

Expediting Environmental Reviews/Modernization Blueprint: USDA Secretarial Memorandum to the Chief of Forest Service



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United States Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue issued a June 12th memorandum to Forest Service Chief Vicki Christiansen titled:

Secretarial Memorandum to the Chief of the Forest Service (“Memorandum”)

The *Memorandum* is described as a “blueprint” for the Forest Service’s systems and approaches to ensure natural forest and grasslands continue to meet the needs of the American people.

One of the focuses of the *Memorandum* is expediting environmental reviews to support active management of the National Forest System.

The *Memorandum* acknowledges that management activities on the National Forest System lands require compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act and additional laws and regulations.

The *Memorandum* states that the Forest Service will:

- set time and page limits on the completion of environmental documents, including categorical exclusions, environmental assessments, and environmental impact statements;
- streamline policy to ensure environmental reviews focus on analysis that is required by law and regulation;
- work across the government to initiate the development of policies for alternative procedures to streamline consultation processes and environmental reviews; and expedite compliance with State Historic Preservation Offices for vegetation management and facility and infrastructure improvements

Additional goals addressed by the *Memorandum* include:

- Increasing the productivity of National Forests and Grasslands
- Valuing United States’ grazing heritage and the National Grasslands
- Increasing access to National Forest System Lands

A copy of the *Memorandum* can be downloaded [here](#).