

**February 16, 2010**

**Forest Service Planning NOI  
C/O Bear West Company  
172 E. 500 S  
Bountiful, UT 84010**

**E-mailed to: [fspr@contentanalysisgroup.com](mailto:fspr@contentanalysisgroup.com)**

**RE: NATIONAL FOREST SYSTEM LAND PLANNING  
PROPOSED ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT (EIS)  
Federal Register/Vol. 74, No. 242/Friday, December 18, 2009**

**Scoping Comments for Analysis  
Deadline for Submission: February 16, 2010**

**The Guardians of the Range is a 501c3 organization which focuses on sound science and community partnership in public land management. Our central focus is that of public land grazing within the framework of the Multiple Use and Sustained Yield Act and the other relevant public land laws.**

**The frustrations of past planning attempts by the forest service and the general public makes one almost not want to provide input.....but optimism is better than pessimism!**

**Comments Requested Section:**

***“Further we need to hear your thoughts on the best ways the Agency could engage the public during this process.” We suggest that you hold some orientation sessions for the public on how the NEPA process works and how an EIS fits in to that scenario. Not an in depth NEPA training.....something with a little energy to it that quickly, clearly and cogently explains for the citizen, totally unfamiliar with this process, how things are wired together. A few introductory remarks really don't do it....so many people are new to these processes that they are totally lost for the first few months.....and then they begin to feel frustrated and lose interest.***

## **Purpose and Need for Action:**

**We really think that the principles you've chosen are heading you right down the same costly, cumbersome and complex path that caused the legal demise, if you will, of the 2000, 2005 and 2008 planning efforts.**

**They are too broadly stated to be effective, and they try to encompass too much conceptually. This will only mire down attempts at on-the-ground management, and impair the development of cogent implementing regulations.**

**You state that "A new rule should also be within the Agency's capability to implement on all NFS units. *This could never be achieved with climate change being proposed as one of the greatest threats to land management under the Substantive Principles.***

*It is not feasible to think that climate change (code for global warming) is something you manage for or against in a planning rule. The Agency needs to recognize that good sound adaptive management of the various resources has the cumulative effect of responding to a multitude of CHANGES and those responses are both long term and short term and provide real, on the ground stewardship.*

*Good adaptive management is by its very nature the caretaker of climate change.*

*Not intending to be cryptic or sarcastic.....but climate change is over geologic time...it is not something a forest plan can or should try and manage around. This term is far too broad, too misunderstood, too easily manipulated and too politically based. It is not a stewardship principle around which natural resources can be managed; BUT it is a term that can and does shut down management as everyone stands around trying to figure out if they are managing for climate change. This is a very, very serious flaw in this proposed rule. It is lethal.*

*Use adaptive management as a Substantive Principle and this creates the legal framework to respond quickly and with flexibility to changes large and small.*

**A specific question you wanted answered is: What do you see as the biggest threats to forest and grassland health and ecosystem resiliency?  
Answer: the legal quagmire of susceptibility to lawsuits that is created by wordy and overly complicated documents be they planning, NEPA etc. etc.**

**Better writing skills are desperately needed. That does not mean more words. It means cogent thoughts, with a 'no fog' index. When you write in such a manner, you can manage around and through situations to the benefit of the resources.**

**Our resources are now threatened because they are at the mercy of decades of lawsuits, injunctions, appeals....and while the Agency and public fight it out in court our nation's bountiful resources are plagued by insects, disease, catastrophic fuel loading, delayed range management, ATV abuse and the list goes on.**

**This is the real, fundamental and most serious threat and we need to recognize this. It is the firewall that stops management while resource degradation runs wild.**

**With the serious constraints of time under which we are attempting to provide input I will make very brief remarks for the remainder of my input.**

**We do think that putting out such an important proposed rule making in the middle of December is very unfair, inappropriate and some what manipulative. We all know that people are very distracted during this month for obvious reasons. It creates distrust and engenders anger.**

- **Plans could provide for the diversity of species and wildlife habitat.....**

*These two things will flow naturally with good adaptive management. The plans don't need to 'provide' for those.....*

- **Plans could incorporate an ‘all-lands’ approach by considering the relationship between NFS lands and neighboring lands.**

*Absolutely not! Planning rules are not cosmic in scope. The mission of the Agency is not all inclusive, and is not charged by congress to manage lands beyond its political boundaries. We realize that many would like to do that, but it is not the Agency’s place to try and expand its authority and its influence by incorporating such a philosophy, approach, framework or any other presumptive rhetoric. The Agency cannot handle what it has on its plate now, and it most definitely should not try and intrude in such a manner.*

- **Plans could be based on the latest planning science..... *I guess this term – planning science – rings hollow. I think the poor track record of the last several planning attempts speaks for itself on this one. This seems like filler.....***
- **Planning rules should not make project or activity decisions.**
- **The Agency cannot analyze and describe the environmental effects of a planning rule in the environmental impact statement. This flies in the face of good science—not meaning to be caustic, but really----this planning rule is not intended to be a cosmic instructional handbook for the management of natural resources.**
- **A plan should NOT have a shared vision. If written well, it will have diverse visions.....just as it seeks to have diversity of species it should have diversity of visions, and the people using these plans should have the professional breadth and depth to manage public resources to reflect those.....that is at the heart of legally sharing the landscape via Multiple Use and Sustained Yield.**

**These comments do not cover many of the other troublesome parts of the proposed planning rule. However, if the comment period is extended the public would be better served, and the end product a better quality.**

**We appreciate the opportunity to comment. While some of our comments may have a frustrated ring to them, they are not meant to offend.**

**Sincerely,**

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