

Unit 4

Existing Conditions Purpose of and Need for Action



Objectives

Understand:

- ⦿ Existing Conditions and Purpose and Need for action
- ⦿ How to frame the problems
- ⦿ Need versus actions

Where Do We Start?

- ◉ Unsolicited proposals
- ◉ Special initiatives
- ◉ Landscape-type assessments
- ◉ Collaboration efforts
- ◉ CDCS/PAD-DOs/Concept Paper

Identify Information Needs

- Identify the geographic area to consider
- Identify resources relevant to the activity's components. For example, an agricultural production activity would require information about soils, water, and crops. Can you think of others?
- Consider information needs of the activity's related actions



Existing Conditions/Baseline Data

- ⦿ Identify existing information:
 - ⦿ Data sources: literature, local communities, local experts, past projects, databases, etc.
 - ⦿ Field verify information using independent observations
- ⦿ Consider need and feasibility for obtaining missing information
- ⦿ Briefly summarize information

Purpose and Need



Problem Framing

Defining Your Problem (Need)

Traps

People are convinced that they know what is supposed to be done, so they don't think there is any reason to take time clarifying the problem.

Problem Framing

- ⦿ Problem framing refers to a focused and specific description of the problem to be solved.
- ⦿ A focused and accurate description of the problem is essential to developing the purpose and need.

Top Reasons Problem Framing Derails



- ⦿ Solving the wrong problem
- ⦿ Stating the problem so it cannot be solved
- ⦿ Solving a solution
- ⦿ Stating the problem too generally; or
- ⦿ Trying to get agreement on the solution before there is agreement on the problem.

Purpose and Need

(40 CFR 1502.14)

Writing the Purpose and Need

- Contrast the desired state with the existing state. Discuss the relationship between the desired condition (outcomes) and existing conditions (what's there now and will be in the future without action). Contrast unacceptable conditions created from not taking action.
- Develop the scope of the problem from different perspectives

Clarifying the Need

- ⦿ Contrast the desired state with the existing state (D – E = Need)

Desired Condition

- Existing Condition

Need for Change (noun)

What is a Purpose and Need Statement? – Terminology

- ⊙ Explanation of “why here, why now?”
- ⊙ **Need:** The problem to be solved; describing why you are proposing to do something in the first place.
 - ⊙ **Example:** The population of Fort Collins has expanded and many communities are now located adjacent to Forest Service lands with high levels of flammable fuels in the form of densely stocked stands and dead and down woody material. There is a need for reduced fire risk to these communities within ¼ mile of the National Forest boundaries (WUI).
- ⊙ **Purpose:** The objective to be realized; describing what you hope to achieve or improve related to the problem.
 - ⊙ **Example:** The purpose of this project is to reduce fire risk to adjacent communities by reducing flammable fuels on approximately 1,000 acres of NFS lands within the defined WUI.



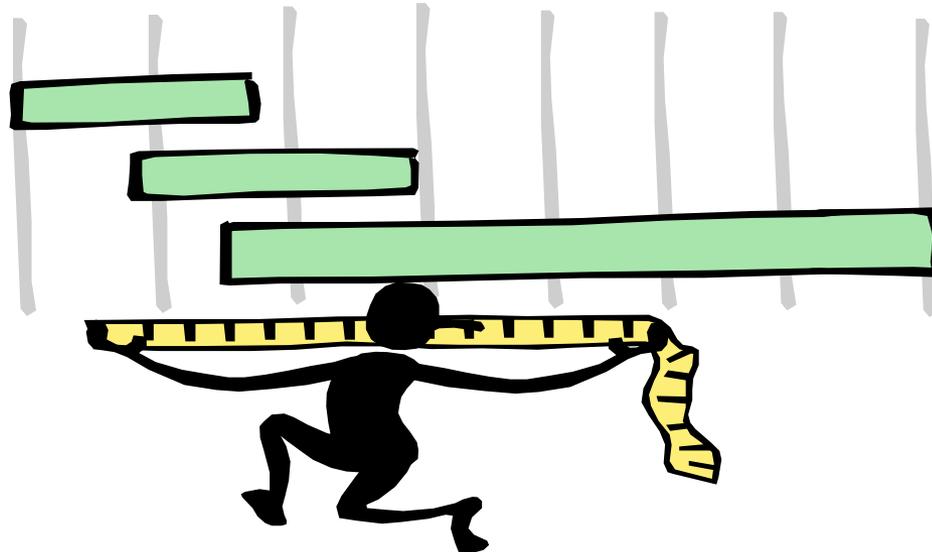
Scope of Purpose and Need



Can I eat the whole bone or just part of the bone?

How Does the Purpose and Need Statement Influence the Range of Alternatives?

- ◉ Broad Scope = Many alternatives
- ◉ Narrow Scope = Few alternatives



Example

- ⦿ **Need:**

Effluent currently being discharged to the Rio Juticalpa from the Juticalpa water treatment plant is high in fecal coliform and does not meet water quality standards.

- ⦿ **Purpose:**

The purpose of this project is to reduce fecal bacteria counts from discharged water by 50% to meet water quality standards.



Need vs. Action

- ⦿ The need for action can be defined as the lack of a desired end state or the presence of something unwanted (a problem).
- ⦿ A need *is a problem or an opportunity.*
- ⦿ An action is proposed to meet some underlying need.”

An Action is not a need TO

- ⦿ Cut trees
- ⦿ Install a recreation development
- ⦿ Prescribe burn
- ⦿ Build as bridge
- ⦿ Construct a trail



These are actions
not NEEDS

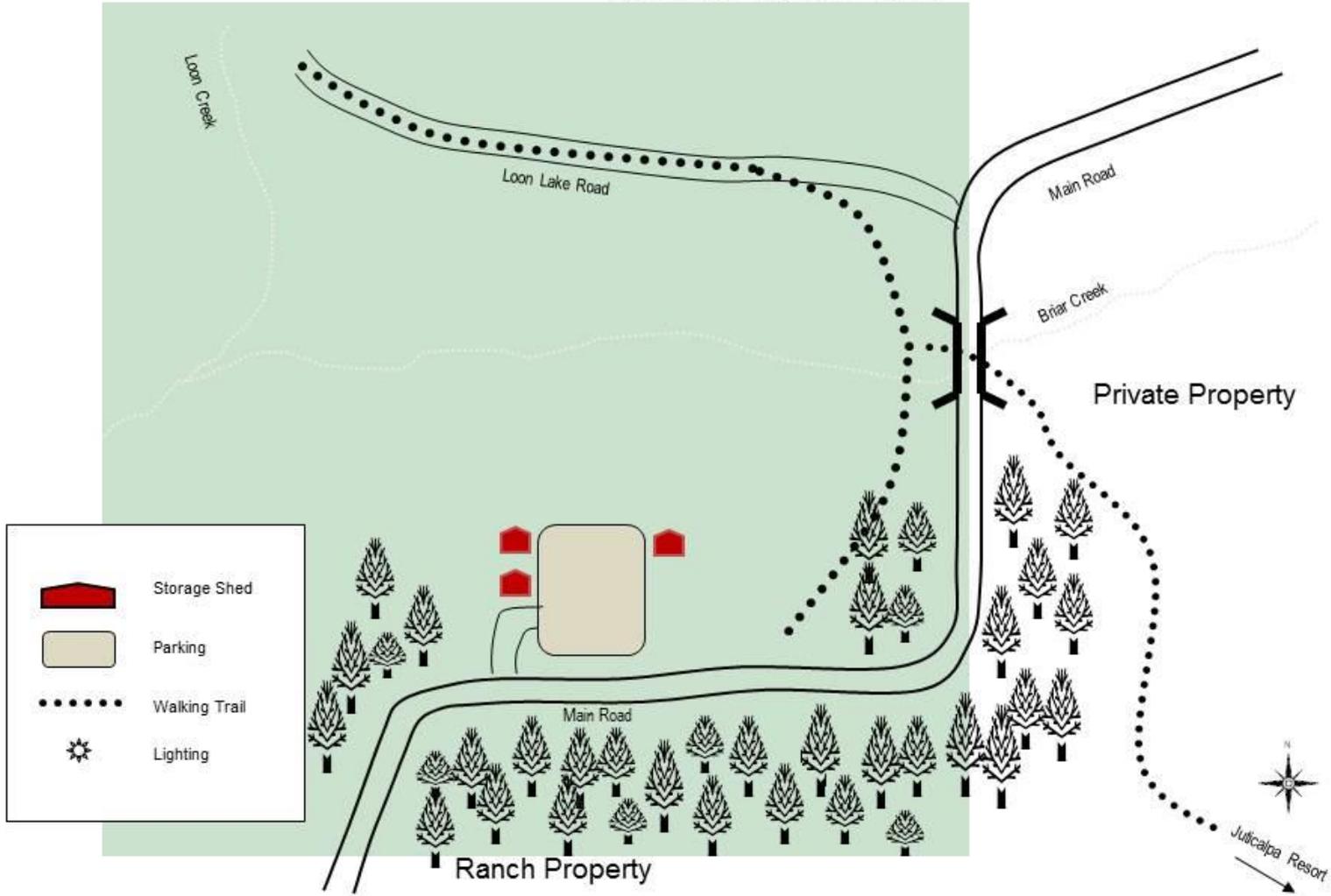
Schoolhouse Exercise

- ⦿ Describe:
 - ⦿ Existing condition
 - ⦿ Desired condition

- ⦿ Compare the two



Current Ranch Site



Key Points

- ⦿ The Existing Condition leads to the Purpose and Need. It should be concise, and based on current knowledge and field verified observations.
- ⦿ Determine the purpose for the activity.
- ⦿ Compare the existing and desired conditions to determine if there is a need for the action – the who, what, where, and why.