP SOLUTIONS	
Barriers	Evidence		Strategies	Tools and Needed Resources
Lack of involvement by stakeholders from urban areas.	Water quality, scenic value, recreation, tourism, and other forest amenities are not considered valuable to urban residents.	Urban constituents recognize that the influence and benefits of well-managed projects on forests.	Outreach targeting urban residents.	
Growth in collaborative groups is dwarfing the founders' impact.		New ideas and energy drawn from scoping and expanding collaborative effort does not disenfranchise or negate the contributions of long-term partners.		
Distrust of USFS by timber industry partners.	Not enough trust in USFS decisions for timber industry to follow and implement DxP.		Rely on DxP more often when restoring former plantations where trees are the same species and size.	
Excessive collaborative membership requirements results in exclusivity.	Collaborative groups that require 100% of members vote in a new member (e.g. San Gabriel Mtns NM Collaborative).	Collaborative groups welcome all stakeholders. Collaborative efforts are diverse and inclusive; everyone can participate and is heard.	Set a collaborative ground rule that anyone can participate. Secure agreement on big picture or overarching goals upfront.	<u>Resources:</u> Facilitators. Assistance with outreach to diverse stakeholders.





CONTINUED   COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIPS				
COLLABORATION & PARTNERSHIP CHALLENGES		DESIRED OUTCOMES	COLLABORATION & PARTNERSHIP SOLUTIONS	
Barriers	Evidence		Strategies	Tools and Needed Resources
USFS distrust of partner intent on treatment projects as scale increases.	Unclear when proof of concept is inadequate, e.g. for road-related restorations; fish passage in western Klamath area.	As large scale projects are completed, IDT is agreeable to proposed treatments that are similar.	Integrate lessons learned from previous projects into new project proposals	
Collaborative groups fall apart over time.	Collaborative members moving away (e.g. Dinkey Collaborative).		Encourage partners to convene groups and fundraise to bring stakeholders together.	
Collaborative groups lack key stakeholders with vital knowledge.	Cases where those affected by decisions are those that USFS does not hear from.	Key/knowledge able stakeholders sought out as collaborative groups form and meet.	Include collaboration guidelines in LO training materials. Add collaboration as a performance measure. Ask collaborative group members what types of stakeholders are missing.	<u>Tools:</u> Performance measures that include collaboration.
Partner's cost of participating in collaborative processes.	Certain groups cannot afford the travel and time off to participate in collaborative groups. Resources are stretched thin.	Diverse approaches to collaboration are used to ensure all voices are heard.	Conduct quarterly public meetings to discuss all projects. Make the project lists on USFS websites easier to find. Ensure knowledgeable field staff participate in public meetings.	<u>Tools:</u> Quarterly meetings between USFS, partners, and public to discuss projects. Project info on website.



CONTINUED   COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIPS				
COLLABORATION & PARTNERSHIP CHALLENGES		DESIRED OUTCOMES	COLLABORATION & PARTNERSHIP SOLUTIONS	
Barriers	Evidence		Strategies	Tools and Needed Resources
Partners lack capacity to leverage their resources to help launch projects.		Full partner potential to help deliver USFS mission is realized. Avenues are created and used so that participation does not depend on the stakeholder's level of resources.	Identify projects with a diversity of objectives that attracts funding. Make small investments in partner capacity that yield big gains (e.g. building tribal survey capacity).	<u>Tools:</u> Capacity grants for partners.
Turnover in staff of partner organizations.		USFS and partners maintain consistent working relationships.	Agency staff reach out to partners on a regular basis to keep contact lists current.	
Partnerships not receiving adequate time for consultation.	Stakeholder groups need greater turnaround time to respond on issues of concern.	USFS maintains appropriate scoping and consultation timelines to allow for stakeholder participation.		<u>Tools:</u> Longer review timelines.
The non-Federal match that is required for grants to partners.	Qualifying for grants is challenging for less-resourced partners.	Stewardship Agreements reduce cash match needed.		<u>Resources:</u> Staff with expertise in Master Stewardship Agreements. Funding for needed match.
Collaborative process holds up planning and project approvals.	Collaborative groups take too much time to make decisions.			<u>Tool:</u> Model of Klamath NF collaborative that studies and incorporate areas of agreement.



CONTINUED   COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIPS				
COLLABORATION & PARTNERSHIP CHALLENGES		DESIRED OUTCOMES	COLLABORATION & PARTNERSHIP SOLUTIONS	
Barriers	Evidence		Strategies	Tools and Needed Resources
Productivity of collaborative groups is low or declining.	Collaborative members stop participating because they feel their time is being wasted.	Collaborative groups get results. Pay-off for engagement is evident. Collaborative members operate as “business partners in a healthy forest,” working hard together and contributing resources to meet goals (e.g. fuels reduction). Stakeholders find participation is worthwhile.	Use facilitators to keep collaborative on track and focused on Forest priorities and needs. Identify and act quickly upon areas of agreement on what should be done in a forest management unit.	<u>Resource:</u> Model of the Dinkey Collaborative (volunteer time used efficiently).



**E. ANALYSIS DOCUMENTS AND SPECIALIST REPORTS**

Federal environmental laws require analysis of the physical, biological, social and economic effects of an action on public lands or waters. Risk aversion and a history of legal challenges to USFS decisions have led to the “bullet-proofing” of environmental analysis documents and specialist reports. Rather than being understandable by the public, documents tend to be extremely long and hard to read. Partners offered suggestions to help streamline documentation and process without sacrificing quality of analysis.

<b>ANALYSIS DOCUMENTS AND SPECIALIST REPORTS CHALLENGES</b>		<b>DESIRED OUTCOMES</b>	<b>ANALYSIS DOCUMENTS AND SPECIALIST REPORTS SOLUTIONS</b>	
<b>Barriers</b>	<b>Evidence</b>		<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Tools and Needed Resources</b>
USFS imposes requirements beyond its purview.	USFS handbook (FSH) has expanded expectations over time. USFS requirements extend beyond those of other agencies.	USFS limits itself to what is required by law, regulation, and policy.	Review FSH requirements to eliminate unnecessary and burdensome elements.	
Fear of litigation results in excessive time spent and detail in EADM documents.	Lengthy, costly and time-consuming EAs/EISs. Lawsuits define forest management. EADM documents “padded” to mitigate risk of litigation.	USFS staff accept greater risk in DM. The management of resources is in good service of the resource and public. USFS institutes checks and balances to mitigate risk.	Provide NEPA training at all levels to embolden staff. Hire staff with the needed leadership skills. Assess risk at each step of using Forest Plan Standards and Guidelines, Best Management Practices, recovery plans, contracts, and consultation.	<u>Tools:</u> Training at all levels. South Lassen Watershed Group (Model).
Over-analysis that addresses all resources.	Lack of focus on key resources. Repeated analyses of the same forest conditions. USFS does not rely on Travel Management EA for proposals concerning designated routes.	When extensive analysis has been done (e.g. Travel Management), the NEPA process for a recurring use relies upon it.	Focus analysis on the unknown. Provide training (especially for new staff) that emphasizes availability of previous decisions. Rely on history of decisions on similar cases.	<u>Tools:</u> Database of previous decisions.



CONTINUED   ANALYSIS DOCUMENTS AND SPECIALIST REPORTS				
ANALYSIS DOCUMENTS AND SPECIALIST REPORTS CHALLENGES		DESIRED OUTCOMES	ANALYSIS DOCUMENTS AND SPECIAL REPORTS SOLUTIONS	
Barriers	Evidence		Strategies	Tools and Needed Resources
EADM processes are redundant when projects cover areas already assessed.	Repeated surveys over the same area. Repetitive National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) Section 106 surveys by individual specialists.		Tie decisions to previous analyses and avoid re-analysis. Create clear guide-lines for and LO and specialist training on the sufficiency of using past NHPA Sec.106 interpretations.	
NEPA process too lengthy.	Permittees offer to pay for “contract NEPA” to get SUPs approved faster.	USFS comfortable with “third-party NEPA.”	Involve stakeholders upfront to save time down the line.	
Document volumes are too large for impact to be realized.	EADM document inefficiencies are risky with the current increase in pace and scale of wildfires. USFS not realizing its Allowable Sale Quantity (ASQ) authority to thin more to prevent wildfires.	Staff understand and comply with NFMA.	Align document size with the volume of treatment, and increase scale as implicated in EADM documents.	<u>Tools:</u> Templates.
Inconsistent issuance of SUPs across forests	LOs and key staff lack a background in special uses.	Dedicated cadre of staff trained and available to process SUPs.		<u>Tools:</u> Specialized training in SUPs.
Permitting process limits options for use.	Historic auditorium in Mammoth area traditionally allows just one permittee per event.	Permitting process facilitates site use instead of impeding it.	Issue permits for multiple years and multiple concurrent actions. Consider the idea of a permittee who can sub-permit uses.	



CONTINUED   ANALYSIS DOCUMENTS AND SPECIALIST REPORTS				
ANALYSIS DOCUMENTS AND SPECIALIST REPORTS CHALLENGES		DESIRED OUTCOMES	ANALYSIS DOCUMENTS AND SPECIAL REPORTS SOLUTIONS	
Barriers	Evidence		Strategies	Tools and Needed Resources
Inconsistency in length of permits authorized for same type of use.	No rationale behind setting a 15-year permit limit for pack stations.	USFS issues SUPs for maximum length of time, due to the Agency's ability to cancel a permit.		
SUPs for uses crossing administrative or jurisdictional (including the Agency) boundaries not guided by clear direction.	One event on two districts required two SUPs.	SUP application and permitting process is streamlined.	Develop materials that clarify SUP approval process for applicants.	<u>Tool</u> : Document describing SUP process document.
Permit application and approval process unclear or overly complicated for the public.	SUP process appears arbitrary. When USFS did not respond to a permit request, an unregulated vehicle event occurred.	Consistently review, approve or deny, and implement SUPs.	Increase training and guidance materials for recreation specialists and LOs.	<u>Tools</u> : Training. Guidance materials.
Repetitive surveys required on developed land within SUP boundaries and utility right of way (ROWs).	Surveys required for SUP renewals.	Because effects of utility and ski area activities on developed land within SUP boundaries are already known, field surveys are not required.	Staff SUP renewals for ski area and utility ROWs with knowledgeable specialists. Expand CE categories to address ski area and ROW areas of developed land.	



CONTINUED   ANALYSIS DOCUMENTS AND SPECIALIST REPORTS				
ANALYSIS DOCUMENTS AND SPECIALIST REPORTS CHALLENGES		DESIRED OUTCOMES	ANALYSIS DOCUMENTS AND SPECIAL REPORTS SOLUTIONS	
Barriers	Evidence		Strategies	Tools and Needed Resources
NEPA “analysis paralysis” gridlock prevents permits from being renewed or approved.	Backlog of permit applications and/or expired permits waiting for renewal.	LOs use CEs to get more SUPs processed more quickly.	Implement performance measures for LOs related to reducing the number of expired permits on a timeline.	
Inconsistent and ambiguous threshold for whether a CE, EA, or EIS is required.	Triggers for CE or EA use differ among decision-makers. EIS sometimes seems easier than EA if thresholds or risk tolerance are unknown.	CEs and EAs are consistently and appropriately deployed across Forests and Regions.	Improve guidelines for use of CEs, EAs and EISs. More clearly define significance thresholds.	
CE categories misunderstood, misused, or unused. Unclear guidance on how to use CE categories appropriately.	CE approval process takes too long (How are CEs used when a chair lift needs replacement?).	Staff and partners understand and use CE categories when appropriate to expedite important work. Staff and partners understand what actions fit within each CE category.	Batch the CEs that have good documentation to reduce processing of CEs. Improve or clarify CE categories. Confer with stakeholders at a regional or national level to identify CEs for large restoration projects (e.g. road restoration, emergency response to storm damage). Use CEs in staff and partner NEPA trainings.	



CONTINUED   ANALYSIS DOCUMENTS AND SPECIALIST REPORTS				
ANALYSIS DOCUMENTS AND SPECIALIST REPORTS CHALLENGES		DESIRED OUTCOMES	ANALYSIS DOCUMENTS AND SPECIAL REPORTS SOLUTIONS	
Barriers	Evidence		Strategies	Tools and Needed Resources
Inconsistent descriptions of desired conditions in Land Management Plans (LMPs)/ forest plans across the country.	NEPA documents lack specificity. LMP in Colorado has management designation for ski areas, whereas LMP in California does not – use must be defended in CA.	Desired conditions are described concisely in LMPs. LMPs contain standard components for management designations, standards, and guidelines, particularly on forests that are physically proximate and/or have similar resource issues.	Where there are similar resource issues and conditions among a set of forests, use common standards and guidelines. Capture the image of what the forest looks like now and what it could look like if desired conditions are achieved.	<u>Tools:</u> Templates for standards and guidelines to meet desired conditions.
For staff and partners new to NEPA, expectations and points of engagement are unclear.		Staff and partners understand how to constructively engage in the NEPA process.	Create NEPA data hubs and training webinars that anyone can access at any time.	<u>Tools:</u> Joint USFS/partner introduction to NEPA training. <a href="#">A Roadmap for Collaboration Before, During and After the Collaborative Process</a> (National Forest Foundation).
New design features created for every project.		USFS efficiently designs projects, taking advantage of some features already used successfully in other projects.	Develop a checklist of design features (that are cataloged), selecting appropriate features for each project. Explain in the project record why some features were not used.	<u>Tools:</u> Checklist of design features.





**CONTINUED | ANALYSIS DOCUMENTS AND SPECIALIST REPORTS**

<b>ANALYSIS DOCUMENTS AND SPECIALIST REPORTS CHALLENGES</b>		<b>DESIRED OUTCOMES</b>	<b>ANALYSIS DOCUMENTS AND SPECIAL REPORTS SOLUTIONS</b>	
<b>Barriers</b>	<b>Evidence</b>		<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Tools and Needed Resources</b>
Cumbersome site-specificity in decision documents.		Site specificity in analysis documents is appropriate.	Develop examples for what constitutes appropriate site specificity in analysis documents.	<u>Tools</u> : Example descriptions of site-specificity.
Time horizon of NEPA decisions is too short for certain long-lived resource issues.	Hazard trees are an ongoing problem in forests. NEPA decision implementation timeframe does not last the length of the effects the project aims to counter.	NEPA decisions endure for an appropriate and efficient length of time.	Conduct NEPA process for longer timeframes when addressing hazard trees and other issues without foreseeable ends.	
Stakeholder input not utilized at unit level.	LOs unwilling to consider changing the IDT proposed actions.	Stakeholder input is considered in the IDT's development of proposed actions.		



**F. TRIBAL AND INTERAGENCY CONSULTATION**

Federal laws require multiple agencies to consult with each other about how the fish, wildlife and cultural resources on National Forests and Grasslands could be affected by an action. The USFS also consults and coordinates with Federally-recognized Tribes in a government-to-government relationship. The lack of adequate staffing, complexity of the issues, and inconsistent approaches and coordination has led to lengthy consultation processes.

CONSULTATION CHALLENGES		DESIRED OUTCOMES	CONSULTATION SOLUTIONS	
Barriers	Evidence		Strategies	Tools and Needed Resources
Lack of interface with tribal governments.		All tribal partners have a voice in EADM processes.	Increase tribal consultation and engagement in EADM processes. Include non-federally recognized tribes in scoping process.	
Tribes expected to publicly disclose the location of a cultural resource, rendering it vulnerable to abuse.	Tribes are more comfortable saying an area of importance exists without saying where/what it is (e.g. when prescribed fire is being considered).	Tribal cultural resources are protected without compromising their security.	Work with tribes to develop protocols for disclosing spatial locations of resource features. Include the protocols in fire and NEPA training modules.	<u>Tool</u> : Protocols.
Time-consuming consultation processes repeated for similar projects.		Consultation time with external agencies is minimized by producing blanket responses to regularly occurring actions.	Apply basal areas programmatically for each threatened & endangered (T&E) species.	
State agency resources not tapped for forest projects.			Leverage state funds to raise more federal funds for projects. Partner with the proposed California Office of Outdoor Education.	<u>Tool</u> : GNA. Fire Safe Council.  <u>Resources</u> : State of California match for federal funding (e.g. \$200K for CalFire).



CONTINUED   ANALYSIS DOCUMENTS AND SPECIALIST REPORTS				
ANALYSIS DOCUMENTS AND SPECIALIST REPORTS CHALLENGES		DESIRED OUTCOMES	ANALYSIS DOCUMENTS AND SPECIAL REPORTS SOLUTIONS	
Barriers	Evidence		Strategies	Tools and Needed Resources
Duplication of NEPA/CEQA analyses.	USFS staff lacks knowledge of how to use suite of tools available for EADM.	Full suite of federal and state EADM tools are utilized, and utilize the right tool at the right time in the appropriate situation.	Increase staff training on use of NEPA and CEQA authorities.	<u>Tools:</u> NEPA/CEQA crosswalk. Templates. Training.



## G. SCALING ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS AND DECISION MAKING

Participants identified a number of issues related to the scale of project analysis, at what level decisions are made, and how local information is or is not reflected in decisions. Partners raised questions about how forest plans and the required large scale analysis relates to project-level decisions. The discussion also highlighted the challenges of climate change and other cross-boundary issues, and the complexity of natural resource projects.

SCALING CHALLENGES		DESIRED OUTCOMES	SCALING SOLUTIONS	
Barriers	Evidence		Strategies	Tools and Needed Resources
Lack of landscape approach to forest management. Lack of knowledge on how to implement large landscape NEPA.	Lack of capacity for feasible or timely implementation. Time it takes to get emergency NEPA decisions completed.	Landscape scale restoration with partners.	Start projects with collaboration that considers needs across the landscape (e.g. as with the PG&E licensing project). Deploy partners that conduct landscape-scale surveys.	Tool: GTR 220. Light Detection and Ranging (LIDAR). Databases of survey information. Partnership agreements.
Litigation threat undermines opportunities to conduct large landscape EADM.	Minimal large landscape environmental analysis decisions.	USFS produces more EAs that cover large landscapes.		
Sale preparation process is not efficient.		More of the landscape is involved in a sale prep.	Make projects economically viable by increasing volume of sale preparation per acre.	<u>Tool</u> : Allowable Sale Quantity (ASQ).
Forest plan revision processes not successfully deployed by all forests.	When USFS combined revisions of several forest plans, public was dissatisfied.	Easy to identify recreation elements in forest plans.		



**CONTINUED | SCALING ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS AND DECISION MAKING**

SCALING CHALLENGES		DESIRED OUTCOMES	SCALING SOLUTIONS	
Barriers	Evidence		Strategies	Tools and Needed Resources
Inconsistent application of NEPA requirements across forests or within forests with revolving staff.	Permitting for ski lifts at three different resorts each underwent a different level of environmental analysis. Utilities and other permittees with permits that cross district boundaries encounter different approaches among LOs.	Projects of a certain type undergo similar analysis and project proponents are able to expect a particular type of analysis and decision timeframe from USFS.	Help USFS staff network across forests to learn from each other and standardize analyses for certain project types. Make regional expertise more accessible to district staff.	<u>Tools:</u> Training manual. Project implementation guide with “if then, what” scenarios. Online forum for USFS staff.
Programmatic agreements are not defined. Shortage of programmatic agreements.	Programmatic agreements applied at different scales have different degrees of effectiveness. Policy supporting programmatic EIS is under-utilized.	Programmatic agreement is defined is useful for landscape- and small-scale projects. Programmatic EIS use is understood and utilized appropriately by USFS staff and collaborative groups.	Use programmatic analysis for low risk and non-controversial projects. Analyze conditions on a larger scale, then tier to the results for site-specific projects. LO and key staff involvement.	<u>Tools:</u> Programmatic analysis.
Adaptive management not deployed to manage forests for T&E species.	NWFP policies for moist forests inappropriately applied to drier California forests. Northern Spotted Owl (NSO) habitat assessments on the Mendocino NF show owls are occupying areas with less canopy cover and drier climates.	USFS is more experimental with management practices, adapting to changing habits and habitats of T&E. Public involved from early stages of planning projects.	Work with scientists from Bureau of Land Management and academia to assess what habitat (forest types, size of tree) the NSO is actually reliant upon.	<u>Tool:</u> Model of Pine Mountain Project with NSO habitat incorporated fuels, stand, and NSO habitat management on the Eel River and will have commercial sale.



**CONTINUED | SCALING ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS AND DECISION MAKING**

SCALING CHALLENGES		DESIRED OUTCOMES	SCALING SOLUTIONS	
Barriers	Evidence		Strategies	Tools and Needed Resources
Inefficiency of repeating NEPA process for similar projects. Small projects repeat methodologies of others yet still require NEPA process.	Following fires, NEPA process results in a whole new EIS. California roads cover twenty-six thousand miles, along which are hazardous dead trees – yet actions are not treated programmatically, even along Federal highways.	NEPA decisions efficiently cover larger areas and utilize programmatic analyses. After minimal analysis of the areas previously burned (and analyzed), prescribed burning is allowed.	Use programmatic EIS to cover fuel reduction, hazard tree treatment, forest recovery, and for a single species over a large area of the forest. Integrate projects, without necessarily invoking more CEs.	
Size of projects proposed is too small. Small-scale projects conducted piecemeal do not get the job done on landscape-scale restoration.	Scale of work proposed is too small to be worthwhile for partners to engage. Small-scale projects result in debates with partners on issues already resolved at a landscape-scale.	Ensure projects are economically feasible, including consideration of size and efficiency. USFS NEPA work enables scaling work to meet forest restoration needs.	Encourage larger-scale projects (not necessarily “programmatic NEPA”). Tier smaller projects to larger landscape plan (where decisions are the end-result of consensus achieved after landscape-scale debates). Tactically combine projects.	<u>Tools:</u> Collaboratively developed landscape plan.
Diameter limits set arbitrarily and at a scale that limits revenue to pay for thinning projects.	Without cutting at a commercial scale, infrastructure and labor force will die. On the Mendocino NF, a thinning project offer is too small-scale to be of interest to a purchaser.	Large landscape scale management that allows for thinning at a volume of commercial value.	Forge agreement among the Pacific Southwest Region Forest Supervisors to use GTR 220 to plan for thinning at a scale that pays for the cost of projects. Make the public aware of why it makes sense to conduct projects at this scale and that habitats can still be enhanced on the landscape.	<u>Tool:</u> GTR 220. Larger thinning projects.



## H. RESEARCH AND SCIENCE

Participants discussed the important role of science and data in EADM processes, and the relationship between research, monitoring and open discussion of science with partners as critical to decision making.

RESEARCH AND SCIENCE CHALLENGES		DESIRED OUTCOMES	RESEARCH AND SCIENCE SOLUTIONS	
Barriers	Evidence		Strategies	Tools and Needed Resources
Data not collected and/or made accessible for EADM and collaboration.	FACTS database entries are inconsistent. With increase in staff with GIS skills, more use by individuals, but data becoming less centralized. Variable map formats. Data provided by corporations that conduct treatment is not helpful.	Data is routinely and consistently catalogued, also accessible by staff and partners. Databases are useful and accurate.	Create central data clearinghouse. Assign a consistent staff POC for data access. Establish IDT rules for data collection and mapping, and a common map format. Provide training on making FACTS database entries (specific to resource areas, e.g. silviculture).	<u>Tool:</u> Training. Well-maintained database.
Lack of post-project follow up and monitoring of management impacts and the sustainability of project benefits.		Stakeholders vested in projects are kept apprised of and involved with monitoring results of projects after completion.	Adopt methods to update partners after project completion, e.g. reporting at meetings and town halls, via field trips, or using newsletter. Involve partners in post-project monitoring, where appropriate.	<u>Tools:</u> Field trips. Post-project newsletter updates. Joint monitoring.
Survey requirements are not well planned to avoid future delays.	Delays caused by need for survey in a different season.	Survey requirements do not create surprising delays in projects.	Consider survey requirements early in planning and factor into project timeline. Ensure IDT and LOs, as well as partners, understand survey requirements.	



CONTINUED   RESEARCH AND SCIENCE				
RESEARCH & SCIENCE CHALLENGES		DESIRED OUTCOMES	RESEARCH & SCIENCE SOLUTIONS	
Barriers	Evidence		Strategies	Tools and Needed Resources
Cost of surveying undermines ability to prioritize treatment areas.	Expense of LIDAR and surveying keeps USFS from conducting necessary landscape treatments.	USFS has the resources to survey the landscape to prioritize areas for treatment (non-controversial and in the greatest need).	Find resources to conduct surveys using LIDAR.	<u>Tool</u> : LIDAR.  <u>Resource</u> : Funding for LIDAR.
Best available science information (BASI) from data and survey results incomplete and inadequate for proper DM.	LOs and IDT uncomfortable making decisions without BASI.	Data and survey information complete and accessible by staff and partners. BASI gaps do not hold up DM on best possible choice given what is known.	Partner with ESRI and other survey firms to identify knowledge stores and gaps. Characterize the gaps in effects analysis (e.g. as likelihood of occurrence, lack of BASI).	<u>Tools</u> : Geo-referenced knowledge center. Color-coded heat map of forest.
Sensitive data not shared with partners.		USFS develops means of sharing sensitive data that partners find important.	Develop information-sharing tools and train staff in their use.	<u>Tool</u> : Information sharing systems.
Economic value of recreation to forest communities not recognized.		Fees collected from recreation sites are invested directly back into recreation projects (funding mitigation of recreation impacts on NFs).	Assess value of recreation fees and develop mechanism to enable a forest to fund partnerships that mitigate impacts of recreation on the forest.	<u>Tool</u> : “Adopt-a-Forest” model. Assessment.





**I. RESOURCE CONFLICT**

Conflicts arise among stakeholders and resource user groups and EADM is complicated because the USFS has the most diverse mission of all land management agencies. The National Forest System is managed for multiple uses and benefits, meaning that USFS is charged with determining how to best achieve “the greatest good” while making trade-offs between different resources and uses.

RESOURCE CONFLICT CHALLENGES		DESIRED OUTCOMES	RESOURCE CONFLICT SOLUTIONS	
Barriers	Evidence		Strategies	Tools and Needed Resources
Leaders are not leading the Agency to meet the unique and multiple-use mandate of the USFS.	USFS mission ranging from wilderness and wildlife, to timber production, and serving the American people.	Strong leaders are able to manage the conflicts that are inherent in satisfying the USFS mission.	Recruit strong leaders who stay engaged and lead by example.	
Conflict among resource user groups ties up EADM and undermines USFS mission.		USFS and partners understand that fire, funding, capacity and targets drive priorities so consensus is challenging to achieve. They work through proposals and choose the most realistic proposals to meet USFS mission.	Establish “agreement zones” (green to red) that stream-line approval of project aspects for which there is stakeholder consensus. Conduct feasibility studies that inform collaborative groups of best options.	<u>Tools:</u> Feasibility studies. Agreement zones assessment.
Long-approved forest uses or objectives are questioned with every project decision.	NEPA process provokes debate about whether skiing is the appropriate use of land leased to a ski area. EAs should not address managing forests as part of a watershed.	Questions of appropriate use are answered at higher level than project level NEPA analysis.	Use the LMP to identify the management criteria for lands where certain uses are allocated long-term (i.e. ski areas and power lines). Avoid the repetition of EAs and EISs for these types of land uses.	<u>Resources:</u> LMPs.



CONTINUED   RESOURCE CONFLICT				
RESOURCE CONFLICT CHALLENGES		DESIRED OUTCOMES	RESOURCE CONFLICT SOLUTIONS	
Barriers	Evidence		Strategies	Tools and Needed Resources
Inadequate prioritization based on public support.	Stakeholders encounter staff resistance to project proposals. USFS budgets leave little room for “extras” like effective collaboration on EADM.		Develop forest plans that move the forest toward desired conditions. Prioritize restoration projects (e.g. of fisheries, meadows) with substantial public support.	
Piecemeal projects spread personnel and financial resources thin.	Projects could establish a presence where illegal cannabis grows, including logging sales that produce revenue for roads used for surveillance and law enforcement.	Units address multiple resource needs when deciding on project possibilities and prioritization. Account for seasonality when issuing LOPs.	Leverage other projects when units conduct planning so that other resource priorities can be addressed concurrently.	
Partner distrust of specialists.	Appears to stakeholders that opinions rather than facts guide specialist assessment of the presence of T&E species.	USFS is consistent in how it assesses resource presence and significance.	Generate guidelines for NEPA specialists on when to assume presence of resources and invoke significance thresholds.	<u>Tools:</u> Guidelines.
Perception that T&E policies are set arbitrarily not based in wildlife science. Staff lacks knowledge to set LOPs.	NSO and goshawk habitat distances from harvesting machines and LOPs are set based on how a sound at a certain frequency affects the birds.	Based on science, priorities set for fuel reduction logically matches T&E priorities.	Conduct more T&E surveys. Use LiDAR across the state. Consider the different impact of new machines with low decibel levels.	<u>Tools:</u> GIS, LIDAR, Drones.  <u>Resource:</u> Funding



CONTINUED   RESOURCE CONFLICT				
RESOURCE CONFLICT CHALLENGES		DESIRED OUTCOMES	RESOURCE CONFLICT SOLUTIONS	
Barriers	Evidence		Strategies	Tools and Needed Resources
Trained staff, resources, and approvals for fire unavailable for proactive, preventative measures (“Rx”).	With just a 6-8 week window to conduct prescribed burns, NFs lack the capacity and trained staff to accomplish EADM. Not able to implement prescribed fire as a disaster prevention tool in NEPA projects.	USFS establishes the trained staff talent and quantity to take advantage of windows for prescribed fire. NFs short on fire staff can borrow staff from another NF. NF has burn plans approved and ready to deploy.	Consider/use thinning before prescribed fire as a wildfire prevention tool. Set LOPs for logging outside the driest, hottest season. Seek insurance company partners to help defray liability costs. Tap collaborative groups for resources.	<u>Tools:</u> Prescribed fire. Thinning.  <u>Resources:</u> Fire Management Officers.
Recreation not a prioritized use on NFs.	Limited or no recreation specialists on IDTs. Recreation permittees not considered partners. Recreationists have to fight to get their issues considered. Lost opportunities for public access to “urban” forests.	USFS and partners provide a stable and growing source of resources for recreation planning and permitting. Full-time recreation positions established and filled at Forest and RO levels. Recreation is treated as a valid and important use of NF lands.	Work with local recreation user groups to complete needed recreation work.	<u>Tools:</u> Recreation partner agreements.
Conflicts within the recreation sector.	OHV use around Pacific Crest Trail not open for discussion during recreation planning.	Full slate of (legal) options considered during planning.	Establish carrying capacity for activities and area beyond trail quotas.	



CONTINUED   RESOURCE CONFLICT				
RESOURCE CONFLICT CHALLENGES		DESIRED OUTCOMES	RESOURCE CONFLICT SOLUTIONS	
Barriers	Evidence		Strategies	Tools and Needed Resources
Recreation is too narrowly defined by USFS.	Hang gliding sanctioned by one LO but not another. Atypical activities (falconry, rock collection) are difficult to permit.	Approval of permits not influenced by staff personality and preference; rather implementation is consistent according to standard guidelines.	Gather data, relying on partners as well as staff, to observe how different recreation user types use the Forest.	
	Motor vehicle use maps do not account for accessibility for people with disabilities.	Special needs are considered in recreation planning.	Planning includes ADA and ABAAS compliance.	<u>Tools:</u> Planning process used by NPS to prioritize ADA.
Difficulty in moving forward with projects that have a timber component.	Timber industry not integrated in planning that involves thinning. Timber targets remain the focus of Washington DC yet fire is an increasing risk. Fuels are building up in T&E habitats.	RO prioritizes programmatic agreements to increase restoration activities that address fire risk.	Involve timber and wood products industry early in planning for thinning projects to enable proper economic feasibility assessments. Take a landscape approach to T&E habitat protection.	<u>Resource:</u> Project managers. Established timeline from project start to finish.
Diameter limits set without considering the ecological change that has occurred.	Density or basal area has increased tree mortality to moisture stress. Variable staff interpretations of GTR 220.		Allow the flexibility to get on top of ecological risks by cutting larger diameter trees.	
Lack of enforcement.	Illegal activities on Angeles NF (mining, parking) continue unabated.	Regulations are enforced before the FP revision process begins, so that violators cannot say their rights are being revoked.	Assess how that enforcement might disproportionately affect disadvantaged communities.	<u>Tool:</u> Enforcement.



## **THE EADM CHANGE EFFORT**

EADM Partner Roundtables were held in each USFS region and in Washington, D.C. Information in this regional report, as well as the national report, will be used by USFS leadership to refine business practices, information sharing, policy, and direction toward improved efficiencies. As they are developed, the NFF will post summary reports from all of the Roundtables and a national report that synthesizes the themes heard around the country regarding EADM challenges and solutions ([click here](#)).

The NFF will present information generated at the Roundtables to USFS leadership and the staff teams working nationally and regionally on the EADM change effort.

The USFS will consider the input from the Roundtables as it develops its proposed rule regarding NEPA. The Agency will also review the input received at the Roundtables as it considers other priorities and actions to improve EADM processes, which may involve changes in practices, improved training, altered staffing structures, and/or steps toward improved rulemaking.

## **RESOURCES**

### **PACIFIC SOUTHWEST REGIONAL EADM CADRE**

- Denise Adamic, Public Affairs Specialist, Regional Office
- Wendy Coats, Public Services Staff Officer, Klamath National Forest
- Debbie Gaynor, Public Services, Regional Office
- Mary Beth Hennessy, Deputy Director of Ecosystem Planning, Regional Office
- Laura Hierholzer, Ecosystem Planning, Regional Office
- Jim Junette, District Ranger, Stanislaus National Forest
- Jennifer Marsolais, Forest Environmental Coordinator, Eldorado National Forest
- Keli McElroy, Forest Silviculturalist, Shasta Trinity National Forest
- Alan Olson, Director of Ecosystem Planning, Regional Office
- Sarah Sawyer, Ecosystem Management - Endangered Species, Regional Office
- Jeff Vail, Forest Supervisor, Angeles National Forest
- Kayanna Warren, State & Private Forestry Ecologist, Regional Office
- Jeanette Williams, Forest Ecosystem Staff Officer, Sierra National Forest

### **WEB LINKS**

- USDA Forest Service EADM webpage – [www.fs.fed.us/managing-land/eadm](http://www.fs.fed.us/managing-land/eadm)
- National Forest Foundation EADM Webpage – [www.nationalforests.org/EADM](http://www.nationalforests.org/EADM)
- USDA Forest Service Directives – [www.fs.fed.us/im/directives/](http://www.fs.fed.us/im/directives/)
- Environmental Policy Act Compliance – [www.federalregister.gov/documents/2018/01/03/2017-28298/national-environmental-policy-act-compliance](http://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2018/01/03/2017-28298/national-environmental-policy-act-compliance)



**APPENDIX A**

<b>Regional Environmental Analysis and Decision Making Partner Roundtable Dates</b>		
<b>Region</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Location</b>
<b>1 - Northern</b>	March 14, 2018	Missoula, MT
<b>2 - Rocky Mountain</b>	March 19, 2018	Lakewood, CO (and by video teleconference in Cody, WY; Pagosa Springs, CO; and Rapid City, SD)
<b>3 - Southwestern</b>	March 21, 2018	Albuquerque, NM
<b>4 - Intermountain</b>	March 29, 2018	Salt Lake City, UT
<b>5 - Pacific Southwest</b>	March 27, 2018	Rancho Cordova, CA
<b>6 - Pacific Northwest</b>	February 22-23, 2018	Portland, OR
<b>8 - Southern</b>	March 20, 2018	Chattanooga, TN
<b>9 - Eastern</b>	March 12, 2018	Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie, IL (and 14 Forest Unit locations by Adobe Connect)
<b>10 - Alaska</b>	March 22, 2018	Juneau, AK and teleconference
<b>Washington, D.C.</b>	March 14, 2018	Washington, DC



## APPENDIX B

### PACIFIC SOUTHWEST REGIONAL EADM PARTNER ROUNDTABLE PARTICIPANT LIST

**SUMMARY:** Approximately 90 partner representatives were invited by the Regional Forester to participate in the Roundtable. Of these, 47 participated in the Roundtable in person. The participants represented a broad range of regional forest interests and revealed strong experience with USFS EADM processes.

#### PARTNER PARTICIPANTS

Don	Amador	BlueRibbon Coalition
Sara	Bholat	Southern California Edison
Steven	Brink	California Forestry Association
Susan	Britting	Sierra Forest Legacy
Philip	Brownsey	California Invasive Plant Council
John	Buckley	Central Sierra Environmental Resource Center
Eric	Carleson	Association of California Loggers
Alan	Carlton	Sierra Club
Stephanie	Cimino	Pacific Gas & Electric Company
Trina	Cunningham	California Indian Water Commission
Marie	Davis	Placer County Water Agency
Kent	Duysen	Sierra Forest Products
David	Edelson	The Nature Conservancy
Deborah	Enos	Watershed Conservation Authority
Steve	Eubanks	national association of forest service retirees (NAFSR)
Pamela	Flick	Defenders of Wildlife
Amy	Granat	California Off-Road Vehicle Association
Karuna	Greenberg	Western Klamath Restoration Partnership / Salmon River Restoration Council
Russell	Henly	CA Natural Resources Agency
Marcia	Hogan	National Forest Foundation
Robert	Hoover	Sierra Pacific Industries
Stephanie	Horii	Center for Collaborative Policy
Rachel	Hutchinson	South Yuba River Citizens League
Jennifer	Leung	Southern California Edison
Stephanie	Lucero	Center for Collaborative Policy
David	Page	Winter Wildlands Alliance/Mammoth Lakes Recreation
Robert	Patterson	Town of Mammoth Lakes
John	Quidaghy	Association of California Loggers
Marily	Reese	National Forest Recreation Association
Michael	Reitzell	California Ski Industry Association
Chad	Roberts	Tuleyome
Kent	Sharp	SE Group



Robert	Spiegel	California Farm Bureau Federation
John	Stewart	California 4 Wheel Drive Assoc
Mark	Stewart	PG&E Electric Vegetation Management
Andrew	Strain	Heavenly Mountain Resort
Jessica	Strickland	Trout Unlimited
Greg	Suba	California Native Plant Society
Hardy	Tatum	Association of California Loggers
Stan	Van Velsor	The Wilderness Society
Kevin	Vella	National Wild Turkey Federation
Leana	Weissberg	Sierra Institute for Community and Environment

#### **USDA FOREST SERVICE STAFF**

Jim	Bacon	Director of Public Service, Regional Office
Liz	Berger	Regional Forester's Liasion, Regional Office
Lindsay	Buchanan	Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program Coordinator
Lawrence	Crabtree	Forest Supervisor, Eldorado National Forest
Maia	Enzer	Planning and Public Engagement Advisor
John	Exline	Acting Deputy Regional Forester, Regional Office
Debbie	Gaynor	Recreation and Special Use Program Lead, Eldorado National Forest
Barnie	Gyant	Deputy Regional Forester, Regional Office
Mary Beth	Hennessy	Deputy Director Ecosystem Planning, Regional Office
Laura	Hierholzer	Regional Environmental Coordinator, Eldorado National Forest
Jeanne	Higgins	National Policy Reform Lead, Washington Office
Jim	Junette	Groveland District Ranger, Stanislaus National Forest
Jennifer	Marsolais	Environmental Coordinator, Eldorado National Forest
Pat	Nasta	Environmental Coordinator
Nancy	Nordensten	NEPA Planner, Eldorado National Forest
Al	Olson	
Sarah	Sawyer	Assistant Regional Ecologist, Regional Office
Greg	Wahl	Detailer, Strategic Planner, Regional Office
Kayanna	Warren	Ecologist, Regional Office
Jeanette	Williams	Ecosystem Staff Officer, Mendocino National Forest

#### **ROUNDTABLE PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION TEAM**

Denise	Adamic	Public Affairs Specialist, Regional Office
Jim	Bacon	Director of Public Service, Regional Office
Kayla	Barr	National Forest Foundation
Liz	Berger	Regional Forester's Liasion, Regional Office
Lindsay	Buchanan	Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program Coordinator
Kim	Carr	National Forest Foundation





Lawrence	Crabtree	Forest Supervisor, Eldorado National Forest
Maia	Enzer	Planning and Public Engagement Advisor
John	Exline	Acting Deputy Regional Forester, Regional Office
Debbie	Gaynor	Recreation and Special Use Program Lead, Eldorado National Forest
Barnie	Gyant	Deputy Regional Forester, Regional Office
Mary Beth	Hennessy	Deputy Director Ecosystem Planning, Regional Office
Laura	Hierholzer	Regional Environmental Coordinator, Eldorado National Forest
Stephanie	Horii	Center for Collaborative Policy, Sacramento State University
Ben	Irey	National Forest Foundation
Jim	Junette	Groveland District Ranger, Stanislaus National Forest
Stephanie	Lucero	Center for Collaborative Policy, Sacramento State University
Jennifer	Marsolais	Environmental Coordinator, Eldorado National Forest
Pat	Nasta	Environmental Coordinator
Nancy	Nordensten	NEPA Planner, Eldorado National Forest
Al	Olson	Acting Deputy Regional Forester
Sarah	Sawyer	Assistant Regional Ecologist, Regional Office
Greg	Wahl	Detailer, Strategic Planner, Regional Office
Kayanna	Warren	Ecologist, Regional Office
Jeanette	Williams	Ecosystem Staff Officer, Mendocino National Forest



## APPENDIX C

### PACIFIC SOUTHWEST REGIONAL EADM PARTNER ROUNDTABLE AGENDA

Wednesday, March 27, 2018

#### AGENDA

- |          |  |
|----------|--|
| 8:00 am  | Registration Opens   |
| 8:30 am  | Welcome and Meeting Overview –<br>Barnie Gyant, Deputy Regional Forester                         |
| 8:45 am  | Meeting Orientation and Logistics<br>National Forest Foundation Facilitator Marcia Hogan         |
| 9:00 am  | National Overview and Introduction of EADM Effort<br>Jeanne Higgins, National Reform Policy Lead |
| 10:00 am | Icebreaker with introductions at table   |
| 10:15 am | Break  |
| 10:30 am | Regional Overview and Perspectives on EADM Effort<br>Regional Panel presentations                |
| 11:15 am | Small-group Discussion at tables   |
| Noon     | Lunch on Site  |
| 1:00 pm  | Breakout Session #1  |
| 2:00 pm  | Break  |
| 2:30 pm  | Breakout Session #2  |
| 3:30 pm  | Breakout groups share key themes   |
| 4:15 pm  | Closing remarks  |
| 4:30 pm  | Adjourn  |



## APPENDIX D

### List of Acronyms

ABAAS	Architectural Barriers Act Accessibility Standard
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
ANPR	Advance Notice of Proposed Rule-making
ASQ	Allowable Sale Quantity
BASI	Best Available Science Information
BMP	Best Management Practices
CCI	California Climate Investments (CAL FIRE)
CE	Categorical Exclusion
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CFLRP	Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program or Project
DM	Decision Making
DxP	Designation by Prescription
DR	District Ranger
EADM	Environmental Analysis and Decision Making
EA	Environmental Assessment
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
ESA	Endangered Species Act
FACTS	Forest Service Activity Tracking System
FMO	Fire Management Officer
FSH	Forest Service Handbook
GIS	Geographic Information System
GTR 220	USFS General Technical Report " <i>An Ecosystem Management Strategy for Sierran Mixed-Conifer Forests</i> "
IDT	Interdisciplinary Team
LiDAR	Light imaging, Detection, and Ranging
LMP	Land Management Plan (Land and Resource Management Plan/Forest Plan)
LOP	Limited Operating Period
LO	Line Officer
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MVUM	Motor Vehicle Use Map
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NF	National Forest
NFF	National Forest Foundation
NFMA	National Forest Management Act
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization



NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act
NSO	Northern Spotted Owl
NPS	National Park Service
NWFP	Northwest Forest Plan
OHV	Off Highway Vehicle
POC	Point of Contact
RO	Regional Office
ROW	Right of Way
SUP	Special Use Permit
T&E	Threatened and Endangered Species
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
USFS	United States Forest Service

