

**Forest Service Manual
National Headquarters - Washington Office
Washington, DC**

**Forest Service Manual 1200 – Organization
Zero Code**

Amendment: 1200-1995-2

Effective date: February 28, 1995

Duration: This amendment is effective until superseded or removed.

Superseded Directive: Amendment 1200-90-1 to FSM 1200, Zero Code

Approved by: Jack Ward Thomas, Chief

Date approved:

Responsible Staff:

Explanation of changes: Following is an explanation of the changes throughout the directive by section.

1200 Zero Code: Makes minor changes throughout the chapter to conform to directive standards.

1204.22: Updates the composition and title of the Washington Office, executive decision making group, now called the National Leadership Team.

1204.24: Reorganizes text to distinguish general responsibilities of all Washington Office Staff Directors from specific authorities that apply only to the Washington Office, Director for Law Enforcement and Investigations.

Table of Contents

1201 - Authority 3

1202 - Objectives 3

1203 - Policy 3

1204 - Responsibilities 4

1204.1 - Overall Forest Service Responsibilities 4

1204.2 - Chief and Associate Chief 4

1204.21 - Deputy Chiefs 4

1204.22 - National Leadership Team 5

1204.23 - Associate Deputy Chiefs 5

1204.24 - Washington Office Staff Directors 5

1204.25 - Support Staffs Assigned to Deputy Chiefs 6

1204.3 - Regional Foresters 6

1204.31 - Deputy Regional Foresters 7

1204.32 - Regional Executive Decisionmaking Group 8

1204.33 - Regional Staff Directors 8

1204.4 - Station Directors 8

1204.41 - Assistant Station Directors 9

1204.41a - Assistant Station Directors for Research 9

1204.41b - Assistant Station Directors for Planning and Applications 10

1204.41c - Assistant Station Directors for Research Support Services 10

1204.42 - Project Leaders 11

1204.43 - Program Leaders 11

1204.44 - Program Managers 11

1204.45 - Director's Representative 11

1204.5 - Area Director 12

1204.51 - Assistant Area Directors 12

1204.52 - Area Executive Decisionmaking Group 13

1204.6 - Forest Supervisors 13

1204.61 - Forest Staff Officers 14

1204.7 - District Rangers 14

1201 - Authority

The Chief of the Forest Service is assigned authority to manage the various Forest Service programs by the Assistant Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment in the Code of Federal Regulations, Title 7, Part 2, section 2.60(b)(1).

The Administrative Procedures Act (5 U.S.C. 522(a)(1)(A)(B)) requires agencies to publish a description of their central and field organizations, titles of responsible officials, and the general manner in which the agency functions and performs its work. Accordingly, the Forest Service has set forth its basic organization structure and functions in the Code of Federal Regulations, Title 36, Parts 200-299.

FSM 1010 contains the laws and regulations under which the Forest Service operates.

1202 - Objectives

The Forest Service organization is designed to:

1. Provide for systematic coordination of work.
2. Organize employees to efficiently carry out the responsibilities assigned to the Forest Service.
3. Ensure that assigned work is accomplished according to the laws, regulations, policies, and directives established by the President, Congress, the Secretary of Agriculture, and the Chief of the Forest Service.
4. Provide for clear and efficient transmission of policy, information, and instructions from the top to the bottom of the organization, and for the flow of information and feedback from the bottom to the top.

1203 - Policy

It is the policy of the Forest Service to:

1. Organize all levels to achieve the Forest Service mission and program goals in the most efficient, effective, and economical manner.
2. Delegate authority and decentralize the Forest Service organization so that decisions are made at the lowest possible level consistent with effective managerial control, and with laws, Executive Orders, and Department of Agriculture regulations.
3. Use a line and functional staff combination as the basic form of organization.

4. Divide major program responsibilities into groups of manageable size and like character.

1204 - Responsibilities

1204.1 - Overall Forest Service Responsibilities

See title 36 of the Code of Federal Regulations, section 200.3(b) for an outline of the overall responsibilities of the Forest Service.

1204.2 - Chief and Associate Chief

All national policy and direction emanates from the Chief, Associate Chief, or appropriate Deputy Chief (FSM 1204.21). The Chief and Associate Chief are responsible for:

1. Providing national and international leadership in forestry-related natural resource and social programs within their area of responsibility.
2. Representing forestry and natural resource management in dealings with the highest levels of Federal and State Governments, the public, national special interest groups, and foreign countries to: (a) see that natural resource and social considerations receive the proper attention in national programs and priorities; and (b) establish a pattern of Federal and State cooperation designed to meet public needs.
3. Advocating, supporting, and applying sound natural resource management and protection principles to public and private lands.
4. Delegating responsibility and authority to Regions, Stations, the Area, and the Institute consistent with operating efficiency, competency, and need.
5. Establishing and maintaining national systems and standards that enable field line officers to exercise their authority within the established organizational framework.
6. Establishing, maintaining, and operating a Service-wide management review system to assess and ensure program quality, and to monitor accomplishment of objectives and targets (FSM 1400).
7. Reviewing and approving field policies and programs to the extent required by law, external regulations, or agency standards.

1204.21 - Deputy Chiefs

Deputy Chiefs are assigned specific, but broad, program authorities and responsibilities by the Chief (FSM 1204.2). Deputy Chiefs serve as staff officers to the Chief, as line officers to their

Washington Office staffs and, for their assigned deputy area, as line officers to subordinate field line officers. Deputy Chiefs are delegated the authority and assigned the responsibility to:

1. Assist the Chief in establishing national policies, programs, and objectives.
2. Participate in the Chief's decisionmaking process (FSM 1204.22).
3. Direct and control management reviews of all pertinent field unit activities within the overall system of accountability (FSM 1400).
4. Provide national direction to their assigned deputy area.

1204.22 - National Leadership Team

The Chief, Associate Chief, Deputy Chiefs, and Reinvention Leader, comprise the national-level executive decisionmaking group for the Forest Service. When participating as a member of this group, Deputy Chiefs function as across-the-board managers and executive decisionmakers. In the absence of a Deputy Chief, the acting Deputy Chief may serve on the National Leadership Team.

1204.23 - Associate Deputy Chiefs

Associate Deputy Chiefs share duties and responsibilities with Deputy Chiefs. Associate Deputies may be designated to act for and represent their Deputy. They are responsible to their respective Deputies for:

1. Day-to-day operations and interpretation of Service-wide policies within the deputy area.
2. Providing coordinated program direction to Washington Office staff directors.
3. Serving as the primary management link with Regional Foresters, Station Directors, and the Area Director on broad operational and administrative matters.

1204.24 - Washington Office Staff Directors

1. General Provisions. Washington Office staff directors are responsible for particular functions or activities. As determined by their respective responsibilities and assignments, staff directors report to the Chief, Deputy Chiefs, or Associate Deputy Chiefs.

Staff directors, using their staff specialists, assist the National Leadership Team by:

- a. Recommending new or modified policies and line direction.

- b. Providing information relating to administrative, management, and/or scientific matters.
- c. Developing and maintaining national systems and standards.
- d. Analyzing alternatives and recommending action relating to existing or new programs in support of executive decisionmaking and policy formulation processes.
- e. Assisting in the formulation of long range plans and programs, and planning and budgeting alternatives that reflect the objectives and priorities of the Forest Service.
- f. Developing implementing instructions for field units.
- g. Providing liaison with other Federal agencies, national and international groups, scientific communities, and the public.
- h. Reviewing field programs to ensure acceptable levels of program quality, effectiveness, and accomplishment (FSM 1400).

2. Washington Office Director of Law Enforcement and Investigations. In addition to the responsibilities assigned in paragraph 1 of this section, the Washington Office, Director of Law Enforcement and Investigations is assigned the authority and responsibility for overall coordination and supervision of the agency's law enforcement program. The Director of Law Enforcement and Investigations reports directly to the Chief (FSM 5307) and serves as a staff officer to the Chief and as a line officer to subordinate Washington Office Law Enforcement and Investigations staff and field personnel, subject to the reservations of authority set forth in FSM 1235.1. It is the responsibility of the Director of Law Enforcement and Investigation to provide overall national direction and leadership for the Forest Service law enforcement program and recommend as needed, national policies, programs, and objectives relating to the agency's law enforcement activities.

1204.25 - Support Staffs Assigned to Deputy Chiefs

The Deputy Chiefs may have a small support staff to assist with the coordination of activities within their deputy areas. Working closely with associate deputies and staff directors, these specialists coordinate long range functional planning or other broad Service-wide activities. Work that encompasses the particular functions of more than one staff director may also be assigned to these small support groups.

1204.3 - Regional Foresters

All Regional direction and policy emanates from the Regional Forester or appropriate Deputy Regional Forester (FSM 1204.31). Regional Foresters, who are line officers reporting to the Chief, are responsible for:

1. Providing overall leadership for Regional natural resource and social programs and for coordinated Regional land use planning.
2. Participating in the formulation of national policies, programs, and objectives by submitting information and advice to the Chief.
3. Delegating responsibility and authority to National Forests consistent with operating efficiency, competency, and need.
4. Translating national direction into Regional policies, programs, and objectives.
5. Coordinating plans, programs, and activities with Stations and the Area as appropriate.
6. Developing Regional systems and standards for uniformity in resource management and administration.
7. Establishing, maintaining, and operating a Region-wide management review system (FSM 1400).

1204.31 - Deputy Regional Foresters

Deputy Regional Foresters are assigned specific, but broad, program authorities and responsibilities by the Regional Forester (FSM 1204.3). Deputy Regional Foresters serve as staff officers to the Regional Forester and, for their assigned deputy area, as line officers to their Regional Office staff and National Forest Supervisors. It is the responsibility of Deputy Regional Foresters to:

1. Assist the Regional Forester and participate in the Regional decisionmaking process.
2. Carry out the day-to-day operating activities within their deputy areas, establishing Regional policy.
3. Formulate program plans for their assigned functional area.
4. Allocate funds and personnel ceilings.
5. Provide coordinated program direction to Regional staff directors.
6. Serve as the primary management link with Forest Supervisors and external clientele on broad operational and administrative matters.
7. Direct and control the review of field unit activities within the overall system of accountability (FSM 1400).

1204.32 - Regional Executive Decisionmaking Group

The Regional Forester and the Deputy Regional Foresters comprise the Regional executive decisionmaking group. When participating as a member of this group, Deputy Regional Foresters function as across-the-board managers and executive decisionmakers.

1204.33 - Regional Staff Directors

Regional staff directors report to either the Regional Forester or to a Deputy Regional Forester, and are assigned responsibilities for particular functions or activities. Staff directors guide the operation of functional programs and technical activities within the Region, and they recommend new or modified Regional policies and line direction as needed, including the development or maintenance of Regional systems, standards, and implementing instructions issued by the Regional Forester or appropriate Deputy Regional Forester. Staff directors, using their staff specialists, assist the executive decisionmaking group by:

1. Providing information relating to administrative, management, and scientific factors.
2. Analyzing alternatives and recommending action relating to existing or new programs in support of the executive decisionmaking and policy formulation processes.
3. Assisting in the formulation of long range plans and program planning and budgeting alternatives that reflect the Region's objectives and priorities.
4. Developing implementing instructions for field units.
5. Providing liaison with other Federal and State agencies; national, State, and local groups; scientific communities; and the public.
6. Reviewing field programs and work to help ensure acceptable levels of program quality, effectiveness, and accomplishment (FSM 1400).

1204.4 - Station Directors

Experiment Station Directors and the Director of the Forest Products Laboratory (FPL) are line officers reporting to the Chief and are responsible for:

1. Providing overall leadership in meeting Forest Service research objectives within the Station's geographical area of responsibility or at the FPL.
2. Coordinating research program development with appropriate Regions, the Area, and other Stations, formulating new natural resource and social research programs, and advising the Chief concerning new research needs and requirements.

3. Directing Station activities, coordinating Station multi-year and short range planning, and allocating funds and manpower assigned to the Station.
4. Coordinating and directing a program of research assigned to the Station in a manner that will promote accomplishment of research programs.
5. Establishing minimum standards and systems to control and evaluate the quantity and quality of research accomplishment.
6. Promptly releasing completed research results in the form of technical publications, talks, reports, and field demonstrations, and promoting prompt application of research findings through close liaison with key administrators in Federal, State, and industrial forestry organizations.

1204.41 - Assistant Station Directors

The Station Director and Deputy Station Director are assisted by a management team usually consisting of Assistant Station Directors for Research, the Assistant Station Director for Planning and Applications, and the Assistant Station Director for Research Support Services. Assistant Station Directors are assigned specific, but broad, program authorities and responsibilities by the Station Director, and serve as staff officers to Station Director and the Deputy, and, for their assigned functions and responsibilities, as line officers to their Station headquarters and field unit staff. The Assistant Station Directors, along with the Station Director and the Deputy Station Director, comprise the Station's executive decisionmaking group. Assistant Station Directors are responsible to the Station Director for:

1. Assisting the Station Director in establishing Station-wide policies and objectives.
2. Carrying out the day-to-day operating activities within their program areas.
3. Establishing program accomplishment standards.
4. Serving as the primary management link with field unit staff and external clientele.

1204.41a - Assistant Station Directors for Research

Assistant Station Directors for Research are responsible for a broad program of multifunctional research within a geographical area, that can go beyond the parent Station's territory. Forest Products Laboratory Assistant Station Directors have functional rather than geographical areas of responsibility. Within their geographically assigned area, Assistant Station Directors for Research serve as staff officers to the Director and as line officers to their research work units. They also represent the Station Director with other Federal agencies, State agencies, forest industries, universities, and other concerned groups. Assistant Station Directors for Research are responsible to the Station Director for:

1. Formulation of recommendations for establishment of research work units.
2. Accomplishment of assigned objectives and quality of research work.
3. Problem analyses of approved research work units.
4. Broad operational and administrative management.
5. Directing and controlling reviews of field research and cooperator activities within a broad overall system of accountability.

1204.41b - Assistant Station Directors for Planning and Applications

The Assistant Station Director for Planning and Applications is the principal staff assistant to the Station Director for development and planning of research programs which involves:

1. Maintaining an internal/external planning and evaluation information network.
2. Developing proposals for new research programs.
3. Recommending shifts in direction of ongoing research.
4. Devising effective ways of translating research results into action programs.
5. Providing in-depth reviews and analyses of basic resource information, economic and sociological factors, and other external determinants that affect ongoing research or that identify regional and national research opportunities.

1204.41c - Assistant Station Directors for Research Support Services

The Assistant Station Director for Research Support Services is the principal staff assistant to the Station Director responsible for:

1. Providing scientific services and administrative support to all Station research programs.
2. Serving as line officer to the Station headquarters and field unit support staffs.
3. Counseling the Station's management team, subordinates, and cooperators on the effects and application of laws, regulations, and administrative decisions.

1204.42 - Project Leaders

Project Leaders are appointed by Station Directors to lead Research Work Units. They assist Assistant Station Directors for Research and Program Managers in:

1. Planning the research programs and activities within their work unit.
2. Preparing problem analyses.
3. Preparing and approving study plans included in each problem analysis.
4. Conducting the approved research programs of their units.
5. Preparing manuscripts documenting results of research conducted by their unit.

1204.43 - Program Leaders

Program Leaders are designated by Station Directors to coordinate and document the results of multiproject programs (FSM 4072.5).

1204.44 - Program Managers

Program Managers are responsible for directing and documenting research and development (FSM 4072.6), and research, development, and application programs (FSM 4072.7), as assigned by the Station, Area, or Institute Director, or Regional Forester.

1204.45 - Director's Representative

A Director's Representative at a laboratory site is a Project Leader who is designated limited, but important, functions for the Station Director. It is the responsibility of the Director's Representative to:

- a. Represent the Station Director on external relations concerning coordination of the location's facilities and programs;
- b. Represent the Station Director in contacts with Federal agencies, including other Forest Service units, State agencies, and other public and private groups on matters pertaining to the laboratory's operations;
- c. Keep the Station Director informed about conditions, problems, and opportunities in the research location and its working area that might affect the Station and its work; and
- d. Assume, at the Station Director's discretion, other responsibilities related to operations at the laboratory, such as common services and use of space and major equipment.

1204.5 - Area Director

It is the responsibility of the Area Director, a line officer reporting to the Chief, to:

1. Provide leadership, coordinated with Regional Offices and Research Stations, on State and private forestry matters.
2. Meet Forest Service objectives relating to assisting State and private forest landowners in the development, management, and administration of natural and human resources.
3. Through State and private cooperators, accomplish Forest Service objectives associated with coordinated land use planning and production of goods and services from private, public, and National Forest lands.
4. Provide technical and financial assistance to States and private cooperators.
5. Participate in the formulation of research programs by identifying and transmitting research needs and priorities to Stations.
6. Disseminate to State and private cooperators new research information, including knowledge and technology from other sources, for use in State and private forestry programs and by external clientele.
7. Develop Area systems and standards for uniformity in administration and management of programs, activities, and assistance is necessary.
8. Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of State cooperative and technical assistance programs.

These responsibilities also apply to western and southern Regions with State and Private Forestry programs.

1204.51 - Assistant Area Directors

Assistant Area Directors are assigned specific, but broad, program authorities and responsibilities by the Area Director. Assistant Directors serve as staff officers to the Area Director and, for their assigned functions and responsibilities, as line officers to their staff. It is the responsibility of Assistant Area Directors to:

1. Assist the Area Director in the Area policy making and decisionmaking processes.
2. Carry out the day-to-day operating activities within their program and geographic areas.
3. Establish Area policy for their assigned functional area.

4. Formulate program plans for their assigned functional area.
5. Provide coordinated program direction to Area staff specialists.
6. Serve as the primary management link with external clientele on broad operational and administrative matters.

1204.52 - Area Executive Decisionmaking Group

The Area Director and the Assistant Directors comprise the executive decisionmaking group for the Area. When participating as a member of this group, Assistant Area Directors represent their assigned responsibilities.

1204.6 - Forest Supervisors

It is the responsibility of Forest Supervisors, who are line officers reporting to Regional Foresters, to:

1. Provide coordinated leadership of natural and social programs to National Forest staff and District Rangers.
2. Participate in the formulation of Regional policies, programs, and objectives by submitting information and advice to the Regional Office.
3. Participate in the accomplishment of State and Private Forestry program objectives and in the dissemination of research information.
4. Meet regionally allocated objectives and targets for accomplishment of coordinated land use planning and the production of goods and services from the National Forest lands.
5. Develop short and long range plans and program alternatives, and Forest policies, programs, and objectives.
6. Develop uniform performance and program accomplishment standards for resource management and administration.
7. Conduct reviews to maintain program quality and to monitor progress toward the accomplishment of assigned objectives and targets (FSM 1400).
8. Provide or secure technical advice and assistance where such service is needed by District Rangers.

9. Provide for support services to the Forest staff and District Rangers and identify efficient ways to accomplish programs in accordance with administrative requirements.

1204.61 - Forest Staff Officers

Forest staff officers report to the Forest Supervisor and are assigned responsibilities similar to those assigned to Regional staff directors (FSM 1204.33), but at the Forest level. Regions may develop a more specific list of responsibilities.

1204.7 - District Rangers

The District Ranger is the line officer responsible for the management of basic, on-the-ground natural and human resource programs in the National Forest System. The District Ranger is a land manager and is responsible for maintaining a proper balance between resources and uses in conformance with the Forest Plan. It is the responsibility of the District Rangers to:

1. Have a working knowledge of the area and its natural and human resources, and be personally knowledgeable of work on the district.
2. Ensure that the quality, quantity, and coordination of the work performed on the district is in accordance with the forest plan.
3. Make public and user contacts, and deal directly on-the-ground with contractors, permittees, forest users, and other segments of the public on important issues.
4. Take an active role in local intergovernmental, cooperative, rural, USDA, and community programs.
5. Provide for the health, safety, training, and other needs of district employees; fully inform employees about the districts mission; and ensure that activities are well coordinated through contact with employees.
6. Provide professional leadership and guidance to district employees.