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Key Principles Guiding State Forester Engagement in Drafting the National Forest System Land Management Planning Rule

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The Council of Western State Foresters (CWSF) represents the combined interests of seventeen State Foresters and six Pacific Island Foresters in the Western United States. We appreciate the opportunity to provide these additional comments as the Planning Rule Team continues work drafting the new Planning Rule.

- The Planning Rule should explicitly require consideration of State Assessments and Strategies in the development of Forest Plans.
 - State Assessments and Strategies are living “All-Lands” assessments that will be updated periodically and are uniquely situated to inform the planning process.
- The Planning Rule should emphasize the principles of restoration that seek to integrate science and community participation and recognize that sustainable forest ecosystems provide a mutually supportive mix of ecological, economic and social values.
 - The Rule should reflect that definitive measures for what constitutes “restoration” are informed by both the human and ecological values being sought from a “restored” system; not exclusively one or the other.
 - Social, environmental and economic considerations are not competing values. Rather, they are interdependent and all play an important role in effectively implementing landscape level restoration across all ownerships
 - The Planning Rule should encourage utilization of an outcome-based approach that focuses on desired future conditions and uses measurable objectives in Forest Plans.
- The Planning Rule should require consultation with State Foresters to utilize their local expertise and to ensure the “All-Lands” approach is implemented at the Forest Plan level by addressing the shared threats to the health and vitality of forest lands and associated local communities across management boundaries.

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