

Community Engagement Newsletter

October 2020

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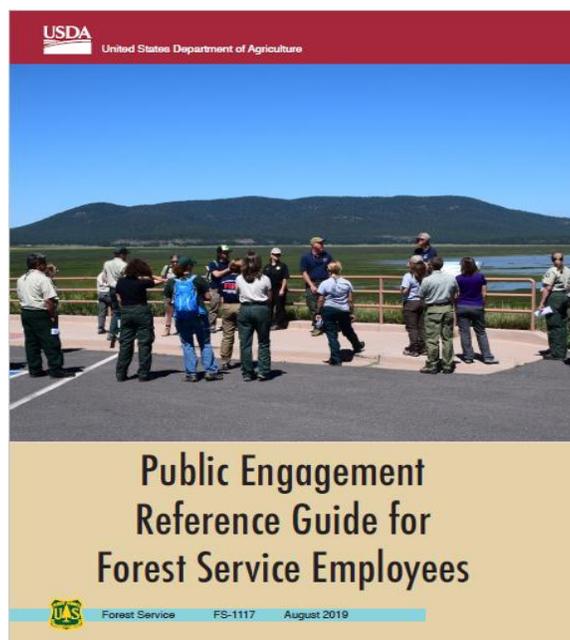
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Public Engagement Reference Guide

Forest Service employees, like all other federal employees, are public servants. With the great mission of the Forest Service to “sustain the health, diversity and productivity of our nation’s forests and grasslands, for current and future generations,” comes great responsibility.

Part of the responsibility of every agency employee, in an effort to achieve the mission, is to engage the public. However, many of us aren’t sure of the means in which to engage and are often hesitant to do so, for many reasons.

We, the FIA Community Engagement team, are always looking for resources to help FIA staff in these engagements. Thanks to the efforts of FIA’s own Joe Donnegan (Deputy Program Manager for PNW) and the other members of his Action Learning Team with Senior Leader Program Cohort 11, a reference guide to engaging the public was created.



For helpful resources on the who, what, when, where, why and how of community/public engagement, visit the following link to the [Public Engagement Reference Guide](#).



Photo Right-Engaging the Public: In 2017 the Idaho Panhandle National Forests and the North Fork Coeur d'Alene River Watershed Advisory Group hosted the fourth public cleanup day on the North Fork Coeur d'Alene River. Approximately 23 volunteers from the community assisted in the clean-up event. Photo Courtesy of NRS

FIA Academy: FIA 101

The *FIA Academy* (composed of staff members within FIA at RMRS), have worked extensively on creating training material that introduces FIA, as well as FIA estimation tools, to potential staff and users and to existing staff and users. The training material is referred to as *FIA 101* and is delivered in two modules.

Module 1 addresses:

- The types of problems Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA) can address and its limitations
- How to communicate FIA data utility to landowners and data users
- Where to find public databases, core tables, and reports
- The role of error and uncertainty when using FIA datasets
- How mandates for confidentiality may affect outcomes of statistical analysis

A graphic slide titled "Welcome to FIA 101". The slide features the Rocky Mountain Research Station logo on the left and the FIA logo on the right. The main text reads: "Welcome to FIA 101" in large, bold letters. Below this, it says "A self-study course and reference guide for Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA) staff and aspiring data users". At the bottom, it lists the production and content creators: "Produced by: Rocky Mountain Research Station, Inventory and Monitoring Program" and "Content Creators: Rachel Simons, Jeremy Morrone, Drew Narduzzi, and Whitney Burgess". It also lists the steering team: "Steering Team: Tracey Frescino, Sara Goeking, Jim Menlove, Maryfaith Snyder, and many others". The slide includes "Version 2" on the bottom left and "06/03/2020" on the bottom right.

Image of FIA 101 Module 1

Module 2 addresses:

- What is needed to produce estimates of forest attributes
- That an evaluation is a group of plots that is used for population estimates
- How to navigate online and Excel-based tools currently available for estimating forest attributes with FIA data
- How to customize these tools to create estimates catered to your specific project
- How to determine how precise your estimates are, whether they include area, volume, growth and mortality,

or other forest attributes

- Why it's important to evaluate not only your estimate, but also the sampling error and number of non-zero plots
- How a relational database is structured
- How FIA data are contained in a relational database named FIADB
- FIA's estimation tools are relatively easy to use, but producing useable results can be a challenge
- The Batch tables are great source of analysis data, but working through EVALIDator for similar results can be a rewarding experience.

FIA 101 is an EXCELLENT resource. For those interested, you can access the training modules, as well as additional information on *FIA 101*, at the following Pinyon link. The modules can be downloaded for use by outside collaborators as well.

<https://usfs-public.app.box.com/s/xhy5jzy102wq7gr9cyfp9f3tbik3hmdu>

FIA Management Structure Terminology

Acronyms within the agency, and even within the FIA program, are abundant and sometimes lead to confusion. Because FIA is a national program, implemented regionally and housed at Research Stations, sometimes terms and acronyms aren't used ubiquitously or if they are, may hold different meaning.

In an effort to address some of the confusion, Michael Wilson (Program Manager for RMRS), offered clarification on some of the common terms and acronyms associated with FIA management as well as additional information about FIA management.

From Michael Wilson:

- **"FIA PM's"** comprise the four Regional FIA Program Managers: Hobie Perry (NRS), Bill Burkman (SRS), Sharon Stanton (PNW), and Michael Wilson (RMRS); the Director of the National Inventory and Monitoring Application Center (NIMAC): Jim Westfall (NRS); and the National Operation PM: Donavon Nigg (RMRS). This is the team responsible for implementation of the Program. ½ of this team are new to their position in the past two years.
- **"FIA Program leadership"** includes the six FIA PM's above plus the WO staff related to FIA: Linda Heath (Inventory, Monitoring, and Assessment, IMAR, Staff Director), Mila Alvarez (National Program Manager – oversees business report, national partnerships, national reporting), Jim Ellenwood (Acting National Program Lead, vice-Greg Reams). This is the team that develops national strategy/priorities for program implementation. 2/3 are new in the past few years.
- **"FIA Management Team"**, aka MT or M-Team, includes the above PLUS 3 members of NFS (WO/Field), 1-2 members from State and Private Forestry, and 3 representatives of the States (chosen by National Association of State Foresters from the three NASF regions, N, S, and W). Because FIA is a Forest Service cross-Deputy program (R&D, NFS, S&PF) in partnership with the States, this large team provides the guidance for FIA direction. At one point, they were involved in approvals for a wide range of technical changes (seriously, part of the change management process), but we've evolved away from that and now they are consulted for possible changes in Program Direction and set high-level national priorities for the Program; and the State members have significant impact through Congress on Program funding and

direction (Farm Bills). The Partner membership rotates somewhat at random based on retirements and job changes – some have been on the team for a decade+, others very new.

- “**Bands**” are intended to be cross-unit/cross deputy/State partnership to facilitate the technical aspects of implementation. It’s been a challenge at times keeping the non-FIA partners engaged at this level, but we’ve found it invaluable for helping us be a little less inwardly focused.

“FIA is a coalition of the willing. Sometimes it would be so nice if we had line authority to direct us as a national program, but we do not. The line authority for each FIA Program (*and sometimes regional Program priorities*) comes through Research Stations, NOT the WO-FIA staff, though our WO staff can provide a lot of influence.”

Thanks for the clarification, Michael!

National Operations Update

DATIM

[DATIM version 13.1](#) was released on October 9. It includes new growth, removals, and mortality (GRM) live report queries, a new Custom Analysis Manager, and many additional improvements.

508 Compliance

Our University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) cooperators hired four new Computer Science student interns to start work this October. UNLV now has five student interns dedicated to helping National Ops meet Section 508 requirements to ensure its electronic and information technology (EIT) is accessible to people with disabilities.



FIA-CIO ITDO

The week of October 12th, leaders and staff from both the CIO and R&D met for two days for an information exchange on topics on the Research Organization and Processes and the CIO service offerings currently and into the foreseeable future. During the week of October 19th Forest Products Lab and North Research station participated in the ITDO assessment sharing their unique IT needs and research to the CIO. The goal of these meetings are to have an open exchange of ideas and discussions of research needs to better enable the two organizations to work together and ensure support for research programs, while maintaining IT legal compliance.

UNIMS

A video presentation of the UNIMS project was demoed at the recent FIA Planning Meeting. The video has been posted [here](#) for all staff to watch and learn more about the UNIMS project – what is UNIMS and what impacts can be expected when we eventually transition to the new system.

Link to Portfolios & Social Media

To keep a consistent location where portfolios can be accessed as well as the latest FIA related social media activity, portfolio links and links to social media are included in the newsletter. Additionally, all FIA-related publications can

be located at the link below using a tool that searches R&D's *Treesearch* database. Follow the links below for the latest information on portfolios and social media activity. And a reminder, any social media post related to FIA, please ensure to use the following handle: #USDA_FIA

Carbon: <https://usfs.box.com/s/l23jxi29zlf0656pc1865lq0qdfg1p>

Biomass: <https://usfs.box.com/s/jhet52fknd2adzd7xvg2hxsjarxxuww>

Digital Engagement: <https://usfs.box.com/s/dglnpdxpp3naskfuzr6ao6v7as4gzzph>

Land Use/Land Cover: <https://usfs.box.com/s/avnvyr0b7j4jkph7qbtppxxt5vppipqy>

National Landowner Survey: <https://usfs.box.com/s/ffj9s2bwyzh0rvo2esl964d514j3jvlj>

Small Area Estimation: <https://usfs.box.com/s/iavhy0afitsibyswx2cpm75mukhoxk7s>

Timber Products Output: <https://usfs.box.com/s/4mmb318nxjz9j0w98ggykdo1ica99j8z>

Urban FIA: <https://usfs.box.com/s/7iobdmd7vbkcl0frp3ukjui75rv97mu>

Community Engagement: <https://usfs.box.com/s/wk07xvr9fcnt3be610lspzzer4iswz1y>

FIA in Social Media: https://twitter.com/search?q=USDA_FIA&src=typd

FIA Publications in Treesearch:

The tool to search FIA-specific publications within *Treesearch* can be accessed at the following link:

<https://www.nrs.fs.fed.us/internal/treesearch/>

To search FIA-specific publications using this tool:

- 1) Click on drop-down and choose "All Forest Inventory & Analysis Units"
- 2) Choose date range
- 3) Click Submit

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