USFS Special Use Permitting

Interview Guide

Debrief

Come back here after the session for a debrief.

About what we learned

- What are the big takeaways that you think the world should know about this story?
    - -
- Are there any notes or quotes we should definitely keep on hand?
    - -
- What opportunities or product ideas did we see emerge from this story?
    - -
- Other discussion items
    - -

About how it went

- Are there any questions that should be added? Removed? Modified?
    - -
- Is there anything about the procedure that should be changed before the next interview?
    - -

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*These are beats to hit, but not necessarily the exact words to say. Let the conversation flow naturally. These questions will be tailored and iterated upon after each session in order to drive towards getting progressively more targeted feedback. **Abbreviate this for participants who know us or those we work closely with.***

Before the session

- Send an introductory email in advance of the invite

Setting up the session

- Copy this document for each interview
  - Add it to the interview folder
  - Delete irrelevant questions
  - Add any specialty questions for the individual participant
- Post a link to the notes in Slack prior to the interview
- Give the participant about a 5 minute grace period to arrive and get settled

Participant background

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Introduction ⧗ 5:00

Hello

- Ask about their day, be a general human
- I'm ___ (name/pronouns/job title) and we also have ____ (name/pronouns/job title). (Have any other teammates or note takers introduce themselves)
  - {their name}, is that right? Do you prefer another name, or {Dr. x}, etc.?
  - We're with 18F – {describe who we are and what we're doing}
- Thanks for doing this session today.
- If you don't mind, I have a script I'm going to use to make sure everyone gets a similar experience.

How it will work

- We're going to ask you general questions about your experience as someone who processes permit proposals and applications
- Today's session will take about 50 minutes
- We can stop at any time

A few more things

- Anyway, there are just a few other things I'd like to mention about today's session.
- You can't do anything wrong today. We're not evaluating you, you won't hurt our feelings, and you can be honest with us about your work. We're here to learn about your world and your expectations. We identify you along with anything you say. We will aggregate your feedback with other interviews.
- Any questions before we begin?

During the interview, listen for

- Barriers
- Pain points
- Time and waiting
- Breakthroughs
- Relationships and influences

Interview questions

Background questions and building rapport ⌛ 5:00

- ☐ Tell me about you! (Have them introduce themselves)

Opening with space for them ⌛ 10:00 (if needed)

- ☐ Before we begin, is there anything you came here today to tell us? Anything you want to get off your chest? Anything you want us to know?

For USFS folks who process proposals and applications ⌛ 15:00

Focus on stories and specific retrospective accounts, then dig into questions you might still have if they haven't already come up.

- ☐ Can you tell me about a proposal or an application you're working on? What about the last one you worked on? How did that go? Walk me through it.
- ☐ What parts of the process are digital today? What systems are you passing through? Tell me more about that

For permit seekers ⧖ 15:00

Focus on stories and specific retrospective accounts, then dig into questions you might still have if they haven't already come up.

- ☐ Are you applying directly? Or do you fill a supporting or oversight role?
- ☐ When was the last time you applied for a permit?
    - ☐ What was the process?
    - ☐ What is your entry point?
    - ☐ What speed bumps did you encounter along the way?
    - ☐ Did you get to the outcome you were after? Why or why not?
    - ☐ What happens when you get approved or denied? What does that look like on your end?
    - ☐ What about enforcement? Does anyone check up on you?
    - ☐ What sorts of communication do you have with FS? What is the customer service relationship like?
    - ☐ Is there a community here? What about users who aren't in compliance? We've heard a bit about that.
    - ☐ How are you tracking things on your end?
- ☐ Are you dealing with other agencies? BLM? NPS?
- ☐ So, with all these issues, do you have any ideas of what might be helpful?

Topics we've been hitting with other participants (if needed) ⧖ 10:00

- ☐ Why is what you do important? What is the value? What is the impact when things go wrong?
- ☐ Have you been involved in other modernization efforts with the Forest Service? How did those go?
- ☐ What are you hearing from proponents and applicants?
- ☐ Mapping?
- ☐ SF299?
- ☐ NextGen SUDS?

Quick and dirty co-design segment (if needed, if time) ⧖ 10:00

Share [co-design scratchpad](#)

- ● Now, if you don't mind, I'm going to share my screen and we can do a little exercise together
- ● Let's imagine your dream scenario for intake and processing proposals and applications

- What happens first?
- What next?

General wrap-up questions ⏳ 5:00

- ☐ What is one thing we didn't ask that would be important for us to know?
- ☐ If you could change one thing tomorrow with a magic wand, what would it be? This could be something in the process, the product, or anything really.

Closing

- Thanks for taking the time to meet with us today. We appreciate your candor and sharing your experiences with us. Is it okay if we follow up with any questions we might have in the future?
- Do you have any questions for us?
- Is there anything else you want to say, or you wish we'd asked?
- Anyone else we should talk to?

After the session

- Comb the notes for any names and file them somewhere else (we keep the notes protected, but if we release them it's easier to clean them up now versus later)
- Debrief and capture takeaways

Notes