

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

**Forest Service Manual 1200 – Organization
Chapter 1240 - Organization Standards**

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Duration: This amendment is effective until superseded or removed.

Superseded Directive: Entire title 1200--1 thru 1243.32a--5; 61, 12/85; 62, 1/86; 63, 2/86; 64, 4/86; 66, 3/87; 67, 10/87; 68, 12/87; 69, 3/88; 70, 8/89

Approved by: F. Dale Robertson, Chief

Date approved:

Responsible Staff:

NEW POSTING NOTICE: This amendment is the first in a new numbering series corresponding to the year in which material was amended. Since this amendment replaces all text except Interim Directives (ID), do not check for the last transmittal received for this title. Replace the entire title text except ID's. Place this transmittal sheet at the front of the title and retain until the first transmittal of the next calendar year is received.

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

1200: Please read the new posting notice carefully. These directions apply to this transmittal only.

Entire text, except ID's, is replaced. New text corresponds with text located in the National Information Center.

The electronic document names are shown above for ease in accessing them from the National Information Center.

Direction has not been changed. Some minor typographical and technical errors were corrected.

Amendment numbers and dates noted above are listed for historical purposes only.

All subsequent amendments will be issued by document.

Contents

1241 - Facility Location	3
1241.01 - Authority.....	3
1241.02 - Objective.....	3
1241.03 - Policy	3
1241.04 - Responsibility.....	4
1241.04a - Chief	4
1241.04b - Regional Foresters, Station Directors, and Area Director	4
1241.05 - Definitions.....	4
1241.1 - Proposal Submission	5
1242 - Names for Administrative Units and Related Sites, and Other Names	5
1242.02 - Objective.....	5
1242.03 - Policy	5
1242.03a - General	5
1242.03b - Memorials	6
1242.03c - National Forest and Grassland Names.....	6
1242.04 - Responsibility.....	7
1243 - Unit Standards	10
1243.01 - Authority.....	10
1243.02 - Objective.....	10
1243.03 - Policy	10
1243.04 - Responsibility.....	10
1243.04a - Chief	10
1243.04b - Regional Foresters.....	11
1243.04c - Forest Supervisors	11
1243.1 - Research Project Locations.....	11
1243.2 - National Forests.....	12
1243.21 - National Forest Study Reports	13
1243.3 - Ranger Districts.....	14
1243.31 - Ranger District Size	14
1243.32 - Study Reports for Ranger District Adjustments Requiring Chief's Approval	15
1243.32a - Complexity and Workload Factors	16

1241 - Facility Location

This section covers the establishment or relocation of offices, laboratories, and other service facilities. If an action also involves a change in the organization or number and size of units, see FSM 1225 and FSM 1243, respectively. See FSM 2473.03 for direction on location of nurseries.

1241.01 - Authority

Departmental Regulation 1010-1. The Assistant Secretary for Administration retains the authority to approve new facilities in urban areas and the establishment, abolishment, or transfer of any Regional, Station, or Area headquarters office.

1241.02 - Objective

To locate Forest Service facilities at sites that enable the unit to effectively accomplish its mission and serve the public, the Department, other Federal agencies, and State agencies.

1241.03 - Policy

The policy of the Forest Service is to:

1. Locate facilities in rural areas where it is practical to do so and program needs are adequately met. Consider:
 - a. The availability of adequate, affordable housing for employees.
 - b. Using existing Government-owned facilities that meet the needs of programs.
 - c. The economic development and redevelopment of areas consistent with State, Regional, and local plans and programs.
 - d. The social and economic impacts of changes in location on affected communities, on employees, and on affirmative action and other civil rights programs.
2. As a guiding principle, colocate offices and/or share services when organizational units are located within 30 miles commuting distance.

Apply items 1b, 1c, and 1d when considering colocation of offices and shared services.

3. Encourage colocation and cross servicing with another Federal agency, a State, or a local government unit when missions are compatible and improved coordination can be achieved.
4. The arrangements listed in items 1, 2, and 3 above must be cost effective, maintain adequate program support, provide adequate service to the public, and assure that quality

resource management is continued. See FSM 1971 and FSM 7312 for direction on economic evaluations and facility planning.

1241.04 - Responsibility

1241.04a - Chief

The Chief approves changes that result in:

1. Establishment, abolishment, or transfer out of a community or a rural area any facility involving 10 or more permanent employees.
2. Colocation of Regional, Station, or Area offices.

1241.04b - Regional Foresters, Station Directors, and Area Director

The Regional Foresters, Station Directors, and Area Director have authority and responsibility to approve:

1. Colocating or moving facilities within the same community or the same rural area, except Regional, Station, and Area offices (FSM 1241.01); relocation of a Ranger District office where no changes in organization unit are contemplated, and socio-economic impacts on the communities or rural areas affected are minimal. Creation, abolishment, or consolidation of Ranger Districts, and establishment or relocating Supervisor Offices outside the same community or rural area must be approved by the Chief (FSM 1225 and FSM 1243).
2. Exceptions to the policy to colocate and/or share services stated in FSM 1241.03, item 2.

1241.05 - Definitions

1. Urban Area. A city or town having a population of 50,000 or more, and any immediately adjacent area with a population density of more than 100 persons per square mile, according to the latest decennial census of the United States.
2. Rural Area. Areas outside an urban area as defined in item 1.
3. Establishment of Facility. Actions to acquire or lease real property for the purpose of housing any activity where the assignment or relocation of personnel will be involved.
4. Relocation of Facility. Relocation of a facility involves moving a facility from one site to another site in the same community. It also includes the moving of an activity from one location to space available in an existing facility at another location.

1241.1 - Proposal Submission

Submit proposals to establish, relocate, or abolish facilities to the appropriate approving official (FSM 1241.01, FSM 1241.04). Proposals must:

1. Define the problem and describe the factors that necessitate the changes requested.
2. Describe the alternative solutions considered.
3. Analyze the alternatives.
4. Recommend one alternative.

Cover the applicable items listed in FSM 1225.2. For organizational and facility location studies, cover a full range of alternatives including the current situation, colocation, shared services, consolidation, reductions at all affected levels, and reductions in selected activities.

See FSM 1730 and FSH 1709.11 for direction on preparing a Civil Rights Impact Statement. A Civil Rights Impact Statement is required for facility locations, or relocations, affecting 10 or more permanent employees.

See FSM 1971 and FSM 7312 for direction on economic evaluations and facility planning.

1242 - Names for Administrative Units and Related Sites, and Other Names

1242.02 - Objective

To select names that will endure and that are significant and appropriate for the particular unit, site, or area being named or renamed.

1242.03 - Policy

The following policies apply.

1242.03a - General

1. Do not use names of living persons (DR 5160-2).
2. Do not name a National Forest or Grassland after a deceased person until 100 years have elapsed since death and the name is firmly established in history or legend (DR 5160-2).
3. Use names whose origin and common usage have local acceptance, are not controversial, and best identify the area to the public.

4. Use names that describe the area's history, Indian culture, geology, geography, physiography, biology, or forestry.
5. Consider the significance of the present and proposed names from a historical and national point of view before renaming areas, sites, or units.
6. Name Ranger Districts and similar administrative areas after the headquarters town or site, if there are no appropriate names using the criteria in items 3 and 4 above.
7. Name classified or special-interest areas using the distinctive or picturesque qualities of the area; for example, wildernesses. Solicit recommendations from people with an interest in the area.

Policies for naming geographic features are in FSM 7147 and FSH 7109.14.

1242.03b - Memorials

Memorials are usually initiated by the local community. Memorials may be: (1) natural features such as geographic features and groves of trees; (2) developed areas such as plantations, nurseries, and campgrounds; or (3) improvements such as roads, trails, and structures.

Memorials may be named for organizations or deceased persons; however, using the name of a former Forest Service employee must be approved by the Chief, and names recognizing individual contributions or interest in conservation shall be used only in especially meritorious cases.

Maintain an appropriate balance between the stature of the individual or organization and kind of area or site being named. For permanent developments, groves, and plantations, ensure that the name and its significance will endure.

1242.03c - National Forest and Grassland Names

Where Forests or Grasslands, or portions of them, have been consolidated with other units:

1. Use only the proclaimed National Forest or official Grassland name for signs and published material about a single Forest or Grassland.
2. Use the following rules for signing when more than one National Forest or Grassland is administered as one unit or lands of one National Forest or Grassland are administered by another:
 - a. Sign administrative sites with a unit name that identifies each Forest when two National Forests are administered as one forest. Accepted examples are (1) Huron-Manistee National

Forest, and (2) Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forest. Use either a hyphen or and between the two names.

b. Sign administrative sites with a unit name such as National Forests in Texas when all forests in a State are administered as one forest. Place the State name last.

c. Sign administrative sites on a portion of a National Forest administered by another National Forest as in item a. or use the proclaimed National Forest name on the main sign and identify the forest responsible for the administration on a plaque beneath.

d. Sign National Forest boundaries, campgrounds, and other improvements with the proclaimed National Forest name. To avoid visitor confusion and costly new signs, place a small plaque of the same color, construction, and material identifying the responsible administrative unit under the sign.

1242.04 - Responsibility

Exhibit 1 shows who has the authority to name areas by subject categories. Subjects not specifically listed shall be handled in accordance with the most comparable category shown.

Exhibit 1

	President	Congress	Secretary	Chief	RF&D
1. National Forests	x	x	x1		
2. Purchase units			x		
3. Wilderness		x			
4. National Recreation Areas		x			
5. National Wild & Scenic Rivers		x			
6. National Scenic Trails		x			
7. National Recreation Trails		x			
8. National Grasslands				x2	
9. Ranger Districts					x
10. Research Laboratories				x	
11. Experimental Areas, Forests, and Ranges				x3	
12. Research Natural Areas				x3	
13. Special interest areas over 100,000 acres			x4		
14. Special interest recreation areas 100,000 acres or less					x4
15. Developed recreation sites over 160 acres			x5		
16. Developed recreation sites 160 acres or less					x5
17. Areas of concentrated public recreation use					x6
18. Improved sites					x
19. Memorials named after a former Forest Service employee				x	

USDA Forest Service

Page 8 of 19

Guidance documents lack the force and effect of law, unless expressly authorized by statute or incorporated into a contract. USDA may not cite, use, or rely on any guidance that is not available through their guidance portal, except to establish historical facts.

Exhibit 1--Continued

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|---------------------|
| 1 | Section 11 of the Weeks Act (36 Stat. 961). | 4 | 36 CFR 294.1(a). |
| 2 | 36 CFR 213.2. | 5 | 36 CFR 294.1(b). |
| 3 | 36 CFR 251.23. | 6 | May be redelegated. |

1243 - Unit Standards

This section covers the various units found within the Forest Service. If an action also involves a change in the organization or facility location, see FSM 1225 and FSM 1241, respectively.

1243.01 - Authority

Departmental Regulation 1010-1 and 36 CFR 200.2. The Secretary of Agriculture retains the authority to approve changes in boundaries of Regions, Stations, and the Area, and proposals to change National Forest boundaries by Presidential Proclamation or Executive Order and Secretary's Administrative Order (FSM 1243.03, FSM 1243.2, and FSM 1243.21).

1243.02 - Objective

To establish units that effectively support the Forest Service mission and serve the public, the Department, other Federal agencies, and State agencies.

1243.03 - Policy

Seek an optimum mix of quality natural resource management, public service, and economy of operation.

Consider workload, geography, ecosystems, transportation, energy use, physical plant requirements, and other cost-benefit relationships when determining the size, location, and organizational structure of administrative units. Appropriate public involvement should be an integral part of the decisionmaking process. Announce the final decision on units only after it has been approved by the responsible official.

See FSM 1971 and FSM 7312 for direction on economic evaluations and facility planning.

1243.04 - Responsibility

1243.04a - Chief

The Chief reviews and approves, or recommends to the Assistant Secretary for Administration, USDA, any adjustment or change that:

1. Administratively combines National Forests.
2. Changes Supervisor Office locations outside of the same community or rural area.
3. Combines one or more Ranger Districts.
4. Creates a new district by dividing or eliminating one or more districts.

5. Changes a district headquarters location to an urban area.
6. Changes a field research headquarters location in a rural area.

1243.04b - Regional Foresters

Regional Foresters should periodically review units to determine if there are opportunities for improving management. See FSM 1241.03 for policy on shared services and colocation.

Regional Foresters approve:

1. Adjustments in National Forest administrative boundaries when such action will not establish or abolish a Forest Supervisor's headquarters, nor require formal action by the President or Secretary.

When an administrative adjustment is made, send the names of forests and acreages involved to the Personnel and Civil Rights Staff, Washington Office. The official file regarding each administrative boundary change shall be retained in the Regional Office.

2. Adjustments to Ranger District boundaries when the total number of units on a forest remains the same. (Authority to approve minor boundary adjustments among Ranger Districts may be redelegated to Forest Supervisors.)

The official file regarding each boundary change shall be retained at the level assigned the responsibility to maintain the official land status records. Normally this is the Regional Office, but in some instances this has been reassigned to the Supervisor's Office.

See FSM 1225 and FSM 1241 for additional direction on organizational changes and facility location.

1243.04c - Forest Supervisors

Forest Supervisors should periodically review Ranger Districts to determine if there are opportunities for improving management. See FSM 1241.03 for policy on shared services and colocation.

1243.1 - Research Project Locations

Select sites for outlying projects that allow work on a particular problem to be conducted in the most efficient and effective manner.

1243.2 - National Forests.

A National Forest or Grassland is the basic entity of the National Forest System with the Ranger Districts considered integral parts. The forest organization manages the land and resources on a National Forest and establishes good rapport and working relationships with the local users and other government entities. In some cases, several proclaimed National Forests have been combined under one Forest Supervisor for administration purposes. The term National Forest in this section refers to the administrative, rather than the proclaimed units, headed by a Forest Supervisor.

Analyze the following factors when reviewing the size of National Forests to determine the number of administrative units desired:

1. Quality of Land and Resources Management. Evaluate possible changes in the quality of land and resource management resulting from proposed unit adjustments.

The quality of management is largely determined by the number and mix of professional and technical skills and budget devoted to land and resource management activities. Where budgets do not allow two or more adjacent forests to have fully staffed organizations, the sharing of staff specialists provides a viable alternative.

2. Desirable Span of Control. Determine that the Forest Supervisor or Deputy can personally spend sufficient management time with each District Ranger or other unit manager to assure that the objective in FSM 1243.02 is being met.

3. Service to the Public. Ensure:

- a. Two-way communications with the public served by that forest.
- b. Working relations among the Forest Supervisor, the staff, and the public.
- c. Communication and coordination within the Region and State.

4. Efficiency and Effectiveness. Consider the economies of scale, the cumulative effectiveness of the Ranger Districts, and staffing composition required to meet program workload when studying forest size.

As used here, efficiency is measured by comparing production with unit costs. Effectiveness reflects the degree to which a unit accomplishes its stated objectives.

5. Potential Costs and Savings. Include an analysis of estimated one-time closing costs and potential annual savings in any study of possible forest consolidations (FSM 1243.03).

Potential forest consolidations may require value judgments between estimated savings and possible effects on service to the public or quality of land management.

6. Transportation, Communications, and Data Processing. Determine the effects of proposed changes on the forest in the areas of transportation, energy use, communications, and data processing.

7. Amount of Outside Cooperation and Contacts. Consider heavy demands upon the Supervisor for cooperation with other agencies and heavy outside organization demands, such as State contacts, when evaluating the size of the forest workload.

8. Impact on States and Counties. Consider the effects of proposed adjustments in boundaries of proclaimed National Forests on 25-percent fund payments.

It may be desirable to administratively adjust the areas for which Forest Supervisors are responsible rather than to take formal action adjusting the National Forest boundaries. This is particularly true where a formal adjustment would significantly disrupt relative distribution of the 25-percent fund among counties.

9. Headquarters Location. Give careful consideration to the selection of the headquarters location in a forest consolidation, including the impact of change on the communities losing or gaining a headquarters and any substantial increase in the size of the Forest Supervisor's staff at a location. Determine office and other building space needs, availability, and costs (FSM 1241).

10. Measure of National Forest Size. There is no formula to measure recurrent, project, or business management workloads on National Forests; however, other kinds of objective data are available through the Resources Planning Act Assessment, ADVENT, program development and budget process, and Service-wide accounting systems for comparative and sensitivity analyses. Use applicable items from the list in FSM 1243.32a.

11. Civil Rights Program, and Employee and Family Needs. See the discussion in FSM 1243.31.

1243.21 - National Forest Study Reports

Address the factors in FSM 1241.1 and FSM 1243.2 in National Forest study reports and include:

1. Names of forests involved.
2. Names of Ranger Districts involved.
3. Acreage involved.

4. Maps (1/2" = 1 mile scale) showing original and adjusted district and forest boundaries.

1243.3 - Ranger Districts

Ranger Districts are the basic, on-the-ground administrative units in the National Forest System. It is here that the actual management and use of the land and natural resources takes place. The ability of the District Ranger and the district staff to maintain a proper balance among the various resources and to prescribe the degree of resource use in conformance with the forest plan largely determines the condition of the land and resources.

See FSM 1204.7 for the role of the District Ranger.

1243.31 - Ranger District Size

Use the following guidelines in determining where changes in districts may be appropriate. Add other items on a case-by-case basis. Normally no one factor overrides the others, but in some locations, strong local identification with the Forest Service or lack of public acceptance of a change may be an important factor.

1. Quality Land and Resource Management. The district must have a manageable workload of a size and complexity which allows the District Ranger to ensure that quality land and resource management is achieved. The Ranger must have a working knowledge of the area and resources, and be personally knowledgeable of district work.
2. Public and User Access to District Ranger. The district must be of a size and complexity that permits the Ranger to be available on the ground to deal directly on important issues with contractors, permittees, forest users, and other segments of the public. The Ranger must be able to take an active role in local community, intergovernmental, cooperative and rural USDA programs.
3. Organization Management and Effectiveness. The Ranger shall know of and provide for the needs of employees, provide a sense of District values and mission, and ensure that activities are well coordinated through contact with the employees. The Ranger shall structure the district organization so that planning, organizing, directing, and controlling are effectively executed.
4. Civil Rights Program, and Employee and Family Needs. Locate the district headquarters considering the need for access to housing, shopping, schools, and medical and social facilities for employees.

Consider the following points:

- a. Number of employee moves required by each alternative.

b. Effect on affirmative action and other civil rights programs (FSM 1730).

5. District Staffing and Budget. As a guiding principle, the district should have the size, balance, and complexity of workload, and associated recurrent budget to accommodate a District Ranger and a minimum of three principal staff capable of independent work.

6. Operations and Investment Cost Reduction; Problem Resolution. Any proposal that requires a significant investment or change in the number of units must result in a significant cost reduction or problem resolution so that the benefits outweigh the direct and indirect costs of change (FSM 1243.03).

a. Compare the costs of alternatives using direct costs to the Government and indirect costs, such as costs to the users.

b. Estimate the cost of making the change.

c. Determine the initial costs and operation and maintenance costs of any new facilities needed to implement the change.

d. Estimate the operation and maintenance costs of facilities to be retained.

e. Project the number and kinds of positions that could potentially be upgraded and their associated cost.

f. Assess possibilities for colocation and sharing services.

7. District Integrity. The District Ranger must be able to administer the district as one unit and avoid creating territorial subdivisions.

8. District Efficiency. Locate the Ranger District and headquarters to ensure that the transportation, communication, and other service facilities contribute to conducting the district mission effectively and economically. Use shared services and colocation where practical.

9. Public and Local Community Acceptance and Service. The district size and headquarters location must contribute to a reasonable level of service to the public and should be acceptable to the local communities.

10. Other Factors. Include any other factors that relate to the proposed change.

1243.32 - Study Reports for Ranger District Adjustments Requiring Chief's Approval

Submit study reports with recommendations that require the Chief's approval to the Director of Personnel and Civil Rights, Work Force Management, Productivity, and Systems Branch,

Washington Office, following the direction in FSM 1241.1 and analyzing the alternatives utilizing guidelines 1-10, FSM 1243.31.

If the recommended alternative does not adhere to a guideline, include a justification statement.

Include the names of the districts involved in any study report along with a forest map (1/2" = 1 mile scale) showing the district boundaries for each alternative.

Add an appendix to the report that compiles a data base for each alternative using the applicable complexity and workload factors in FSM 1243.32a. Use these data to evaluate the various alternatives in relation to the Ranger District size guidelines (FSM 1243.31). Some factors may apply to more than one guideline.

1243.32a - Complexity and Workload Factors

Footnote any unusual items. Add other unique factors needed to portray the situation, but keep them to a minimum. Some factors may be best described by a phrase or an attached chart rather than by numbers. Include the following data:

1. District Size
 - a. Total gross acres inside the proclaimed national forest boundary within the district.
 - b. Total net national forest acres within the district.
 - c. Number of acres with high potential for transfer in or out of the unit which would affect workload; for example, land exchanges and transfer of jurisdiction. (Briefly explain.)
2. Total District Budget and Facilities
 - a. Operating costs (latest full fiscal year (FY)).
 - (1) Salaries and overtime.
 - (2) Travel costs and per diem.
 - (3) Rent and utilities.
 - (4) Other recurring costs.
 - b. Investment costs.
 - (1) Remodeling.
 - (2) New construction (include date planned in Fire, Administrative, and Other Facilities Program (FA&O)(FSM 7312)).

c. Implementation costs; for example, transfers, office moving, consolidation of records and files, changing maps, directories, and signs.

d. Shared services or colocation opportunities with other districts or government entities, especially in USDA.

3. District Personnel

a. Total number of district full time equivalents (FTE's) (latest full FY for current situation).

b. Total number of district permanent personnel (latest full FY for current situation).
(Include FTE's for this group in parenthesis.)

c. Attach organization charts.

4. Transportation System

a. Total miles of Forest Service road.

b. Miles of road constructed and reconstructed (completed in latest full FY).

c. Total miles of Forest Service trail.

d. Miles of trail constructed and reconstructed (completed in latest full FY).

e. Acres of district which cannot be reached within 2 hours travel time, one way, using ground transportation (not applicable to Alaska).

5. Recreation

a. Developed sites - recreation visitor days (RVD's) and persons at one time (PAOT days).

b. Dispersed areas - RVD's and PAOT days.

c. Recreation special uses - RVD's and number of permits.

6. Wilderness

a. Acres.

b. RVD's.

7. Timber

- a. Acres treated by regeneration cuts (latest full FY sell program).
- b. Total acres treated (latest full FY sell program).
- c. Volume of timber sold annually.

8. Range

- a. Number of permittees.
- b. Number of grazing associations.
- c. Number of authorized animal unit months (AUM's).

9. Forest Protection

- a. Average number of fires per year for the past 10 years, or last planning decade, and average number of acres burned per year.
- b. Average number of acres treated with prescribed fire for the past 5 years.
- c. Average number of acres treated for insects or disease for the past 5 years.

10. Lands

- a. Number of special use permits (non-recreation).
- b. Average number of right-of-way (ROW) or cost share cases for the past 5 years.

11. Minerals

- a. Number of active mineral permits, leases, and operating plans.

12. Wildlife

- a. Total wildlife and fish user days (WFUD's).
- b. Total area occupied by threatened, endangered, and sensitive species.

13. Watershed

- a. Number of acres classified as having high or very high erosion hazard rating as described in the forest soil survey.

- b. Number of acres identified as having high or moderately high landslide potential.
- c. Number of acres in municipal or municipal supply watersheds.
- d. Miles of streams requiring water quality administration.
- e. Average number of requests to divert water and water rights adjudication cases for the past 5 years.

14. Social and Economic Considerations

- a. Impact on employees. Specify how employees will be placed or displaced, need for increased overnight trips, increased driving, and effect on morale of involved employees.
- b. Impact on spouses and families.
- c. Impact on females and minorities.
- d. Methods to help employees and others deal with the change.
- e. Impacts on local community; for example, payroll, schools, housing market, and local tax base.
- f. Number of local governmental units where working relationships must be maintained (towns, counties, parishes, State, and Federal).

15. Other Factors Unique to the Analysis