



MEMORANDUM

Date: June 5, 2020

To: State Foresters
Forest Service Regional Foresters, Station Directors, IITF Director, and State & Private Forestry Leadership

Re: Ten-year Revisions of State Forest Action Plans

The State and Private Forestry Board provides the following guidance as the State Forest Action Plans approach the 10-year mark from their original completion in June 2010.

Background:

The State Forest Action Plans collectively represent *the* strategic plan for the nation's forests. This historic effort grew out of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (the 2008 Farm Bill) when Congress tasked the 50 states, eight territories, and the District of Columbia with crafting Statewide Forest Resource Assessments and Strategies, commonly referred to as Forest Action Plans, for all forests—federal, state, and private—within their boundaries.

The Forest Action Plans were completed in 2010 and have since been implemented as long-term plans for improving forest health and investing state, federal, and other resources where needed most. In 2014, all State Foresters agreed at the National Association of State Foresters (NASF) Annual Meeting to add a National Priorities section or report to Forest Action Plans to highlight state-specific outcomes consistent with the three national priorities identified in the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act:

- Conserve and manage working forest landscapes for multiple values and uses
- Protect forests from threats
- Enhance public benefits from trees and forests

Based on mutual agreement between the NASF and the U.S. Forest Service, the deadline for Forest Action Plans has been extended from June 30, 2020 to December 31, 2020. State Foresters and U.S. Forest Service will work together and use the attached checklist to document that requirements are met. To facilitate working in a shared virtual environment, the Forest Service has established a cloud-based repository for uploading Forest Action Plans.

All previous Forest Action Plans and information for keeping the plans current are publicly available on the NASF website at www.stateforesters.org/forest-action-plans.

Requirements and Process:

The attached checklist provides the list of requirements, per the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act, for the Forest Action Plans. In addition to formal U.S. Forest Service review, it is recommended that the State Forester offer opportunity for informal input on drafts of the Forest Action Plan earlier in the process.

1. The State Forester completes the top of the checklist and submits it, along with the Forest Action Plan document(s) and the National Priorities report, to the relevant U.S. Forest Service Regional Forester or IITF Director via Box, the cloud-based system maintained by the U.S. Forest Service.

2. The Regional Forester or IITF Director reviews the Forest Action Plan to ensure it meets the checklist requirements, fills out and signs the checklist, and forwards it to the Deputy Chief for State and Private Forestry.
3. The Deputy Chief for State and Private Forestry certifies the plan for purposes of eligibility for federal assistance and submits to the Secretary of Agriculture or his designee.

System for Review:

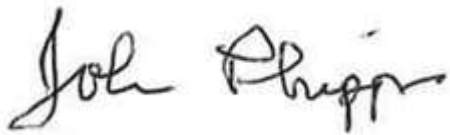
To facilitate submission and review in a virtual environment, the U.S. Forest Service has established a cloud-based file sharing system, called Box, for the receipt of Forest Action Plans. We ask that each state identify the users they wish to gain system access, and email this information to Peter Bedker, Team Leader for Application Development and Support, at peter.j.bedker@usda.gov (provide names, email addresses and phone numbers for each person). Individuals will receive a collaboration invitation from Box to establish a free Box user account. Please allow a day or two for these requests to be serviced.

Uploading documents to this location will be the official means of submitting assessments and strategies. For states where their IT systems are not able to access Box and any islands or territories without internet sufficient for uploading, please coordinate with the relevant regional or IITF U.S. Forest Service staff to make alternate arrangements to provide electronic copies.

Timing and Flexibility:

Forest Action Plan updates are required at least every 10 years; however, minor changes and full revisions may have been completed since June 2010.

The State and Private Forestry Board understands the importance of flexibility for states to format and time Forest Action Plans updates to best suit state needs, while also meeting federal requirements. For states that have not completed a full revision since 2010 (even if some substantive changes were made to portions of the Forest Action Plan), the deadline for submitting the 10-year revision is December 31, 2020. All national priorities sections or reports (submitted in fall 2015) should be revised, along with the strategies and assessments. As the NASF performance measures reporting system is still being developed, there is no requirement to incorporate the measures into the Forest Action Plans. However, states may find the measures useful for developing the National Priorities section or report. More information on the performance measures can be found at <https://www.formap.info/nasf-performance-measures/>.



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