

# Focus Group Session Guide

OMB # 0596-0078

Expiration date: to be updated

IN THE HALLWAY, A SIGN THAT SAYS:

- Landowner Focus Groups [and room name or directions]

ON FLIP CHART IN THE ROOM:

- Welcome to the landowner focus group. Moderator: <NAME>.

AT EACH SEAT:

- Focus group guidelines sheet

AT MODERATOR'S SEAT:

- Clock
- Highlighters - yellow and pink
- Handouts
- Coffee

IN THE MIDDLE OF THE TABLE:

- Audio recorders
- Napkins

AS THEY SIT DOWN, ASK THEM TO:

- Fill out the name tents, front and back. Just your first name - whatever you want to be called.
- Read and sign the disclosure statement and return it to <ASSISTANT>.

## A. OVERVIEW

### WELCOME

Good [morning/afternoon/evening]. My name is <MODERATER's NAME> and I will be the moderator for today's discussion. The one thing you all have in common is that you are landowners in [state]. And over the next two hours, that is what we will be talking about - your land and more precisely, the part of your land that is covered by trees.

### AGENDA

During this time, you will be doing several things:

- Participating in group discussion;
- Reviewing some materials.

This should be a free-flowing conversation. There are no wrong answers; we want to hear your opinions.

### MODERATOR INTRODUCTION

I am a researcher from the USDA Forest Service and I am here to facilitate the discussion and listen to your answers.

I will apologize upfront that at times you may get frustrated with me. During our discussion, you can ask me any questions that you want, but it is highly unlikely that I will answer them. But after the group discussion is over, I will be happy to answer any questions that I can.

I have a series of questions that I need to cover, so at times I may need to ask someone to wrapup their thoughts and we'll have to move on.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to say thank you for coming. We really appreciate you taking time out of your schedules to be with us today.

### DISCLOSURES

You will notice that there are two audio recorders on the table. I am sure there will be many interesting things said here today and we want to make sure we can capture all of it. These recordings are strictly for research purposes, they will not go beyond the research team. Individual statements will never be attributed to specific individuals, but we may say that landowners in [state] said x.

### INTRODUCE BACK TABLE

At the back table is <ASSISTANTS/OBSERVERS> whom many of you have already met. S/he [they] will be observing today's discussion. If you need anything to make you more comfortable, please let one of us know.

### PERMISSIONS

The bathrooms are [give directions] and there is food on the back table. At anytime, please feel free to use the facilities and to grab some food or drink.

### SAFETY

For your safety, please note that the exits are located [give locations]. In case of a [identify potential emergencies and related instructions].

### PRA

## Paperwork Reduction Act Notice

A Federal agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, nor shall a person be subject to a penalty for failure to comply with an information collection subject to the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 unless the information collection has a currently valid OMB Control Number. The approved OMB Control Number for this information collection is 0596-0078. Without this approval, we could not conduct this survey. Public reporting for this information collection is estimated to be approximately 2 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the information collection. All responses to this information collection are voluntary. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this information collection, including suggestions for reducing this burden to the U.S.D.A. Forest Service email address [SM.FS.InfoCollect@usda.gov](mailto:SM.FS.InfoCollect@usda.gov) and include the OMB Control Number in the subject line.

### GUIDELINES

To help facilitate today's discussion, here are a few guidelines:

HAVE THE FOLLOWING AS A PRINT OUT AT EACH PARTICIPANT'S SEAT

- Talk one at a time
- Talk in a loud, clear voice
- Avoid side conversations
- Work for "equal air time" so no one talks too much or too little
- When someone else says something, I would like to know who else agrees with it and who has something different to add
- Say what you believe, whether or not anyone else agrees with you
- Only one person up or out of the room at a time
- Remember, there are no wrong answers, we want **your** opinion
- And finally, if you have a cell phone, please turn it off or set it to vibrate

### B. PARTICIPANT INTRODUCTIONS

To start, I would like to go around the room and have each of you tell us:

WRITE THE FOLLOWING ON A FLIP CHART

- Your name
- Describe the land that you own o Where it is located (location) o How big it is (# of acres) o What percentage is covered by trees

(% trees) o How long you have owned it (tenure) o [Something that is special to you about it]

**[The rest of the focus group time is allotted to going over sections of the survey to see how landowners respond. Below are the possible sections of the Public Survey and Tribal module available to go through in the focus groups. Choose a subset of the below topics or a subset of the other forms to go over in more detail with focus groups. Focus groups will not go over the allotted time.]**

[TRIBAL]

Initial questions (potential probing questions as sub-bullets)

I am handing out another piece of paper. Again, answer the questions and highlight any words or phrases that are confusing or you do not like.

PASS OUT SHEET A. TIME HOW LONG IT TAKES.

What on here was confusing?

Was it difficult to answer?

I am handing out another piece of paper. Again, answer the questions and highlight any words or phrases that are confusing or you do not like.

PASS OUT SHEET B. TIME HOW LONG IT TAKES.

What on here was confusing?

Was it difficult to answer?

- What concepts do you use to describe Tribal legal control of land?
  - o Ask about specific terminology/words
    - Ownership
    - Tribal
    - Forests/land

I am handing out another piece of paper. Again, answer the questions and highlight any words or phrases that are confusing or you do not like.

PASS OUT SHEET C. TIME HOW LONG IT TAKES.

What on here was confusing?

Was it difficult to answer?

I am handing out another piece of paper. Again, answer the questions and highlight any words or phrases that are confusing or you do not like.

PASS OUT SHEET D. TIME HOW LONG IT TAKES.

What on here was confusing?

Was it difficult to answer?

- What terms or words do you use to identify forests you are tied to/have rights to?
  - Is there a distinction between 'tribal forest' and 'forest'?
  - Who owns/manages these lands?
  - Does it matter if they are inside or outside a reservation boundary?

I am handing out another piece of paper. Again, answer the questions and highlight any words or phrases that are confusing or you do not like.

PASS OUT SHEET E. TIME HOW LONG IT TAKES.

What on here was confusing?

Was it difficult to answer?

Please describe your relationship with Tribal forests.

- Who did you directly work for?
- When was this?

- o What was your role(s)?
- o What is your professional relationship with tribal forests?
- o What is your personal relationship with tribal forests?
- o Is there a distinction between professional and personal relationship?

I am handing out another piece of paper. Again, answer the questions and highlight any words or phrases that are confusing or you do not like.

PASS OUT SHEET F. TIME HOW LONG IT TAKES.

What on here was confusing?

Was it difficult to answer?

- What work can we do together?

I am handing out another piece of paper. Again, answer the questions and highlight any words or phrases that are confusing or you do not like.

PASS OUT SHEET G. TIME HOW LONG IT TAKES.

What on here was confusing?

Was it difficult to answer?

- Who can potentially benefit from this research and how?
  - o How can we make this beneficial to the tribes?
  - o Do tribes want this information to be public?

I am handing out another piece of paper. Again, answer the questions and highlight any words or phrases that are confusing or you do not like.

PASS OUT SHEET H. TIME HOW LONG IT TAKES.

What on here was confusing?

Was it difficult to answer?

- What would you like us to know about Tribal forest holding, ownership, and relationships?
  - Would the SWOT and AHP concepts/methods work for tribal?
    - Is it appropriate/informative to ask about strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats?
  - What specific concepts are of interest to you?
    - Management, engagement, etc.
  - What timeframe should we focus on?
    - Historical
    - Present

I am handing out another piece of paper. Again, answer the questions and highlight any words or phrases that are confusing or you do not like.

PASS OUT SHEET I. TIME HOW LONG IT TAKES.

What on here was confusing?

Was it difficult to answer?

- What concerns do you have about this process or our research?

I am handing out another piece of paper. Again, answer the questions and highlight any words or phrases that are confusing or you do not like.

PASS OUT SHEET J. TIME HOW LONG IT TAKES.

What on here was confusing?

Was it difficult to answer?

- Who should we talk to and include in this process?

I am handing out another piece of paper. Again, answer the questions and highlight any words or phrases that are confusing or you do not like.

PASS OUT SHEET J. TIME HOW LONG IT TAKES.

What on here was confusing?

Was it difficult to answer?

- What resources and research should we be sure to include as foundational to this work?
  - Non-academic?
  - Non-scientific?

#### M. CLOSING

Thank you all very much for your time. Before we end, does anyone have any other comments you would like to make?

Thank you and have a good [morning/afternoon/night]!

[PUBLIC]

Before each question below, do the following:

I am handing out another piece of paper. Again, answer the questions and highlight any words or phrases that are confusing or you do not like.

PASS OUT SHEET J. TIME HOW LONG IT TAKES.

What on here was confusing?

Was it difficult to answer?

Questions:

1. How many total acres of land are currently under your agency's jurisdiction in <STATE>?
2. Forested land covers XX% of <STATE>.
 

Forested land includes:

  - ✓ Woods, woodlots, timberland, and forests
  - ✓ Land at least 1 acre in size, 120 feet wide, and has at least 10% forest cover
  - ✓ Land at least 1 acre in size, where trees were removed and trees will grow again

Forested land does *not* include:

  - ✓ Christmas tree farms, orchards, or nurseries
  - ✓ Land that is mowed for lawn or recreational fields

How many acres of *forested land* are currently under your agency's jurisdiction in <STATE>?

3. Approximately what percentage of your agency's forested land is reserved? Reserved includes land permanently reserved from wood products utilization through statute or administrative designation.

4. How important are the following reasons for why your agency currently has forested land in <STATE>?
5. Which of the following have occurred on your agency's forested land in <STATE> in the **past 5 years**?
6. Which of the following will likely occur on your agency's forested land in <STATE> **in the next 5 years**?
7. a. Who, with your agency's permission, has hunted, hiked, or otherwise recreated on your agency's forested land in <STATE> in the past 5 years?
8. Approximately what percentage of your agency's forested land in <STATE> is posted to restrict trespassing?
9. Approximately what percentage of your agency's forested land in <STATE> is posted to restrict hunting?
10. Approximately what percentage of your agency's forested land in <STATE> is posted to restrict motorized vehicles?
11. A management or stewardship plan may be written in order to help an agency meet its goals for its forested land. What percentage, if any, of your agency's land is covered by a written management plan?
12. Development rights for land can be sold or voluntarily given away. This is usually in the form of a conservation easement. What percentage, if any, of your agency's land is covered by a conservation easement?
13. In efforts to reduce the impacts of climate change, public programs and private markets have been created that pay owners of wooded land for capturing or sequestering carbon. What percentage, if any, of your agency's land is enrolled in a carbon program?
14. To encourage good woodland management, groups have created green certification programs to recognize landowners who comply with the group's standards. Examples include Tree Farm, Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), and Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI).
  - a. How familiar are you with green certification?
  - b. What percentage, if any, of your agency's forested land in <STATE> is currently green certified?
10. Please indicate your level of concern about each of the following topics for your agency's forested land in <STATE>.
- 15.