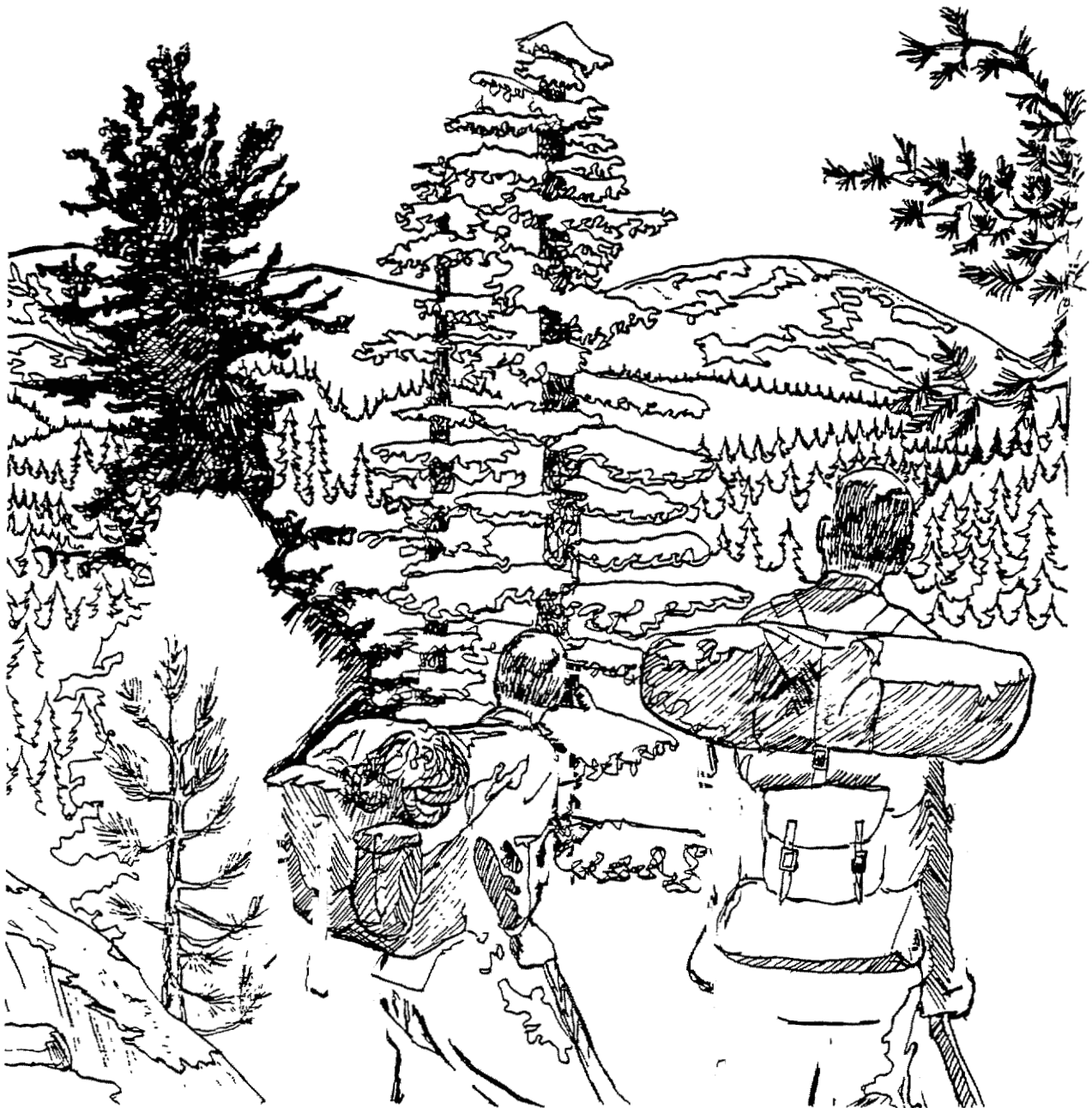


APPENDIX F

Recreation Opportunity Spectrum



APPENDIX F

RECREATION OPPORTUNITY SPECTRUM (ROS)

The Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS), is a system that allows Forest Service managers to provide the type of land base most likely to provide the setting for the types of outdoor recreation opportunities our public will desire. ROS is based on the premise that the relative "primitiveness" of the land is a key determinant as to what types of activities or "opportunities" are possible on the land. ROS includes the following categories: primitive, semi-primitive non-motorized, semi-primitive motorized, roaded natural, rural, and urban. The Mendocino National Forest does not provide urban recreation opportunities. As the landbase becomes more developed with roads and other facilities, the mix of recreational opportunities will change from the more primitive categories to the more developed ones.

Although development of new road systems changes ROS classifications, it does not change the "wild" status of areas such as Wildernesses, Wild and Scenic Rivers, etc. The status of officially designated Wildernesses do not change, no matter how closely new roads approached their boundaries. However, the ROS classifications for areas inside Wildernesses change in response to development of new roads, just as they are influenced by proximity to existing roads. The presence or development of road systems outside but adjacent to Wilderness boundaries explains how it is possible to have Wildernesses which contain little or no acreage of Primitive ROS lands. Because of its proximity to existing roads and other facilities, the Snow Mountain Wilderness contains no lands classified as Primitive (1982 ROS inventory).

The impacts of roads on ROS classifications may be modified to some degree by terrain features. For example, a ridge which follows a Wilderness boundary may reduce or eliminate the impacts of roads located outside the Wilderness, by preventing the sights and sounds associated with that road from intruding onto the Wilderness side of the ridge. In a case like this, it might be appropriate to adjust the ROS remoteness criteria for distance from the nearest road, and assign the area a more remote ROS classification. On the other hand, a stream which follows the boundary of a Wilderness would not be effective in reducing the impacts of roads located outside the Wilderness. A situation like this would very likely require use of the full distance criteria, in establishing the degree of remoteness and assigning the appropriate ROS classification.

Another consideration is that since each alternative has different intensities of development, the distribution of acreages among the various ROS classes will vary according to the alternative being considered.

A key concept of the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum is the assumption that there is a mix of primitive recreation and more developed recreation opportunities that will best meet public needs in the future. Unless the Forest Service specifically manages for such a mix, the public will gradually lose the opportunity for the more primitive types of recreation experience, as new roads and other facilities are developed. On the basis of this concept, the four ROS categories being managed for on the Mendocino National Forest are described and defined as follows:

PRIMITIVE ROS CLASS

CHARACTERIZATION	SETTING	CHARACTERIZATION OF EXPERIENCE	REMOTENESS
Land Based includes viewing scenery, hiking, walking, horseback riding, camping (primitive), and mountain climbing. Water based includes canoeing, sailing, and swimming. Snow and ice based includes snow play and X-country skiing.	Area is characterized by essentially unmodified natural environment of fairly large size. Interaction between users is very low, and evidence of other users is minimal. The area is managed to be essentially free from evidence of human induced restrictions and controls. Motorized use within the area is not permitted.	Extremely high probability of experiencing isolation from the sights and sounds of humans; independence; closeness to nature; tranquility; and self-reliance through the application of outdoor skills in an environment that offers a high degree of challenge and risk.	At least 3 miles from any road or trail with motorized use.

SEMI-PRIMITIVE, NON-MOTORIZED ROS CLASS

CHARACTERIZATION	SETTING	CHARACTERIZATION OF EXPERIENCE	REMOTENESS
Includes all the previous plus mountain bicycling and hang gliding.	Area is characterized by a predominantly natural or natural appearing environment of moderate to large size. Interaction between users is low, but there is often evidence of other users. The area is managed in such a way that minimum onsite controls and restrictions may be present but are subtle. Motorized use is not permitted.	High (not extremely high) probability of experiencing isolation from the sights and sounds of humans; independence; closeness to nature; tranquility; and self-reliance through the application of outdoor skills in an environment that offers challenge and risk.	1/2 to 3 miles from any road or trail with motorized use.

SEMI-PRIMITIVE, MOTORIZED ROS CLASS

CHARACTERIZATION	SETTING	CHARACTERIZATION OF EXPERIENCE	REMOTENESS
Includes all the previous plus off-road motorcycles, 4x4 ORVs, all terrain vehicles, motorized aircraft, camping (most), power boating, and snowmobiling.	Area is characterized by a predominantly natural or natural-appearing environment of moderate to large size. Concentration of users is low, but there is often evidence of other users. The area is managed in such a way that minimum on-site controls and restrictions may be present but are subtle. Motorized use is permitted.	Moderate probability of experiencing isolation from the sights and sounds of humans; independence; closeness to nature; tranquility; and self-reliance through the application of outdoor skills in an environment that offers challenge and risk. Opportunity to have a high degree of interaction with the natural environment. Opportunity to use motorized equipment while in the area.	At least 1/2 mile from roads maintained for use by highway vehicles.

ROADED, NATURAL ROS CLASS

CHARACTERIZATION	SETTING	CHARACTERIZATION OF EXPERIENCE	REMOTENESS
Includes all the previous plus automobile, recreation vehicles, aerial trams and lifts, bicycling, organization camping, resort lodges, gathering forest products, camping (all), picnicking, downhill skiing, water skiing, sledding, and tobogganing.	Area is characterized by a predominantly natural-appearing environment with moderate evidence of the sights and sounds of humans. Such evidence usually harmonizes with the natural environment. Interaction between users may be low to moderate, but evidence of other users is prevalent. Resource modification and utilization practices are evident but harmonize with the natural environment. Conventional motorized use is provided for in construction standards and design of facilities.	About equal probability to experience affiliation with other user groups and for isolation from the sights and sounds of humans. Opportunity to have a high degree of interaction with the natural environment. Challenge and risk opportunities associated with more primitive type of recreation are not very important. Opportunity for both motorized and non-motorized forms of recreation are possible.	Within 1/2 mile of roads maintained for use by highway vehicles.