

## APPENDIX G RECREATION NICHE

### National Forest Service Recreation Niche – Colorado Recreation Strategy

Nationally, the Forest Service has identified its role or niche in providing recreation as: *Nature-based, dispersed recreation, including undeveloped settings, built environments reinforcing natural character, and wild land settings that complement enjoyment of special places.*

The Forest Service manages many diverse special places. Each place is unique in its characteristics, recreation opportunities and role in local and state tourism. Different areas of National Forests serve different clientele. Each place, however, cannot provide for every recreation activity. Limited budgets require a focus on providing only the most important suites of recreation opportunities. Working with the inherent potential of the land and determining the recreation focus from a social context, the land can be managed for its niche or what it does best.

According to the Colorado Recreation Strategy, Recreation Niche identification assures that special places retain their uniqueness and provide the kinds of public benefits for which they are best suited. Areas across the GMUG National Forest were delineated into large areas that share a common recreation emphasis. Emphasis is based on a statewide perspective of what makes an area important to recreation and tourism in Colorado. Providing a recreation focus assists in setting project and budget priorities. The Table G-1 describes the variety of recreation niches on the GMUG. The accompanying map in Figure G-1 displays where these niche areas are located.

Niche areas are compatible with ROS settings and theme areas as described in the GMUG Forest Plan.

**Table G-1.** Summer Niche Descriptions

	PLACE OF NICHE	NICHE MANAGEMENT	PRIMARY RECREATION ACTIVITIES	MEANINGFUL MEASURE STANDARD	AREA SETTING & EMPHASIS ACTIVITIES
1	<b>Destinations of Significance/Special Places:</b> National, State, Regional, Local, plays a role in area tourism, has capacity to draw visitors, includes	<b>Scenic Integrity:</b> Very High to High. <b>ROS:</b> SPNM, RN to Rural. High standards in facility design, and accessibility. Careful	<b>Recreation Activities:</b> Day-use activities including viewing scenery, photography and interpretation as	Manage facilities, interpretation, trails and concentrated use areas to <b>standard.</b>	Alpine to mountain slope scenery High-use interpretive sites to pristine, highly challenging, mtn experiences:

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	heritage sites and historic districts. These are both linear and point features.	attention to agency image. Fees may be collected to recover costs.	primary activities.		hiking, ice climbing, 4-wheel driving.
2	<b>“Year-round” Resort Community Settings.</b> Primary areas of second home development and transient recreating population. Residents depend on the Forest for the Scenic backdrop and day-use recreation activities, includes winter sports areas.	<b>Scenic Integrity:</b> High to Moderate. <b>ROS:</b> RN to Rural.	<b>Recreation Activities:</b> Day-use activities including viewing scenery, day hikes, and festival supporting activities.	Manage facilities, interpretation, trails and concentrated use areas to <b>critical standard.</b>	Hubs of intense year round recreation within historically rich mtn communities and surrounding alpine landscape. Expansive views of mixed conifer/aspens and wildflowers: downhill skiing, Nordic, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, snowshoeing, snowboarding, hiking, biking, rec residences & lodges.
3a	<b>High Use “Developed” Recreation Areas.</b> Intensively managed areas and/or corridors including large group gatherings, camping, motorized trails and water-based recreation, of region-wide importance. Winter & summer.	<b>Scenic Integrity:</b> High to Moderate. <b>ROS:</b> RN to Rural. High standards in facility design, and accessibility. Careful attention to agency image. Fees may be collected to recover costs.	<b>Recreation Activities:</b> Includes developed recreation, both day and overnight use and water sports.	Manage facilities, interpretation, trails and concentrated use areas to <b>standard.</b>	Hubs of intense summer recreation within surrounding mtn landscape. Views of mixed conifer/aspens, wildflowers, parks; Feature and activity based camping, and day-use activities. Fishing activity is high. Kayaking and White Water Rafting.

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3	<p><b>High Use “Dispersed” Recreation Areas.</b> Intensively managed areas or corridors including large group gatherings, camping, motorized trails and water-based recreation, of region-wide importance. Winter &amp; summer.</p>	<p><b>Scenic Integrity:</b> High to Moderate. <b>ROS:</b> SPM, RN to Rural. High standards in facility design, and accessibility. Careful attention to agency image. Fees may be collected to recover costs.</p>	<p><b>Recreation Activities:</b> Primarily dispersed activities and unrestricted camping.</p>	<p>Manage facilities, interpretation, trails and concentrated use areas to <b>standard.</b></p>	
3b	<p><b>Low Use Recreation Areas.</b> Areas where recreation activities are predominate while resource utilization practices occur concurrently</p>	<p><b>Scenic Integrity:</b> High to Moderate. <b>ROS:</b> SPM-RN.</p>			
4	<p><b>General Forest Areas.</b> Recreation activities occur concurrently with active resource management, i.e., timber harvest, utility corridors, mineral exploration, grazing, etc.</p>	<p><b>Scenic Integrity:</b> High to Moderate. <b>ROS:</b> RN.</p>	<p><b>Recreation Activities:</b> Primarily dispersed activities such as OHV travel, hunting, camping, viewing scenery, cross-country skiing, mountain biking, and hut system.</p>	<p>Manage trails and concentrated use areas to <b>standard.</b></p>	<p>High elevation mixed conifers to low elevation sage brush and pinion-juniper. Rolling foothills to mountain Slopes:</p>

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5	<p><b>Scenic Travel Corridors/Wild &amp; Scenic Rivers.</b> Areas adjacent to major highways and scenic byways and other scenic travel corridors, where the vast majority of visitors enjoy the forest solely from their automobiles.</p>	<p><b>Scenic Integrity:</b> Very High to High. <b>ROS:</b> RN to Rural.</p>	<p><b>Recreation Activities:</b> Intensive day use viewing for pleasure, with stops at concentrated service, scenic viewing or developed interpretation/recreation nodes.</p>	<p>Manage facilities, interpretation, trails and concentrated use areas to <b>critical standard.</b></p>	<p>Alpine to mountain slope scenery. High elevation mixed conifers to low elevation sage brush and pinion-juniper. Rolling foothills to mtn slopes, including rivers, lakes &amp; reservoirs: viewing scenery, photo opps, fishing, rafting, kayaking, &amp; bicycling .</p>
6	<p><b>Backcountry M.</b> Traditional dispersed recreation, including dispersed camping, hunting, and other motorized uses.</p>	<p><b>Scenic Integrity:</b> Very High to High. <b>ROS:</b> SPM.</p>	<p><b>Recreation Activities:</b> OHV trail riding, dispersed camping, hunting, and other unregulated activities.</p>	<p>Manage trails and concentrated use areas to <b>standard.</b></p>	<p>High elevation mixed conifers to low elevation sage brush and pinion-juniper. Rolling foothills to mountain slopes: Hunting, recreational riding, OHV and 4wding, viewing scenery, fall colors and wildlife, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, mtn biking and hut system.</p>

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6a	<b>Backcountry NM.</b> Traditional dispersed recreation, including dispersed camping, hunting, and other <b>non-motorized</b> uses. Including bike trails, some evidence of human presence either past or present.	<b>Scenic Integrity:</b> Very High to High. <b>ROS:</b> SPNM.	<b>Recreation Activities:</b> Mountain biking, horseback riding, hiking, hunting, camping.		
7	<b>Wilderness.</b> Challenge, adventure, solitude, quiet contemplation, undeveloped, non-motorized. Congressionally designated.	<b>Scenic Integrity:</b> Very High. <b>ROS:</b> Pristine, Primitive, Semi-Primitive	<b>Recreation Activities:</b> Hiking, horseback riding, back packing.	Manage wilderness and concentrated use areas to <b>standard</b> . Manage wild lands and concentrated use areas to <b>standard</b> .	Areas providing high challenge, solitude and remoteness values. High elevation mixed conifers to low elevation sage brush and pinion-juniper. Rolling foothills to mountain Slopes, high desert to mtn tundra: Hiking, dispersed camping, climbing/ mountaineering
7a	<b>Wild lands.</b> Challenge, adventure, solitude, quiet contemplation, undeveloped, non-motorized, including lands that are Wilderness eligible.	<b>Scenic Integrity:</b> Very High. <b>ROS:</b> Pristine, Primitive, Semi-Primitive or SPNM	<b>Recreation Activities:</b> Hiking, horseback riding, back packing.		
8	<b>Portals/Gateways.</b> Localized transition areas on major access corridors to the National Forest that may provide opportunities for information/orientation.	<b>Scenic Integrity:</b> High to Moderate. <b>ROS:</b> RN to Rural.	<b>Recreation Activities:</b> Primarily interpretation and orientation.	Manage facilities and interpretation and concentrated use areas to <b>standard</b> .	

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9	<b>Mixed Ownership.</b> Blocks of mixed public and private ownership. Recreation management is influenced by a high degree of activities on adjacent private lands. Private development may come into conflict with recreation uses.	<b>Scenic Integrity:</b> Moderate. <b>ROS:</b> RN to Rural.	<b>Recreation Activities:</b> Primarily day use hiking and overnight trailhead parking. Very limited development.	Manage trails and concentrated use areas to <b>critical standard.</b>	Setting is similar to Back country/GFA, Emphasis is day use.

**Figure G-1.** Recreation Niche Areas on the GMUG NF.

