

# FIA National Newsletter

August 2021

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## New FIA Recruitment Video & Employment Webpage

The Community Engagement team has been working on a recruitment video with a goal of providing more information about FIA field work to interested applicants. There has been concern among Data Collection/Acquisition hiring managers that the applicant pool is dwindling.

In an effort to hopefully increase interest and recruit more applicants, the CE team started efforts to create the video. We are happy to share that the video is now complete and is available on FIA's national website [here](#). Additionally, a webpage was created on the national website to assist applicants in applying for all FIA-related jobs, not just field vacancies. The new page is under the "Work With Us" tab. We hope to also imbed the video within job vacancies so interested applicants can view the video when applying. Click on the image to view the video!



## National Conferences, Meetings & Presentations

### National Planning Meeting

The National Planning Meeting has been tentatively set for mid-October. The agenda for this meeting has not yet been set but attendance will be virtual. In the past, this meeting has consisted of reviewing accomplishments, setting goals for the coming year and discussing challenges to achieving those goals. Attendees usually include FIA Leadership and Band Representatives. More information for this meeting will be shared when available.

## Change Management

Current national issues that require attention to resolve are moving through the program's new change management process. There have been many questions concerning the new process, so a Standard Operating Procedure document was created. The document is now in its final form and can be accessed through the FIA Resource Center [here](#).

Summer Dunn presented the new change management process to each of the bands and the Program Managers (PM's). However, if you were unable to attend the band meeting, a video of the presentation can be accessed at the FIA Resource Center under the *Posts* tab on the *General* channel, linked [here](#).

A number of questions were generated from these presentations. Some of the questions are outlined below as well as responses.

**Q1:** *I have an issue that I think needs to be resolved, what do I do?*

**A1:** Take the issue to your respective Band Lead/Team Lead to discuss if it's national in scope (i.e., an issue that requires multiple bands to resolve). Bands operate differently but the main point is to ensure your issue is elevated through the band structure, who will then discuss and decide if it's national in scope. If it's deemed national in scope by the band, then an issue paper will be created often with the help of band leadership. The issue continues to move through Phase 1 of the process by the Band Lead taking the issue to the Band Leader Group (meetings weekly) to inform other bands that the issue exists and add to the "potential issues/innovations" list.

To note, any individual can move a Band-approved issue through Phase 1 up until Tollgate 1. Tollgate 1 is where the issue is presented to the PM's for approval to move forward with resolving and into Phase 2 of the process. It should be noted however that even if an issue is approved by PM's for resolution, it doesn't immediately start Phase 2 of the process. Issues must be prioritized as not all issues can be resolved at once. Therefore, some issues may stall at Phase 2 until it's prioritized. See Question 5 for more information about prioritization.

**Q2:** *The process seems so complex and intimidating. Is there concern that the complexity of the process will discourage issue identification?*

**A2:** There have been more issues identified since the institution of the new process (February 2021) than compared to the same time with the old process/non-process (some have indicated there wasn't actually a defined "process" thus non-process). The new process does have many steps but the lack of clearly defined steps was identified in the After-Action Review of 2020 as a point of frustration. Any issue that requires a national change is likely inherently complicated and we (the Band Leader Group) are continually working on addressing questions and clearly messaging the answers.

*Q3: I have an issue but I don't want to formally identify because I don't want to be the "champion" of resolving the issue as was the case in the previous process/non-process. Will I be the champion if I identify the issue?*

**A3:** No. The good news in this new process is that the "identifier" of the issue will not be responsible for pushing the issue through the process. The new process is meant to support issues moving forward by relying on teamwork and not a personal lift by one person. Additionally, the National Operations Team will provide the support in moving the issues through the process. The "identifier" of the issue will often play a role however on a team of subject matter experts.

*Q4: I identified an issue, presented to the bands, wrote an issue paper but there has been no progress beyond that point. What is the status of the issue I identified?*

**A4:** Ask your band lead. Band leads have calls weekly to track and discuss the status of all issues. Also, status updates for each issue are regularly provided via the National Issue Spreadsheet linked in the FIA Resource Center. [Link here](#)

*Q5: How are issues prioritized?*

**A5:** Prioritization is still hard and the process is still in it's infancy. Some issues are identified as an immediate priority from our clients or from a top-down request (i.e., Washington office/FIA Leadership). The Band Leader group is working with the PM's on building criteria to prioritize issues that will take into consideration impacts on resources, estimations, stakeholder needs, etc..

*Q6: This new process is being presented but it seems like some issues aren't moving through each phase and step, why?*

**A6:** The Band Leader Group and PM's are working through many years of backlogged issues, to identify and prioritize, while new issues are also being raised. It will take time. We are working to fit some of the issues raised previously into the new system. Additionally, not every issue is going to fit perfectly in the new process so we must adapt accordingly and update the process as needed. Rome was built brick by brick.

A complete list of national issues as well as supporting documentation (including timelines and deadlines) can be accessed through the FIA Resource Center under the Bands and National Consistency Channel.

For further information or questions concerning change management or the FIA Resource Center, contact Summer Dunn.

## **National Issue Update**

### Master Species List v. 2.0

Most should be aware that there is an effort to update the Master Tree Species List from the way it was originally implemented. The issue is national in scope thus has moved through the new change management process. Updates on the status of the issue are provided via Band meetings and distributed through representatives from the Bands. The next step is to provide the Bands with a document detailing the suggested changes and requesting feedback from the Bands. The timeline for distributing the document to the Bands for feedback is within the next few weeks.

## DATIM

The DATIM issue was also national in scope and thus went through the new change management process. As detailed above in the Q&A, some of the existing/historical FIA issues are at different steps in the process to resolve based on previous work completed (i.e., prior to new change management process). This is the case with DATIM. DATIM has been approved and is moving forward in the implementation phase. A formal decision documenting the change can be accessed [here](#).

Below is an update from Gretchen Andrews on the status of implementing the change.

*“Working with National Forest System (NFS) representatives, the DATIM team made it possible for authenticated NFS staff to use actual plot locations for analyses in DATIM v15.0. With the protected role assigned by the NFS FIA Coordinators, those NFS users can now bypass the 250-acre rule and use actual coordinates to select plots. Using the Spatial Intersection Tool (SIT), those users can now obtain accurate attributions from vector and raster data, such as land cover or Lidar products. This user role requires responsibility (via a signed Letter of Intent) to protect FIA plot locations, which is critical to FIA security and continuation.”*

## Bug Fixes for Field Guide 9.2

There are a number of Bug Fixes for field manual version 9.2 that will be distributed for band review shortly. A reminder that a Bug Fix is changing field manual verbiage, illustrations, etc. to ensure consistent national interpretation for implementation. Bug Fixes include understanding and agreement on *intent* of data item and thus Bug Fixes *do not* change intent associated with the collection of data item. For those interested in pre-field and field guide change timelines, visit the FIA Resource Center [here](#)

## **New Member of National Operations Team: Welcome Daryl Lederle!**

Daryl Lederle is the newest member of the National Operations Team and will be filling a greatly needed Project Manager position.

A little about Daryl:

“I joined the Forest Service in 2010 as an intern with the legislative affairs staff in Washington DC. In the 11 years since then, I’ve worked on many different projects while with WO R&D, from cultural transformation, policy analysis, speechwriting, the 2014 IUFRO World Congress and the conference management process. I’ve had the chance to visit and live in many different regions during this time, and have enjoyed getting to know people from all over. I earned a BA from Michigan State and a MA from George Washington University, both in international science and tech policy. Personally, I love to bake and have amassed quite the collection of cookbooks, which I read like novels. There’s nothing quite like reading all 30 steps to laminating croissant dough before bed. However, I rarely follow a recipe as written, but rather combine many similar recipes and wing it. In quarantine I’ve taken up quilting and follow the same basic set of rules. Otherwise, I enjoy hiking, finding local oddities, spending time with a good book, and weightlifting.”



## Links and Updates to Portfolios, Social Media Posts, Treearch & FYI

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 *Treearch* 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/g5awv86ym9c1lf1ijipx049xk4ou4ejo>

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

**Digital Engagement:** <https://usfs.box.com/s/7n54qiqpbn5fqimfuuuqvyysvcx1n86z>

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

**National Landowner Survey:** <https://usfs.box.com/s/qlblr2ocia7x9ny35mmwdkeq0blk37v6>

**Small Area Estimation:** <https://usfs.box.com/s/6oz691r8h7eeiavgjiwx1p0dsbkms2dh>

**Timber Products Output:** <https://usfs.box.com/s/gqf2127er38d7djrsypwqwfq6khavvps>

**Urban FIA:** <https://usfs.box.com/s/7iobdmd7vbkel0frp3ukjui75rvg97mu>

**FIA in Social Media:** [https://twitter.com/search?q=USDA\\_FIA&src=typd](https://twitter.com/search?q=USDA_FIA&src=typd)

### FIA Publications in Treearch:

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

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

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

For more information on the Community Engagement Newsletter, please contact:



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