

# Partnership Capacity Assessment Tool

## FACT SHEET



National Partnership Office, USDA Forest Service  
"Imagine -- The Power of People Working Together."

The National Partnership Office of the USDA Forest Service is pleased to offer the Partnership Capacity Assessment Tool, available online through [www.partnershipresourcecenter.org](http://www.partnershipresourcecenter.org). The Assessment Tool helps Forest Service units assess, sustain, and improve their abilities to work with partners in continuing the Forest Service's long history of partnership and collaboration in land stewardship.

### *What is the Partnership Capacity Assessment Tool?*

The Assessment Tool is a group exercise that helps teams reflect on experiences and attitudes about partnerships and collaboration. The tool asks the group to score itself on a series of questions about partnership opportunities, goals, resources, procedures, incentives, barriers, skills, and relationships. The team uses these scores to chart strengths, analyze positive and negative factors that contribute to partnership capacity, and identify actions to sustain and grow capacity.

### *Who should use the Assessment Tool?*

Field units at any level, including field or research offices, ranger districts, or forests, will benefit from the assessment. Units with well-established partnership programs may value this tool most for its ability to generate open dialogue with partners and among staff. For units with less experience in partnerships, the tool will be a useful starting point for assessing current partnership abilities and discussing how to maintain strengths or address needs.

### *How can my team use the Assessment Tool to best meet our needs?*

The Assessment Tool is very versatile and can be applied in multiple ways. For example, you may use it as part of an annual business planning process or as a stand-alone tool to assess partnership needs and develop priorities to meet those needs. The tool is best completed in a group setting, either internally or with partners. Including partners in the process can help to promote dialogue and improve relationships. However, the tool is not intended to assess the feasibility of or develop plans for specific partnership opportunities.

### *How long will the assessment take?*

If participants familiarize themselves with the tool beforehand, groups can expect to complete the assessment in half a day. The investment of time will pay off by helping teams systematically identify needs and actions to meet those needs. Using a trained facilitator to keep the process moving smoothly is highly recommended. Partnership Coordinators can provide facilitation assistance.

### *Where can I find the Assessment Tool?*

Go to <http://www.partnershipresourcecenter.org/resources/tools/index.php>. From there, follow the link to the "Partnership Capacity Assessment Tool" from the orange box in the upper right corner.

### *Who can I contact for help with this tool or for more information?*

Contact your Regional or Forest Partnership Coordinator, or the National Partnership Office. Contact information is available at: [http://www.partnershipresourcecenter.org/resources/npo/pship\\_coord.php](http://www.partnershipresourcecenter.org/resources/npo/pship_coord.php). Visit [www.partnershipresourcecenter.org](http://www.partnershipresourcecenter.org) for additional resources on building effective partnerships.

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