

## FIA EVALIDator Briefing Paper for External Users February 24, 2022

---

**Topic:** Updating the Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA) EVALIDator Tool  
**Contact:** Donavon Nigg, [Donavon.Nigg@USDA.Gov](mailto:Donavon.Nigg@USDA.Gov)  
FIA National Operations Program Manager  
Renate Bush, [renate.bush@usda.gov](mailto:renate.bush@usda.gov)  
FIA National Program Lead (acting)

---

### **Key Points:**

- FIA has developed an application, EVALIDator 2.0, to replace EVALIDator. This application functions much like EVALIDator but is newer technology, which is more secure and easier to maintain.
- FIA is working with the Forest Service Chief Information Office (CIO) to release EVALIDator 2.0 into a test environment by March 15, 2022. In the test environment, internal FIA will test the application and external FIA testers will be brought in soon after with plans to release EVALIDator 2.0 prior to sunseting of EVALIDator version 1.8.
- A Program of Action and Milestones (POA&M) agreement between FIA and CIO is moving forward to ensure EVALIDator 1.8 is available no more than 6 months while EVALIDator 2.0 is tested and released.

**Issue:** At the FIA Users Group meeting in June 2021, attendees were briefed that EVALIDator ([EVALIDator Version 1.8.0.01 \(usda.gov\)](#)) would go offline in the future, being replaced by newer technology that is easier to update and maintain in coordination with the CIO. It is now time to transition to the new application, EVALIDator 2.0.

**Background:** The FIA Program’s mission is to “make and keep current a comprehensive survey and analysis of the present and prospective conditions of and requirements for the renewable resources of the forest and rangelands of the United States...”. For more than a decade, FIA has provided EVALIDator as an application to access and analyze FIA data with an average of 310,000 data requests per year from internal and external FIA users. For several years, FIA has been transitioning to a more secure tool to access and analyze FIA data that meets CIO security requirements.

USDA and the Forest Service have been transitioning to a tightly controlled governance under the Chief Information Office (CIO) to ensure software applications developed and used by FS employees are meet cyber security standards. FIA has been moving towards more integrated application development, release, and maintenance with the CIO resulting in improved transition plans when replacing applications. The FIA National Operations team as well as new positions under the Washington Office, Research & Development Inventory, Monitoring and Assessment Research staff have been put in place to liaison with the CIO on all information technology matters, including the transfer of tools from research and development into a production environment in accordance with CIO rules and Regulations.

FIA is diligently working with the CIO to ensure that EVALIDator 1.8 remains available to its internal and external user community until EVALIDator 2.0 is tested and released. FIA will engage with external partners to assist with testing and will provide documentation of major and minor changes, to help with transition from one application to the other.