

3.13 Developed and Dispersed Recreation

3.13.1 Introduction

Regulations from the CEQ direct agencies to insure the professional and scientific integrity of environmental analyses in an EIS. This direction includes using the best available science to describe existing conditions in the Project Area; in this case, the UNF. Published, peer reviewed studies are used when applicable to conditions in the UNF; however, in most cases only those studies that are relevant to identifying potential impacts from the proposed action (in Chapter 4) are considered. These studies are cited in the text. The most relevant literature for most resources in Chapter 3 comes from internal Forest Service publications and reports, because this information is based on UNF-specific investigations and assessments. Throughout Chapter 3, the UNF Land and Resource Management Plan (USFS 2003) and associated EIS (USFS 2003a) are the most frequently cited documents. These documents were not peer reviewed within the scientific community, but were written using best available science, open to public comment as dictated by the NEPA process, and revised accordingly by resource specialists.

Throughout most of its history, the UNF has been popular for recreation. The Antiquities Act of 1906 established a set of standards that governed how the USFS managed recreation, which allowed forests to be preserved for the enjoyment of the people. In 1917, USFS officials launched a campaign to study their recreation facilities and determine which policies should govern the development of recreation facilities and uses (USFS 1997a). Recreation grew increasingly popular over the years and by the 1930s the USFS provided recreational opportunities for four times as many people as the National Park Service (USFS 1997a).

Participation in outdoor recreation in the UNF and throughout the nation continues to grow today. Table 3.51 shows national trends in outdoor recreation and participation. These trends suggest that outdoor recreation has increased considerably in popularity all over the country since 1983. In particular, recreational activities, such as backpacking, hiking, and snowmobiling, have seen some of the greatest increases in participation.

Table 3.51. National trends in outdoor recreation from 1983 to 2000 in millions of participants age 16 or older.

Activity	Participants in 1983	Participants in 1995	Participants in 2000	% Change (1983-2000)
Backpacking	8.8	15.2	27.9	+217.1
Hiking	24.7	47.8	69.8	+182.6
Snowmobiling	5.3	7.1	10.7	+101.8
Off-road Driving	19.4	27.9	35.0	+80.4
Bird Watching	21.2	54.1	38.2	+80.2
Cross-country Skiing	5.3	6.5	8.8	+66.0
Camping (primitive area)	17.7	28.0	25.8	+45.8
Horseback Riding	15.9	14.3	23.1	+45.3
Motor boating	33.6	47.0	48.2	+43.5
Picnicking	84.8	98.3	118.3	+39.5
Camping (developed area)	30.0	41.5	41.3	+37.7
Sightseeing	81.3	113.4	108.6	+33.6
Fishing	60.1	57.8	67.9	+12.9
Hunting	21.2	18.6	20.9	-1.4

Source: Cordell and Overdevest 2001.

3.13.2 Affected Environment

The UNF is particularly popular for recreation due to the myriad activities it offers, as well as its close proximity to over a million people along the Wasatch Front. In this section, the recreational environment the UNF is discussed in detail and, where available, specific information is presented for MAs.

In a 2001 National Visitor Use Monitoring Project, the USFS identified the most popular recreational activities in the UNF (table 3.52). The top five recreational activities for visitors to the UNF were general (relaxing, escaping urban areas), viewing natural areas, hiking, scenic drives, and wildlife viewing. While these activities were most popular with visitors, the survey concluded that the UNF offered visitors a number of activities and that recreational use of the UNF is comprehensive (USFS 2002).

Table 3.52. UNF activity participation.

Activity	% Participation
General/other: relaxing, hanging out, escaping noise and heat, etc.	77.0
Viewing natural features such as scenery and flowers on National Forest System lands	61.5
Hiking or walking	47.7
Driving for pleasure on roads	41.9
Viewing wildlife, birds, fish, etc. on National Forest System lands	35.7
Fishing: all types	21.6
Picnicking and family day gatherings in developed sites (family or group)	13.0
Other non-motorized activities (swimming, games, sports)	13.0
Camping in developed sites (family or group)	12.9
Nature study	10.3
Primitive camping	6.5
Visiting a nature center, nature trail, or visitor information services	5.8
Hunting: all types	5.1
Off-highway vehicle travel (4-wheelers, dirt bikes, etc.)	4.8
Gathering mushrooms, berries, firewood, or other natural products	4.4
Snowmobile travel	3.8
Bicycling, including mountain bikes	3.2
Horseback riding	2.5
Motorized water travel (boats, ski sleds, etc.)	2.3
Backpacking, camping in unroaded areas	1.7
Non-motorized water travel (canoe, raft, etc.)	1.7
Resorts, cabins and other accommodations on Forest Service managed lands (private or run by Forest Service)	1.3
Visiting historic and prehistoric sites/area	1.3
Cross-country skiing, snowshoeing	1.3
Downhill skiing or snowboarding	0.4
Other motorized land/air activities (plane, other)	0.2

Source: USFS 2002.

The USFS uses the ROS to classify the uses of the land and all of its components into individual classes. The ROS Classification System describes different classes of outdoor environments, activities, and experience opportunities, and uses environmental components to identify ROS classes. The ROS classes applied to the UNF are Primitive, Semi-Primitive Non-Motorized, Semi-Primitive Motorized, Roaded Natural, Roaded Modified, and Rural. One additional ROS class, Urban, is described in table 3.53, but is not applicable to the UNF. Table 3.53 describes the recreation setting for each ROS class and gives a definition to each type of setting. Figure 3.29: Forest-wide Recreation Map shows the location of different ROS classes.

Table 3.53. Recreation opportunity spectrum classification system.

ROS Class	Description of Setting
Primitive	Very high probability of solitude, closeness to nature, challenge and risk; essentially unmodified natural environment; minimal evidence of other users; few restrictions evident; non-motorized access and travel on trails or cross-country; no vegetation alterations.
Semi-Primitive Non-Motorized	High probability of solitude, closeness to nature, challenge and risk; natural appearing environment; some evidence of others; minimum of subtle, on-site controls; access by non-motorized trails or non-motorized primitive roads or cross-country; vegetation alterations to enhance forest health are few and widely dispersed.
Semi-Primitive Motorized	Moderate probability of solitude, closeness to nature; high degree of challenge and risk using motorized equipment; predominantly natural appearing environment; few users but evidence on trails; minimum of subtle, on-site controls; vegetation alterations few, widely dispersed, and visually subordinate.
Roaded Natural	Opportunity to be with other users in developed sites; little challenge or risk; predominantly natural appearing environment as viewed from sensitive roads and trails with moderate evidence of human sights and sounds; moderate concentration of users at campsites; some obvious user control; access and travel is standard motorized vehicles; resource modification and utilization practices are evident but harmonize with the natural environment.
Roaded Modified	Opportunity to get away from others, but with easy access; little challenge and risk; predominantly natural appearing environment as viewed from sensitive roads and trails with moderate evidence of human sights and sounds; moderate concentration of users at campsites; little user site controls; access and travel is standard motorized vehicles; resource modification and utilization practices are evident but harmonize with the natural environment.
Rural	Opportunity to be with others is important as is facility convenience; little challenge or risk except for activities like downhill skiing; natural environment is culturally modified; high interaction among users; obvious on-site controls; access and travel facilities are for intensified motorized use.
Urban	Opportunity to be with others is very important as is facility and experience convenience; challenge and risk are unimportant except for competitive sports; urbanized environment that may have a natural appearing backdrop; high interaction among large number of users; intensive on-site controls; access and travel facilities are highly intense; motorized use often with mass transit supplements; vegetation is planted and maintained.

Source: USFS 2003.

Table 3.54 summarizes the ROS classification spectrum for each MA in the UNF.

Table 3.54. Acres of ROS classification for each MA in the UNF.

RFOGD	MA	Primitive	Semi-primitive Non-motorized	Semi-primitive Motorized	Roaded Natural	Roaded Modified	Rural	Total
Currant Creek	Currant Creek	270		15,600	23,490	3,510		42,870
	West Fork Duchesne			21,700	12,670	7,240		41,610
Deer Creek	Deer Creek Reservoir		2,420	24,460	8,240	3,730		38,850
	Hobble Creek		42,250	20,790	4,510	3,090	550	71,190
	Lower Provo	6,110	35,280	10,760	7,450	3,700	180	63,480
Diamond Fork	Diamond Fork		7,900	57,550	20,140	11,460		97,050
Payson	Mona	14,930	250	140	850			16,170
	Nephi	7,450	6,570	10,350	5,220	3,020	30	32,640
	Payson	4,670	7,460	11,700	5,440	4,250	860	34,380
	Thistle		3,970	27,030	2,920	2,750		36,670
Spanish Fork Canyon	Upper Spanish Fork			29,230	3,920	11,170		44,320
Strawberry	Strawberry Reservoir			35,370	69,160	21,100		125,630
	White River			15,240	10,520			25,760
	Willow Creek			11,930	12,030			23,960
American Fork	American Fork	25,240	16,570	9,190	2,540	4,510	30	58,080
Upper Provo	Upper Provo			24,830	23,230	5,700		53,760
Vernon	Vernon			10,840	54,730			65,570
	West Sheeprock			18,120	7,340			25,460
Total		58,670	122,670	354,830	274,400	85,230	1,650	897,450
Percentages		6.54	13.67	39.54	30.58	9.50	0.18	

Source: USFS 2003a.

In the UNF, nearly 40 percent is Semi-primitive Motorized, in which motorized vehicles are permissible, but access is difficult and the environment is predominantly natural. Thirty percent is Roaded Natural with well-developed roads and trails and access to standard motorized vehicles. Nearly ten percent of the UNF is Roaded Modified with easy vehicle access and moderate evidence of the human environment. Combined, nearly 80 percent of the UNF is permitted for motorized vehicles, which offers visitors plentiful access to both developed recreation sites and dispersed recreation in the backcountry.

Approximately seven percent of the UNF is Primitive, with the largest acreages occurring in MAs adjacent or within wilderness boundaries, such as American Fork (Mount Timpanogos and Lone Peak Wilderness) and Mona (Mount Nebo Wilderness). Nearly 14 percent of the UNF is Semi-primitive Non-motorized, with primitive roads or trails with motorized use limited to heli-skiing, emergency situations and limited administrative uses. Combined, only about 20 percent of the UNF is off-limits to vehicles, and much of this acreage is in wilderness areas.

Developed Recreation

Developed recreation consists of visitors using areas that have been specifically designed for concentrated public use. These amenities consist of developments such as campgrounds, picnic sites, interpretive sites, observation points, and boating and fishing access sites. The UNF has many developments and amenities to accommodate a high volume of recreational users. Figure 3.29: Forest-wide Recreation Map, shows the location of developed campgrounds, trailheads and other facilities.

Recreation use is often measured in terms of Recreation Visitor Days (RVDs). One RVD represents one visitor spending twelve hours on the UNF engaged in recreational activities, or twelve visitors each spending one hour in the UNF, or any combination thereof (USFS 2003). Developed recreation site capacity is measured in terms of People At One Time (PAOT), which is the number of people that a developed site was designed to accommodate (USFS 2003). Developed recreation on the UNF had a capacity of approximately 32,200 PAOT, for a yearly estimated capacity of 6 million RVDs (USFS 2003). Efforts continue to ensure that the requirements for high visitor use are met (USFS 2003).

Since the 1984 Forest Plan was implemented, recreation expectancy has exceeded what the forest predicted for capacity of PAOT. Thirty additional developments have been completed or acquired in order to accommodate this high visitor use (USFS 2003). For instance, campgrounds and interpretive sites have been constructed for public use, and privately developed facilities are approved and permitted under special use authorization by the USFS (USFS 2003). In 2005 there was capacity for 12,411 PAOT in the 32 campgrounds available for use and 17,351 PAOT in developed day use sites (USFS 2006). Table 3.55 summarizes the existing developed recreation facilities in the UNF.

Table 3.55. Developed recreation facilities on the UNF.

Developed Recreation Type	# of Sites
Family Campgrounds	30
Family Picnic Areas	8
Group Campgrounds	4
Group picnic grounds	3
Visitor/Interpretive Sites	10
Trailheads	26
Winter-use Trailheads	14
Fishing Access Sites	14
Boating Access Sites	5
Nordic Ski Areas	2
Snow Parks	6
Observation Points	7

Source: USFS 2006.

Dispersed Recreation

Dispersed recreation is recreation that takes place outside of developed areas, such as back country camping and picnicking in dispersed campgrounds and picnic areas. It includes both non-motorized and motorized activities. Non-motorized activities include camping, hiking, mountain biking, and horseback riding; while motorized activities include motorcycle riding, All Terrain Vehicle (ATV) riding, and snowmobiling. Table 3.56 summarizes the miles of motorized and non-motorized trails that are available for recreation in the UNF in both summer and winter.

Table 3.56. Motorized and non-motorized trails.

Type of Trail	# of Miles
Miles of motorized trail available in the forest (this data includes 301 miles of motorized trail and 629 miles of roads open to mixed use [including OHVs])	930
Miles of non-motorized trail available in the forest	248
Miles of trail groomed for winter use	218

Source: USFS 2006.

Dispersed Recreation: Non-motorized

There are currently 248 miles of non-motorized trails for non-motorized use (USFS 2006). Wilderness areas in the UNF also provide opportunities for non-motorized recreation, including dispersed camping and hiking. Additionally, opportunities for wildlife viewing are abundant in the UNF, allowing visitors a chance to observe the diverse biological community within the forest. Backcountry travel is growing in popularity with participants around the United States as visitors search for solitude (Cordell 1999).

Rock and ice climbing has become increasingly popular. While few areas in the UNF have these opportunities, in certain parts of the forest, such as the American Fork MA, climbers can be seen nearly year-round (USFS 2003a).

The UNF also provides numerous winter activities for dispersed recreation users. For instance, 30 miles of ungroomed cross-country ski trails can be accessed by three different trailheads (USFS 2006).

In addition to developed stream access points, anglers can find dispersed fishing opportunities in the UNF backcountry. Many of these waters are stocked with different species of game fish by UDWL. Ice fishing opportunities also exist on reservoirs during the winter (UDWL 2006a).

Dispersed Recreation: Motorized

The popularity of motorized recreation has been increasing in recent years. Scenic driving is popular on many of the UNF’s scenic byways, including the Mount Nebo Scenic Byway, the Alpine Loop Scenic Backway, the Provo Canyon Scenic Byway, and other U.S. highways that provide opportunities to drive for pleasure. In addition, off highway vehicle (OHV) use and snowmobiling have been attracting an increasing number of visitors to the UNF (Hayes 2006).

OHV use provides access to more remote areas of the UNF and has grown substantially in the past decade. In Utah County alone, the percentage of registered OHVs grew 197 percent from 1998 to 2005 (Hayes 2006). Nearly 35 percent of Utahns choose to ride their OHVs on National Forest land, with many of these riders choosing the UNF specifically (Hayes 2006). OHVs are allowed on roads open to mixed use and on motorized trails. Currently in the UNF there are 301 miles of motorized trails and 629 miles of mixed use roads (USFS 2006).

Snowmobile registration from 1998 to 2005 has also grown considerably in all counties that are adjacent to or within UNF boundaries, with the least growth of 15 percent in Utah County and largest growth of 85 percent in Duchesne County (Hayes 2006). Snowmobile registration increased from 16,481 users in 1990 to 27,894 users in 2000 (USFS 2003b). There are 218 miles of trail groomed for snowmobile use (USFS 2006).

Dispersed Recreation: Hunting

Hunting is a popular recreational activity in the UNF. Hunting and issuance of hunting permits is managed by UDWL. There are six harvestable big game species in the UNF, including mule deer, elk, moose, cougar, bear, and mountain goats. UDWL divides the State into Wildlife Management Units (WMUs) and tracks the harvests of each animal according to these WMUs. WMU boundaries overlay MA boundaries and several MAs may be within one WMU boundary. Table 3.57 summarizes the three WMUs that overlay the UNF.

Table 3.57. Summary of WMUs in the UNF.

WMU	WMU Subunit	MAs
Wasatch Mountains	Heber	Deer Creek Reservoir Strawberry Reservoir Lower Provo
	Timpanogos	American Fork Lower Provo
	Diamond Fork	Lower Provo Deer Creek Reservoir Hobble Creek Diamond Fork Strawberry Reservoir Willow Creek Upper Spanish Fork Canyon White River
	Currant Creek-Avintaquin	Currant Creek West Fork Duchesne
Nebo	None	Mona Nephi Thistle Payson
Vernon	None	Vernon West Sheeprock

Source: Hersey 2006.

Hunting data for the WMUs in the UNF show that in 2005 mule deer was the most hunted big game animal, followed by elk. Table 3.58 summarizes 2005 big game harvest data for all WMUs that overlap the UNF. Harvest is the actual number of animals that were successfully harvested; Hunters is the number of permits issued for each individual species; and Days represents the total number of days that hunters spent pursuing a respective harvest (Hersey 2006).

Table 3.58. UNF hunting statistics.

Species	Harvest	Hunters	Days
Mule Deer	3,054	18,108	76,780
Elk	912	5,433	29,132
Moose	20	21	124
Goat	15	16	55
Cougar	56	NA	NA
Bear	10	NA	NA

Note: these data are likely overestimates as areas outside of the UNF are included.
Source: Hersey 2006.

The following information about specific game animals has been summarized from two sources: Hersey 2006, and UDWR’s hunting proclamations (UDWR 2006b).

Mule Deer

Mule deer hunting season runs from mid-August through October, with specific dates for specialized weaponry. Dates could change by a few days each year to correspond with management needs. Mule deer archery is held from approximately August 19 to September 15; Mule deer muzzleloader is held from approximately September 27 to October 5; and mule deer any weapon is held from approximately October 21 to October 29. Although the Nebo WMU yields a bigger percentage of the mule deer harvest, there are more hunters in the Heber WMU. Table 3.59 summarizes the mule deer hunt within each WMU.

Table 3.59. Percentage of harvest, hunters, and days of mule deer hunt within each WMU.

WMU	% of Harvest	% of Hunters	% of Days
Heber	24	26	25
Diamond Fork	19.5	22	22.8
Timpanogos	6	6	5.5
Currant Creek- Avintaquin	20	20.5	20
Nebo	28	24	25
Vernon	2.5	0.65	0.7

Source: Hersey 2006.

Elk

Elk hunting season extends from late August to early November, with specific dates for specialized weaponry. Elk general archery season is held from approximately August 24 to September 15; Elk youth any bull season is held from September 16 to September 26; Elk general season spike season is held from approximately October 7 to October 15, with general season any bull elk held from approximately October 7 to October 9. Finally, elk general muzzleloader season is held from approximately November 1 to November 9. Elk hunting is concentrated in the Heber, Diamond Fork, and Nebo WMUs, and the greatest percentage of the harvest comes from the Nebo WMU and the Diamond Fork WMU. Table 3.60 summarizes the elk hunt within each WMU.

Table 3.60. Percentage of harvest, hunters, and days of elk hunt within each WMU.

WMU	% of Harvest	% of Hunters	% of Days
Heber	21	25	25
Diamond Fork	27	26	25.5
Timpanogos	3.5	4	4
Currant Creek- Avintaquin	15	21	19
Nebo	31.5	22	25.5
Vernon	0.9	1.8	2

Source: Hersey 2006.

Rocky Mountain Goats

Hunting for Rocky Mountain goats is a popular once-in-a-lifetime hunt. In a once-in-a-lifetime hunt, hunters are awarded permits via lottery system, and each hunter can only be awarded one permit for this species in his or her lifetime. Dates vary with Rocky Mountain goats and harvest dates are limited, which increases the challenge of the sport. The Rocky Mountain Goat Fall

2006 hunt is scheduled to run from approximately September 16 to October 22. The hunting totals for Rocky Mountain goat are considerably less than those of mule deer and elk. In 2005 total harvest was 15 animals, with 16 hunters over 55 days. WMU-specific data is not available for this species.

Black Bear

Black Bear can be harvested several times a year throughout the forest. The spring hunting season runs from approximately April 8 to May 31; the summer hunting season runs from approximately July 15 to August 13; and the fall hunting season runs from approximately November 1 to November 26.

Cougar

Similar to Rocky Mountain goat, harvest times may vary for cougar. A longer hunting season allows hunters a good chance at making a harvest and helps to keep the populations of cougars in the forest at healthy numbers. The 2005 season extended from November 23, 2005 through June 4, 2006, in which 56 cougar were taken. Number of hunters and hunter days were not available for this species.

Upland Game

Upland game is harvestable throughout the UNF with dates ranging from August to January, depending on the game. Upland game species include ruffed grouse, blue grouse, pheasant, band-tailed pigeon, chukar partridge, California quail, Hungarian partridge, snowshoe hare, and cottontail rabbit. Hunting data for upland game is not available.

3.13.3 RFOGDs

In the following sections, the recreational resources of each MA are described and, where available, unique or specific sites are identified (see also figure 3.29: Forest-wide Recreation Map).

Currant Creek Group

Currant Creek MA

The Currant Creek MA offers several developed campsites, picnic areas, trailheads, and boat ramps, including the Currant Creek Campground which is one of four campgrounds in the UNF that accommodate equestrian use (USFS 2003). A developed observation point (see figure 3.29: Forest-wide Recreation Map) as well as fishing, boating, and kayaking on the Currant Creek Reservoir also attract visitors.

Dispersed recreation activities include hunting, camping, hiking, biking, horseback riding, OHV use, and snowmobiling. Hiking, horseback riding and other trail-use sports are accommodated by two trails in this MA. There is one designated trail for snowmobiling near the Currant Creek Reservoir (USFS 2006e).

West Fork Duchesne MA

With limited developed facilities in this MA, recreation is mostly dispersed and primitive. Big game hunting and OHV use are the most popular activities. The Wolf Creek Campground offers developed recreation, as do two trailheads which are heavily used during the hunting season (USFS 2003a).

Dispersed fishing opportunities are provided on many streams and rivers, including the West Fork of the Duchesne River which is a Blue Ribbon fishery (UDWL 2006c). In the winter snowmobiling use is high, and there are approximately seven trails in this MA for snowmobile riding (USFS 2006e).

Deer Creek Group

Deer Creek Reservoir MA

The Deer Creek Reservoir MA has opportunities for dispersed camping, hiking, biking, and OHV use. There is currently work being done to widen US Highway 189 through Provo Canyon to Heber, which will shorten the driving time to this area and may generate heavier visitor use (USFS 2003a).

The Deer Creek Reservoir MA offers a number of developed recreation facilities, including a campground, picnic site, trailhead, and boat ramps. Visitor use is high, which may be attributed both to the MA’s close proximity to population centers such as the Salt Lake Valley (USFS 2003a). The Lodgepole Campground provides campsites for both tents and RVs, as well as amenities such as fire rings, grills, picnic tables, and restrooms for public use. A developed picnic area offers a playground, restrooms, drinking water, and an interpretive trail. One trailhead is available to hikers, bikers, horseback riders, and motorcycle enthusiasts, providing access into the UNF’s backcountry (USFS 2006d).

Deer Creek Reservoir offers multiple aquatic recreation opportunities, including fishing and boating. Three boat ramps are provided for reservoir access, and an abundance of fish in this MA attracts anglers. Boating and other aquatic activities are sought out by visitors in warmer months and creates heavier use in the UNF from the late spring to early fall. In addition to fishing at developed recreation sites, streams and rivers in this MA offer a variety of fish species, including rainbow and brown trout, perch, walleye, and small mouth bass (UDWL 2006a).

Because much of the MA is classified roaded, the backcountry is accessible even outside of developed areas. This MA provides opportunities for dispersed recreational activities including camping, hiking, horseback riding, and biking. There are approximately five trails for backcountry travel on foot, horseback, or bicycle. These trails provide access to the UNF backcountry and allow visitors a primitive experience (USFS 2006d). In the winter, two cross-country ski trails accommodate skiers and snowshoers (see figure 3.29: Forest-wide Recreation Map).

The large acreage of roaded and semi-primitive motorized ROS classes provide ample opportunities for motorized recreation in this MA. Scenic driving is a popular form of recreation on paved highways such as Highway 40. OHV use is also popular along the Little Valley Road from the MA boundary to the Deer Creek Reservoir. Main Canyon Creek and Little Hobble Creek areas also receive a great deal of OHV use (USFS 2003a). In the winter snowmobiling is accommodated on approximately five trails in the area (USFS 2006e).

Hobble Creek MA

The Hobble Creek MA is immediately adjacent to the Wasatch Front and receives a great amount of day use by the public. Developed recreation sites include campgrounds and trailheads for summer and winter use. Because they provide access to the UNF’s extensive backcountry,

trailheads are popular with visitors for hiking, biking, motorcycling, equestrian use, Nordic and downhill skiing, snowshoeing, and snowmobiling.

In addition to developed facilities, this MA also provides chances for dispersed camping and travel, with approximately six trails for backcountry use (USFS 2006d). One of these six trails is the Bonneville Shoreline Trail, which is currently under analysis to span the Wasatch Front from Ogden to Spanish Fork. This trail follows the reminiscent shoreline of ancient Lake Bonneville and is popular for hiking, biking, horseback riding, and dog walking (BSTC 2006). The Great Western Trail, a national millennium trail, crosses the northeastern portion of the MA, and is proposed to stretch from Canada to Mexico (USFS 2003a).

Dispersed motorized recreation is also a popular activity in this MA, as much of the acreage is designated for vehicle access. Visitors take scenic drives along the right fork of Hobble Creek as part of a loop into Diamond Fork Canyon. This MA provides one multi-use trail for riding OHVs, with several others for motorcycle riding. One of these roads runs along the Wasatch Front to Kolob Basin and provides an impressive view of the Utah Valley (USFS 2003a). In the winter, groomed snowmobile trails provide opportunities for snowmobile riders to access trails and the UNF backcountry (USFS 2006e).

Lower Provo MA

The Lower Provo MA receives high visitor use, particularly as it is in close proximity to Provo. Cascade Springs in the Little Provo Deer Creek Corridor is used by educational groups, for wildlife viewing, and for weddings (USFS 2003a). The area is operated under the Recreation Fee Demonstration Project Authority, which creates opportunity for regular maintenance and upkeep of the canyon (USFS 2003).

Brigham Young University’s Aspen Grove facility and the Sundance Ski Resort are estimated to contribute 30 percent of the visitor use in this area. Opportunities range from kayaking and fishing in the Provo River to hiking and hunting in the canyons (USFS 2003a). There is also an Archery Range permitted to Timpanogos Archery Club, several picnic areas operated by Provo City, and a single picnic area under special use permit operated by Utah County Parks and Recreation (USFS 2003a).

Scenic driving is popular on the Provo Canyon Scenic Byway (USFS 2003a), with developed recreation points including the Cascade Springs observation point and interpretive trail. These two amenities are unique to the MA and are not offered in other areas of the UNF. In addition, the Provo River Parkway offers approximately 13,000 visitors a year access to the Mount Timpanogos Wilderness Area (USFS 2003a).

There are many opportunities for developed recreation in this MA. The Rock Canyon, Hope, and Mount Timpanogos campgrounds offer public restrooms, drinking water, and picnic tables to enhance the developed camping experience (USFS 2006f). Seven developed picnic sites in this MA offer developed facilities for day use, while other developments include two trailheads that provide easy access to hiking, biking, horseback riding, and OHV use. In winter, one trailhead offers snowmobile access, and one trailhead provides opportunities for cross-country skiing (see figure 3.29: Forest-wide Recreation Map).

In addition to developed facilities, this MA offers access to myriad dispersed recreation opportunities. Camping and backpacking are popular in the Mount Timpanogos Wilderness Area

(Wilderness.net 2006). There are also approximately seven trails for hiking, biking, horseback riding, and motorcycle use. This MA is one of the few that offer rock and ice climbing in the UNF, and many visitors from along the Wasatch Front choose this area to climb (USFS 2003).

The lower section of the Provo River is heavily used for fishing with a seven mile stretch of Blue Ribbon waters between the Olmstead Division and Dam Creek Dams (UDWL 2006e).

Diamond Fork Group

Diamond Fork MA

The Diamond Fork MA offers diverse recreational opportunities. Developed recreation facilities are limited to the Diamond Fork campground, with fishing access and ADA accessible facilities. There are two trails for OHV use, known as multiple use trails. Currently there are not any designated trails for OHV use alone (USFS 2003).

Diamond Fork MA offers multiple opportunities for dispersed camping, hiking, and biking, along with motorcycle use and horseback riding. Thirteen trails provide access to the backcountry and opportunities for dispersed recreation (see figure 3.29: Forest-wide Recreation Map). Diamond Fork has been listed as having potential for blue ribbon status by the Blue Ribbon Advisories Council (UDWL 2006c).

Payson Group

Mona MA

This area is home to the Mount Nebo Wilderness Area and brings in many visitors from different areas to experience a wilderness setting. There are no developed recreation facilities in this MA. The Mount Nebo Wilderness Area provides many opportunities for backcountry camping and hiking along 21 miles of trails. Scenic driving occurs along the Mount Nebo Scenic Loop (see figure 3.29: Forest-wide Recreation Map).

Nephi MA

The Nephi MA’s western portion is comprised of the Mount Nebo Wilderness Area which offers dispersed recreational opportunities. There is one picnic area and two developed campgrounds in this MA which offer restrooms, fishing access, and a nature trail. Dispersed recreation activities such as hiking, biking, equestrian use OHV use, and snowshoeing are accessed by five trails. Scenic driving on the Mount Nebo Scenic Byway in this MA is accessed in the warmer months, and the road is used for snowmobiling in the winter time (see figure 3.29: Forest-wide Recreation Map).

Payson MA

Payson MA has opportunities for both developed and dispersed recreation and many visitors come from Payson City and other parts of Utah County for day use in the UNF (USFS 2003a). The MA offers three campgrounds, including Payson Lake Campground which provides opportunities for fishing, swimming, and a nature trail. There is also one picnic area for day use. Although there are no developed trailheads for summer travel, two winter trailheads provide snowmobiling access to areas outside of the Mount Nebo Wilderness area (see figure 3.29: Forest-wide Recreation Map).

There are fifteen trails for dispersed recreation, including hiking and biking, but no multi-use OHV trails exist. The Mount Nebo Scenic Byway is popular for scenic driving when roads are

clear and offers snowmobile access in winter months. There are no cross-country ski trails; however, many visitors choose to snowshoe in the UNF during the winter. The Mount Nebo Wilderness Area provides opportunity for a remote experience (see figure 3.29: Forest-wide Recreation Map).

Thistle MA

The Thistle MA offers both developed and dispersed recreation activities. In addition to one picnic area, Blackhawk Campground provides stock loading facilities and restrooms. One developed trailhead exists for hiking or horseback riding. Summer use of these developments accounts for much of this MA’s RVDs. One snowmobile trail provides opportunities for visitors to enjoy the winter landscape outside of the wilderness area (see figure 3.29: Forest-wide Recreation Map).

Spanish Fork Canyon Group

Upper Spanish Fork MA

The Upper Spanish Fork MA is primarily managed for dispersed recreation and there are no developed recreational facilities (see figure 3.29: Forest-wide Recreation Map). The MA is primarily used for hunting, fishing, hiking, scenic driving, wildlife viewing, and OHV use. There are approximately three multiple-use trails open to motorized use. The Great Western Trail, a National Millennium Trail, is located along the eastern boundary of the MA (USFS 2003a).

Snowmobiling is a popular winter activity in Sheep Creek, one of at least two groomed trails in the area (USFS 2003a and USFS 2006e).

Strawberry Group

Strawberry Reservoir MA

Strawberry Reservoir MA provides ample opportunities for boating and other water sports in the summer, and ice fishing in the winter. Strawberry Reservoir receives more than 1.5 million angler hours annually and is the most popular fishing area in Utah (UDWL 2006d).

This MA offers four developed campgrounds, the most in the UNF, and two picnic areas. A visitor center near the reservoir has public information about the UNF. Six trailheads offer access to hiking, biking, and horseback or motorcycle riding (see figure 3.29: Forest-wide Recreation Map). There is also one multiple use trail for OHV use (USFS 2006d).

In the winter, three trailheads and approximately 12 trails for snowmobiling and three trailheads for cross country skiing provide backcountry access, which, along with the American Fork MA, is the highest number of winter use trailheads in the UNF (USFS 2006e).

The importance of this MA as habitat for nesting and migratory birds and for the recreational opportunities it offers has resulted its nomination as an Important Bird Area by the Audubon society (Darnall 2006).

White River MA

The White River MA is mostly dispersed with no developed recreation facilities in the MA. There are abundant opportunities for backcountry travel on six trails. There are two multi-use trails for OHV use (USFS 2003a). In the winter, one groomed snowmobile trail offers access to the backcountry (USFS 2006e).

Willow Creek MA

There are no developed recreation facilities in the Willow Creek MA. There are four multi-use trails providing for hiking, biking, horseback riding, snowmobiling, and OHV use (see figure 3.29: Forest-wide Recreation Map)

American Fork Group

American Fork MA

This MA received approximately two million recreation visitor days in 1998. Most of these users come from the urban Utah and Salt Lake Valleys. Recreational activities include developed and dispersed camping, picnicking, fishing, hiking, mountain biking, bike touring, hunting, horseback riding, recreational gold panning, cross-country skiing, heli-skiing, snowmobiling, scenic driving, rock climbing, and photography. The area is a world-renowned rock climbing destination (USFS 2003a).

To accommodate the high volume of use, the UNF has provided many developed recreational facilities in this MA. Three campgrounds provide campsites, trailheads, and public restrooms (USFS 2006f). For day-use visitors there are eight picnic sites, including Mile Rock, Warnick, Martin, RoadHouse, Echo, Grey Cliffs and Hanging Rock picnic areas, and one horse-transfer station with a picnic area.

This area has one of the highest numbers of trailheads in the UNF; six trailheads provide access for hiking and biking and many of the trails are multi-use for OHVs. Additionally, this MA has approximately ten trails, including the Great Western Trail and Bonneville Shoreline Trail, for hiking, biking and other means of backcountry travel (see figure 3.29: Forest-wide Recreation Map). Motorized use is permitted on the Great Western Trail, a national millennium trail. The Bonneville Shoreline Trail is limited to non-motorized use (USFS 2003a).

The MA has seven developed fishing access sites for anglers, including the American Fork River, Tibble Fork, and Silver Lake Flat Reservoir. These sites are regularly stocked with hatchery-raised rainbow trout each season (UDWL 2006a).

Winter recreational opportunities include three developed snowmobile trailheads and three developed trailheads for cross country skiing (USFS 2006e). As a result of the high number of trailheads for snowmobiling and cross country skiing, this MA receives some of the highest winter recreational use.

The Alpine Scenic Loop is a popular scenic drive from May to mid-October, with over a million visitors annually (USFS 2006g).

Both the Mount Timpanogos and Lone Peak Wilderness areas are accessible from this MA, and many visitors use this MA to access Mount Timpanogos and Lone Peak Wilderness areas for primitive backcountry travel either on foot, horseback, or by bicycle to experience the solitude of the wilderness (Wilderness.net 2006).

In American Fork Canyon, activities such as hiking, picnicking, and fishing are being managed under a pilot recreational fee demonstration project authority. This allows funds to stay in the area for maintenance and improvement of recreational facilities.

A one-mile segment of the South Fork of the American Fork River is eligible for the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System, of which 0.25 miles outside the wilderness area are eligible as a recreational river.

Upper Provo Group

Upper Provo MA

This MA offers year-round developed and dispersed recreation. Recreational activities include camping, hunting, fishing, and snowmobiling. The Mill Hollow Campground offers campsites and amenities such as a trailhead, restrooms, and fishing access sites to accommodate visitors. Recreational use in this MA is moderate and the Mill Hollow and Wolf Creek Campground accounts for a large portion of recreational use. A limited trail system offers motorized opportunities for ATV and motorcycle use (USFS 2003a). Snowmobiling is accessed by one trailhead in the winter (USFS 2006e). Scenic driving is also a key recreational activity and State Highway 35 is a popular road for this activity (USFS 2003a).

Vernon Group

Vernon MA

Recreation use in the Vernon MA is moderate, centered on the Vernon Reservoir and upper Vernon and Little Valley Creeks. The majority of recreational use is dispersed recreation related to hunting and ATV use. Most of the users are residents of Salt Lake Valley. ATV use is prevalent around the Vernon Reservoir and has caused problems related to off-road impacts to both NFS and private lands. The UNF has installed developed facilities at Vernon Reservoir to address adverse impacts on water and soil resources as a result of heavy use. Big game (deer) hunting seasons generally increase the recreation use in the MA in the form of dispersed camping and general hunting activity (USFS 2003a).

ATV users who recreate at the Little Sahara Recreation Area (administered by the BLM) travel through the National Forest on the Main Canyon Road from the Little Sahara to the town of Vernon. This high level of use contributes to the wear and tear of the road facilities (USFS 2003a).

West Sheeprock MA

This MA lies just west of the Vernon MA and is very similar in terrain and types of recreational activities offered. It is a high west desert environment which attracts visitors from the Tooele Valley and other surrounding areas. There are no developed recreation facilities in this MA (USFS 2003a).

Dispersed recreational use includes camping, hiking, biking and OHV use and is mainly associated with the hunting seasons. There are three trails for hiking and biking, motorcycle riding, equestrian use, and OHV riding. OHV use occurs on existing roads and trails and is the most common activity in the MA (USFS 2003a).

Figure 3.29. Forest-wide recreation map.

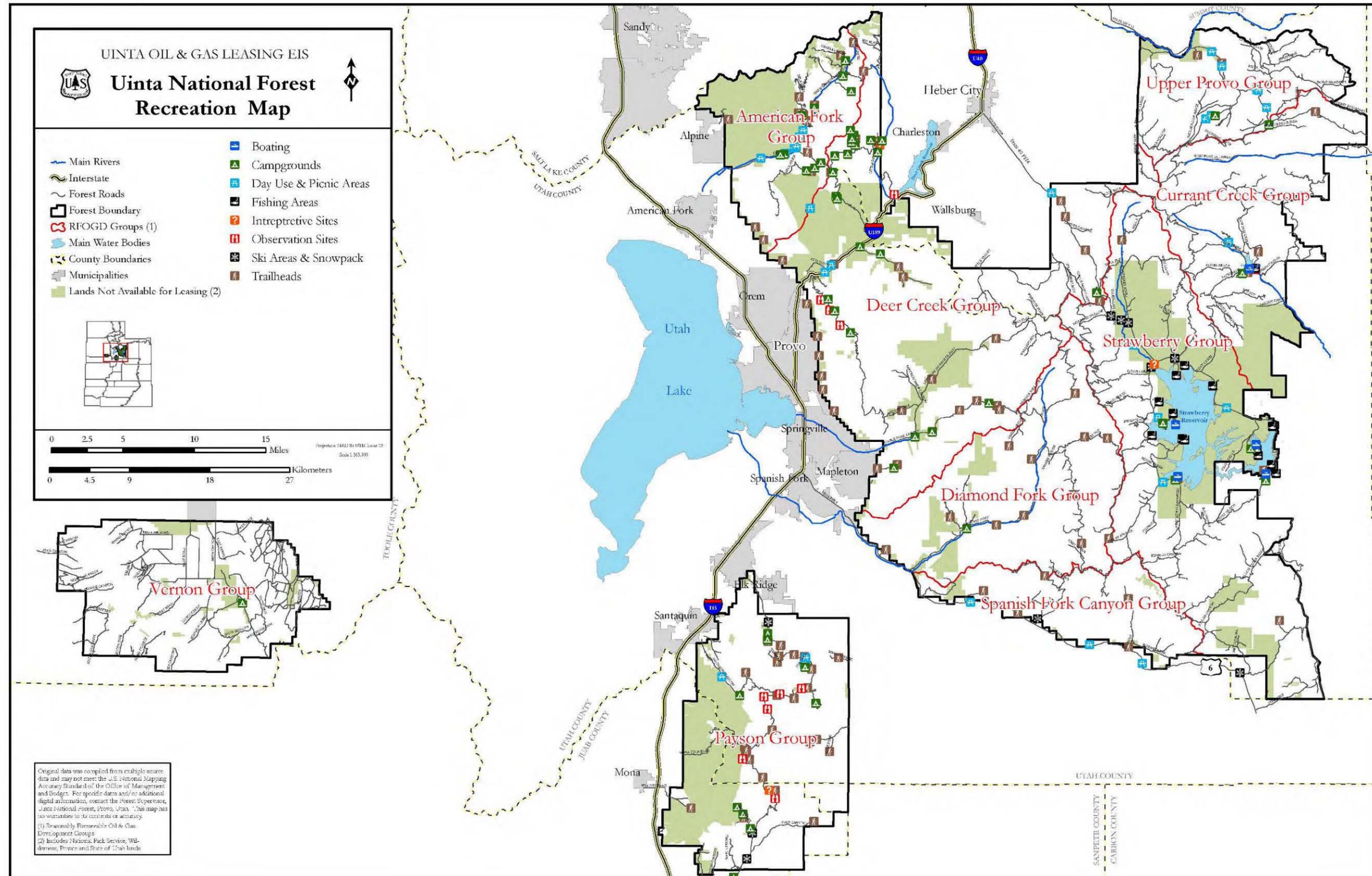
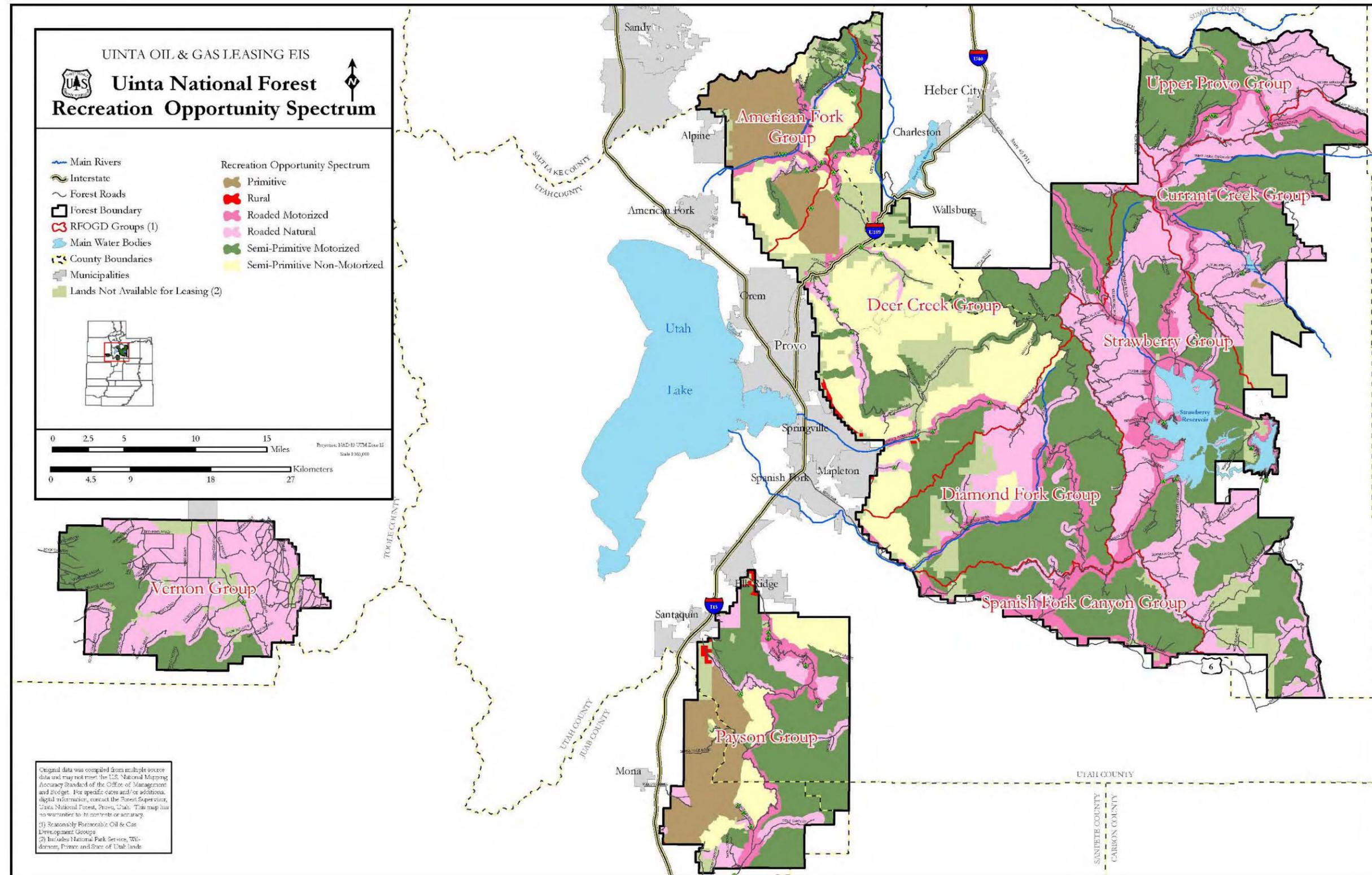


Figure 3.30. Recreation Opportunity Spectrum.



3.14 Other Mineral Resource Extraction Activities

Other Mineral Resources are discussed under Section 3.3: Geology and Soils. Other mineral resources are described for each RFOGD in Section 3.3.4. Please see those sections for information about other mineral resources.

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