



# Cibola National Forest and Grasslands

## *Forest Plan Revision Frequently Asked Questions*



**What is a Forest Plan?** A Forest Plan provides a general, conceptual framework to guide a forest in managing its forest resources, goods, and services. Described as “the view from 30,000 feet,” Forest Plans are intentionally strategic and broad in scope and provide guidance in the decision-making process involved with site-specific projects. Forest plans have desired conditions, objectives, standards and guidelines, identification of suitability of areas for certain uses, and monitoring programs.

**Why does the current Forest Plan need to be revised?** The National Forest Management Act of 1976 requires that plans be revised periodically-- usually every 15 years. The Cibola National Forest is currently revising the 1985 Forest Plan (Land and Resource Management Plan) for the Sandia, Mountainair, Magdalena, and Mt. Taylor Ranger Districts.

Revisions to the Cibola’s 1985 Forest Plan are long overdue, and a lot has changed on the forest and surrounding areas. In addition, there is also new guidance for how forest plans are to be revised. The Forest Service’s 2012 Planning Rule directs forest plans to be science-based and developed with extensive public involvement and collaboration throughout the revision process.

The 2012 Planning Rule provides for an adaptive, flexible framework that allows national forests to meet their current and future needs, taking into account a new understanding of what constitutes forest health and how science can help inform land managers. The 2012 Rule is designed to ensure that forest plans maintain and restore national forest land and water ecosystems while providing for multiple uses. The 2012 Rule also emphasizes an all-lands approach to planning, while recognizing that many management issues, such as wildfire, water resources and wildlife, require an understanding of conditions across jurisdictional boundaries.

**How can the public be involved?** The Cibola National Forest is committed to involving the public in a meaningful, substantive dialogue to help form the development of a forest plan that will result in sustainable management of its resources, goods and services for the next 15 years.

Overall, the Cibola National Forest aims to improve the transparency of the planning process by clarifying the phases of the planning process, and providing information how individuals or interest groups may contribute their comments, suggestions and ideas to help the Cibola develop an effective, implementable plan to manage resources.

During the initial assessment phase, the Forest will work with federal and state agencies, tribes, local and county governments, land grant communities, private landowners, and other partners and interested parties to develop a mutual understanding of the context for forest plan revision, and of current and desired conditions of the Forest.

Interested members of the public may be involved throughout the planning process in a number of ways, including:

- Participating in public meetings or workshops. These sessions will be announced through press releases and posted on the Cibola’s web site: <http://www.fs.usda.gov/cibola>.
- Hosting a planning staff member to make a presentation and answer questions at your organization’s meeting. Contact Champe Green, Forest Planner, Cibola National Forest at (505) 346-3889 if you’re interested.
- Joining a work group for a specific topic of interest. Please send an e-mail that includes your name, contact information, and topics of interest to [cibolamtplanrevision@fs.fed.us](mailto:cibolamtplanrevision@fs.fed.us).
- Sharing your suggestions, comments and information. You can do that by:
  - Accessing the web site [http://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/cibola/landmanagement/planning/?cid=fsbdev3\\_065627](http://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/cibola/landmanagement/planning/?cid=fsbdev3_065627) and clicking on the “Contact us” link at the bottom left side of the page. This link has Cibola’s contact information and a feedback form to send a message.
  - Downloading the comment form that’s posted on the web and either e-mailing it to: [cibolamtplanrevision@fs.fed.us](mailto:cibolamtplanrevision@fs.fed.us) or mailing it to Cibola National Forest Plan Revision, 2113 Osuna Road NE, Albuquerque, NM 87113



# Cibola National Forest and Grasslands

## Forest Plan Revision Frequently Asked Questions



- Check the Cibola’s website for updates: [http://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/cibola/andmanagement/planning/?cid=fsbdev3\\_065627](http://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/cibola/andmanagement/planning/?cid=fsbdev3_065627) or call Champe Green, at (505) 346-3889.
- For more detailed information on the 2012 Planning Rule and related topics, please see <http://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/planningrule/faqs>

### Timeline for Plan Revision

The Cibola National Forest is looking at a 2012-2016 timeframe for Plan Revision. The table below is a tentative schedule for the four planning phases, associated activities, and time period.

Phase	Description of Activity	Time Period
<b>Assessment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluate existing and relevant data/information on existing conditions, roles and contributions, and trends.</li> <li>• Assess sustainability of social, economic and ecological resources within the plan area and a broader landscape.</li> <li>• Prepare a Forest Assessment Report as the basis for determining needs-for-change to the 1985 plan. This will be made available for public review.</li> </ul>	Fall 2012 to Summer 2013
<b>Plan Revision and Scoping for Alternatives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• With public involvement, identify needs for change to the current plan.</li> <li>• Develop the Draft Plan that addresses potential desired conditions, management objectives, and other plan components based on identified needs-for-change. This includes developing alternatives that focus on issues where there are differing options or controversy.</li> <li>• Develop a draft Environment Impact Statement (DEIS) that analyzes the effects upon the environment of each of the alternative plan proposals.</li> </ul>	Fall 2013 to Fall 2014
<b>Public review and comment and Endangered Species Act compliance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distribute a Proposed Forest Plan and DEIS for public review and comment</li> <li>• Receive feedback on Plan components and content</li> <li>• Analyze and respond to comments</li> <li>• Select a final Plan</li> <li>• Complete a Biological Assessment on the selected Plan</li> <li>• Prepare a final EIS</li> </ul>	Fall 2014 to Fall 2015
<b>Objection Process</b>	Prior to the approval of the preferred alternative, members of the public and other agencies may raise issues related to the plan or plan revision and suggest ways the plan decision may be improved. The reviewing officer makes the final decision regarding any objections that are raised.	Fall 2015 to Summer 2016
<b>Decision</b>	Final decision is made by the Cibola NF Supervisor.	Summer 2016