

## Appendix A: Interview Protocol

**Name of CFLRP:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Position:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Thank you for participating in this project. This project is designed to develop a better understanding of how USDA Forest Service employees engaged in ecological restoration view the concept and potential mechanisms. In particular, your answers and those of your colleagues will help us to understand the similarities and differences in how researchers and managers think about ecological restoration. There are no “right” or “wrong” answers; I am simply interested in your ideas.*

*This is meant to be informal, but I do have a list of questions that I need to ask each participant. If you feel like I am asking something you have already addressed, please do not hesitate to tell me to move on or to say that you have nothing additional to contribute. Do you have any questions?*

*If you agree to participate further, please indicate that you understand the purpose of this research and that you are a willing participant by answering “yes”.*

*Is it okay if I audiotape this interview? If so, please indicate consent by answering “yes.” If not, that is okay, we can proceed without the audio recording.*

### INTRODUCTORY/OPENING QUESTION

#### 1. What are things that come to mind when you think about forest restoration?

Neutral prompts:

- ◆ Can you tell me more about \_\_\_\_\_?
- ◆ Can you explain how \_\_\_\_\_?
- ◆ Does \_\_\_\_\_ bring anything else to mind?
- ◆ How would you define \_\_\_\_\_?
- ◆ If you were going to explain forest restoration to someone else, is there anything you would say differently or add to what you have said?

### SECTION 1 - NATURAL/REFERENCE FOREST ECOSYSTEM

#### 2. How would you describe a natural forest ecosystem?

[Prompts: Check/highlight if prompt was used; leave blank if covered without prompt]

- What would the landscape look like?
- What would the species composition be?
- How would the forest be structured?
- What functions would be associated with the system?
- What would be a natural response to disturbance events?

**3. What was the landscape within the CFLRP project area like in the past?**

- What are you using as your reference point? (e.g., time period or set of conditions)
- How are historic conditions determined?

**4. How would you describe the historic disturbance regime for this landscape?**

- What were the typical types of disturbances?
- How frequent were the disturbance events?
- What was their typical severity?

**5. What is the role of disturbance in a forest ecosystem?**

SECTION 2 - CURRENT CONDITIONS

**6. How would you describe the current condition of the forests encompassed by the CFLRP?**

- What is the current species composition?
- How is the forest currently structured?
- What are the current system functions?

**7. How are the current conditions different from what they were in the past?**

- What caused the changes?
- What will happen if the forest stays on its current trajectory?

**8. What are the current policies/management strategies directing management of this landscape?**

- How do land use patterns contribute to the current condition of the landscape?

SECTION 3 - STAGES OF FOREST RESTORATION

**9. What are the stages of forest restoration?**

**10. How do you know when a forest needs to be restored?**

**11. What are the goals of the forest restoration activities?**

- From an ecological standpoint, what are the desired future conditions?
- From an economic standpoint, what are the desired future conditions?
- From a social standpoint, what are the desired future conditions?

**12. What is the process of getting from the current condition to the desired future condition?**

- What are the specific management actions that can be used?
- Are there social factors that influence the choice of management actions?

**13. How are projects monitored?**

- What are the measures of success for forest restoration?

**14. What is the role of adaptive management in forest restoration?**

- How are uncertainties addressed through adaptive management?
- What social factors influence adaptive management?

**15. How does climate change factor into restoration decisions?**

- How do you account for projected future conditions when you make decisions about forest restoration?
- How confident are you in current climate change projections?
- What information do you need to integrate projections of future conditions into your forest restoration decisions?
- What are your sources of information about climate change?

**SECTION 4 - SOCIAL FACTORS**

**16. Can you describe any social factors that influence forest restoration decisions?**

**17. Is there a shared vision for forest restoration among the members of the project team?**

- How was a shared vision created?
- Do others within your agency/organization share that same vision or are there diverse perspectives about forest restoration?

**18. How do the existing policies or agency mandates mentioned previously influence forest restoration decisions?**

Do these mandates/policies encourage or serve as barriers to accomplishing forest restoration?

**19. How do you make tradeoffs when restoration goals are incompatible with other resource management objectives?**

**20. How do economic factors influence forest restoration decisions?**

**21. In what ways do external stakeholder groups contribute to forest restoration decisions?**

Does the general public play a role in these decisions?

#### WRAP UP/ CLOSING COMMENTS

*Thank you again for your willingness to speak with us today. Those are all of the questions that we have.*

**22. Is there anything else that you would like to cover?**