

Today the Forest Service is proud to announce the proposed planning rule for the 193-million acre National Forest System. This proposed rule has been developed through an open and transparent process through contributions from a broad and diverse mix of the American people. I want to thank all of you that are participating with us to develop the new planning rule.

The proposed planning rule will be released in the Federal Register on **February 14, 2011**, kicking off a **90 day public comment period**. A prepublication copy of the proposed rule is now available online at <http://www.fs.usda.gov/planningrule>. I encourage you to take a look and let us know how we can make it better. Information on how to submit comments is available at <http://www.fs.usda.gov/goto/planningrule/HowToComment>.

We are committed to keeping the development of planning rule open, transparent and participatory. Please take advantage of the following opportunities to stay engaged over the coming months:

- * Attend one of our public forums to learn more about the proposed rule. Information on these public meetings is available at <http://www.fs.usda.gov/goto/planningrule/forums>

- * Submit written comments at <http://www.govcomments.com/>. Comments are due by [May 16, 2011](#).

Check back often to the planning rule website at

<http://www.fs.usda.gov/goto/planningrule> for the latest information.

Discuss the proposed rule informally with other interested members of the public on the Planning Rule blog at <http://planningrule.blogs.usda.gov/>.

- * Sign up for the planning rule listserv to keep informed on progress and opportunities to participate along the way. If you haven't already, please sign up at <http://www.fs.fed.us/news/pr-listserv-subscribe.html>.

You can also follow the Forest Service on Twitter at

<http://twitter.com/forestsservice>.

Thank you again for your interest in the National Forests and Grasslands and your help with the rule development process. Your continued participation is important to our success.

Sincerely,
Tony Tooke
Director, Ecosystem Management Coordination