

ENCLOSURE A
REPLY DUE BY APRIL 613, 2007
Region 2 Draft Responses 3/12/2007
Forest Service for the 21st Century
National Transformation Management Questions

In answering the questions below, provide specifics to your Region, Station, Area, or Washington Office Staff, along with suggestions and ideas that are more corporate in nature for the organization as a whole. Please present ideas that will assist the Forest Service in maximizing capacity, increasing effectiveness, and reducing costs. Avoid focusing on the status quo.

We would appreciate one consolidated response from each Deputy Chief, Regional Forester, Station Director, Area Director, and Washington Office Staff Director. We recognize that you might have responded to questions associated with the restructuring of the Washington Office and the Team will consider those in addition to your responses to this request.

Please submit your responses via email to DeAnn Zwright at DZwright@fs.fed.us **BY APRIL 613, 2007**. If you have any questions, or comments, please contact Bill LeVere at (801)-625-5669 or at wlevere@fs.fed.us.

Transformation Efforts and Transition

1. Please list other recent, current, or projected Forest Service initiatives (e.g., other organizational efficiencies, consolidation, or shared service initiatives) that could compete or align with this effort's success. Provide the name and contact information of who leads these efforts.

[What does this mean? Region 2 has set up a partnership organization within the Region. Is this an example of an initiative that should be included.](#)

[Planning directors are working on coordinating economics expertise across regions to reduce the need for an economist in each RO.](#)

2. What are some of the important lessons learned from past change efforts within your area/unit AND Forest Service-wide?

- The August 1999 NAPA study Restoring Managerial Accountability to the Forest Service was required reading for the Foundation Principals Group and it should be required reading for the Transformation effort.

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My lessons learned:

YOU NEED TO OPTIMIZE ALL LEVELS AT ONCE

From the Pilot (all parts of the agency need to be aligned: problems during the Pilot with the Region not going for the "bucket of money" approach; certainly partially due to a need for accountability with Congress but

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From Region 9 decreasing their RO a number of years ago- I experienced people who would have called the RO now calling other regions and using theirs or WO expertise. Leeching off others is not efficiency. From efforts to centralize and improve the efficiency of administration – again, making your workload less by giving it away to others does not increase the efficiency of the organization- it is a shell game.

IT SHOULD BE KNOWN IN ADVANCE WHO WILL DO WHAT WORK AND IT MUST BE COSTED OUT, AGREED TO BY THE NLT, AND PASS THE LAUGH TEST (perhaps an outside group less likely to be invested in the desire to "go with the flow" or not be seen as an obstacle).

THE KEY ASSUMPTIONS AND TECHNOLOGIES SHOULD BE PILOTED PRIOR TO FINALIZING THE CHANGE

Efficiency is impaired by nonfunctioning computer systems and applications or poorly designed ones. It should be very clear who is responsible for each application and to whom questions should be addressed. Each should have a board of customers to advise on issues and possible improvements.

IF THERE ARE TOUGH CHOICES TO BE MADE WE SHOULD INVOLVE STAKEHOLDERS IN THOSE DECISIONS. Perhaps an advisory board? Perhaps some academics from public administration schools? Our tendency is to circle the wagons when we're in trouble and appeal to our internal constituencies (example, EMS) and potentially build a monstrosity that doesn't meet the original need to due the need to garner internal political support. Internal politics is important for sure, but shouldn't be the main determinants.

3. What effect would a "soft freeze" have on your program areas as we move through this process?

This is an odd question. Don't know what a soft freeze is. The impacts would depend on who retires or gets a different job, and how easy it is for someone else to learn those skills – in my case, running an appeals process (easy) , NEPA expertise (not easy).

4. What recommendations do you have for implementing a “soft freeze”?

- Attrition is not the best way to design a Transformed Forest Service. Our experience from past efforts is that it is a good way to loose critical skills needed by the agency.

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If you must implement a freeze, then give RF's discretion over which positions to fill. Otherwise we are managing by random factors (who retires or leaves). Don't know anyone who would run a business not knowing who was coming to work the next day.

Back to Basics

5. Before we can look at organizational concepts, we first need to look at what work we are organizing to do. What do you think is the core business of the Forest Service?

- A finalized Foundational Principals document is key to the Transformation effort in that with the Foundational Principals one could discern the core business of the Forest Service and the design and organizational concepts for the Agency.
 - The National Leadership Team needs to approve a “Core Business of the Forest Service” and Transformation design criteria or organizational concepts statements.
- Much of the Agency's time and energy now goes into things the public does not care about (where our financial organization is located, how we structure the WO and Regions, etc.). We as an agency are focusing more and more on ourselves and less on the customers we serve.
- Organizational Concepts

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Running the national forest public lands (research and helping state and private forests). Keeping the campgrounds running, the permits processed, The streams running clear, etc. If all we had left was a ranger, a visitor information specialist and a contracting officer on each district, and some folks to inspect the

contracts we could do the core business. (this model places high value on presence in communities).

6. What do you think are the priority areas of work needed to “take care of the land and serve people”?

- Upward reporting is taking more and more time away from the field to measure aspects of performance at the Washington level. The question to ask instead is whether we are delivering services to the field better.
- Things on the land the people on districts do and the advice they need to do them right.

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7. What skill sets are needed to accomplish the Agency’s mission in the future?

Natural resources, conflict resolution, contracting.

Organizational Concepts

8. Are there any organizational concepts or ideas that you feel should be evaluated as part of this transformation effort?

- If all we are trying to do is reduce costs, why not use a simple across the board WO/RO cut of 25% or a 40% cut in the WO and a 15% cut in the RO.
- The follow-the-money analysis the Team is considering is very important to the process.
- Want to know how much of the Agency’s funding goes to the WO and the ROs.

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9. Are there any key areas deserving extra focus and evaluation as a part of this transformation effort?

- Human Capitol Management should be on the table in the Transformation process.
- Specialists of all kinds in terms of project and broader scale planning - we need them but how many do we need and can we share better and actually have higher quality available at a lower cost?
- When can people work from wherever and when it is important that they be together? Our organization seems to be unclear on this and makes different decisions at different points in time before we spend beaucoup bucks on TOS shouldn't we have a corporate principle about this?
- There is so much change going on right now. How does it all fit together and when will it stop? The agency as a whole may be at a breaking point in so far as continual change is concerned. There is a perception at the upper levels of the Agency that the field is resistant to change, while in fact change has been continuous. The agency has gone from a predominately timber focused organization to one focusing on fire ecology and management, a very significant change.
- The Agency as an organization is not functioning well.
- The Charter says we will leverage new technology but we have not been able to do so. For example, we cannot pay our bills on time.
- Many Forest Service organizations have undergone efficiency changes. Don't penalize those organizations that have already made efficiency changes.
- The Case for Change in the Charter is written defensively and needs to be written with a positive focus such as:
 - We want to be able to do our mission better, here are some reform ideas.
 - Need to explain the origin of the Case for Change
 - Roslyn leases were up and an opportunity to operate more efficiently became apparent.
 - The Regional Foresters agreed to being able to deliver an extra Million dollars in funding to each National Forest. This later became a 25% reduction in WO/RO funding.
- In the Charter Key points it says, "Leverage the capacity of the Agency's centralized business operations services in Albuquerque."
 - Albuquerque has not been a success. There is not any capacity in Albuquerque to be leveraged and they have not been able to deliver what has been asked of them.

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10. Are there certain program areas within your Region/Station/Area that would have the capacity to provide national program leadership for the Forest Service?

[Sustainable ops???](#)

11. Are there any programs or functions to exclude from this transformation effort?

12. How much vacant space does your Region/Station/Area have that is capable of handling a workforce increase?

13. Are there other geographic locations that the Team should consider for program placement? Other than Albuquerque? The Albuquerque thing is silly –why would we put all our eggs in one basket. It looks to the public like we are on the payroll of legislators from NM. Alb is likely to grow and then costs will be higher, will we pay to move everyone to somewhere that is then cheaper? If we are to centralize services they should be scattered around- diversity of location is a good idea so we can take advantage of whatever happens in the future.

14. If the point of ASC is they can serve folks wherever, then folks can be wherever. If they need to be next door for some reason, then the rationale for ASC must not be what we were told.

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14.15. What programs could be consolidated between the Regions and the Washington Office to reduce fragmentation and duplicative work, enhance program delivery, and provide better proximity to our customer base?

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Almost any program we have specialists on forests/ in ROs and in DC. We can't afford enough experts to do the job in some areas (realty?) while in others, we have enough to have debates between specialists in different regions.

Do a workload analysis of what kind of support districts and forests require, and build an organization around those needs.

The WO has been working directly with some forests in the first round of planning, the RO has been involved but it could be argued that the region ends up being a conflict resolution system between the WO and the unit. If we had one centralized dispenser of advice, say in planning, the unit and the service center could work it out directly. But the problem with centralized service centers is that 1) we don't seem to be able to manage them with an adequate level of accountability.eqefficenes i

15.16. Are there unique geographical areas or niches that we should be made aware of that fill some key program roles and responsibilities that cannot be done elsewhere?

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| ~~16~~.17. Are there other areas or processes (i.e. AQM, cell phone management, decommissioning buildings, etc), you would recommend the Team evaluate that would reduce costs or enhance efficiencies?

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| ~~17~~.18. Provide, in priority order, 3 to 5 criteria for evaluating proposed organizational design scenarios that would define program delivery, enhance capacity, increase efficiencies and reduce costs

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| ~~18~~.19. With technological advances, now and in the future, how would you envision the Forest Service of the future?

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Communications

| ~~19~~.20. What forms or methods of communication would be most effective to keep your employees informed as this transformation effort proceeds?

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| ~~20-21.~~ What types of feedback mechanisms do you believe would be most effective for soliciting leadership and employee input on the transformation?

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- The all employee survey Transformation Team is planning is critical to the success of this effort.

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| ~~21-22.~~ What internal networks are you already using that we could utilize to support communications for this effort?

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| ~~22-23.~~ As part of our change management approach, we are planning focus group meetings involving employees of the Washington Office, Regions, Stations and Area. The primary purpose of these focus groups is to solicit ideas and thoughts on the practical application of change management principles. What role, as RF, SD, AD, DC, and WO Director would you like to play in these events?

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Success/Barriers

| ~~23-24.~~ How would you define success as we move along in this process?

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24.25. How would you measure success for this effort?

- In the Charter change the third and fourth measures of success to
 - Increase organizational efficiency and flexibility by allocating resources to support work and program priorities rather than adhering to traditional organizational structures and behavior.
 - Predecisional – maybe some traditional organizational structures and behaviors are OK. This locks us into a single point of view
 - Maintain decentralized decision making within a more centralized support environment.
 - It is technology that helps us maintain a decentralized agency. Given the technology available there does not seem to be the need for centralized services in a single building.
 - We seem to be moving toward a single organizational level above the Forests. The BLM has been there for a number of years and after analyzing the situation has decided to move back to where we are now.
 - This is not a measure of success but a how-to statement.

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25.26. What are the top 1 or 2 potential barriers to success?

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26.27. What “people” issues or other potential challenges to successful implementation can you foresee?

- It is very hard on morale for the workforce to hear that we are only going to be able to maintain existing budgets with this Transformation. The Transformation effort should have a bold goal in order to make it a successful effort.

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- The Agency is very skeptical on the adoption of new technology. We have not been able to reorganize based on the adoption of new technology. Business Operations was reorganized based on new technology and yet cannot pay bills on time. Numerous vendors have gone unpaid for considerable lengths of time.
- In the Charter in the Case for Change we state, “The Forest Service has agreed to initiate a significant transformation of the “top two tiers” of its organizational structure.”
 - It should be restated that “The Forest Service has agreed **with OMB** to initiate a significant transformation of the “top two tiers” of its organizational structure.” It is important to be honest with the employees in the agency.
- The Charter Objective talks about the need to “realign fragmented organizations”.
 - It is not understood what quote means and this phrase should be removed.
- The Second Charter Objective talks about the need to prepare “the organization for ongoing changes”. The Agency is at a breaking point on change. Change has been continuous and has not proved to be productive.
- Do not believe the old Forest Service Chief’s will be of benefit to the Transformation process.
 - Employees did not feel they could be honest with Dale.
 - Gail lends a fresh honest face to the process and bringing in the old faces could be detrimental to the process.

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27,28. What political issues will be potential challenges to successful implementation?

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Additional Comments or Concerns

28,29. Do you have any other thoughts or ideas you would like to share?

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- It is going to be very hard to manage the scope of the Transformation effort to keep it within its original intent. It was simpler when only NFS was included. It is

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understood that to be fair State & Private & Research are included also, but this makes the managing the scope very difficult.

- The Forest Service seems to be experiencing significant cuts in funding while the Park Service is experiencing significant funding increases. The Park Service has been working the Hill over the last several years while the Forest has not.