

RECREATION

A VISION

The Carson provides leadership in quality outdoor recreation in New Mexico. The needs of people who come to visit and use the Forest are met with services and facilities which recognize and respect the Land of Enchantment's unique character information and interpretive services emphasize New Mexico's vast array of cultural and recreational opportunities. Visitors feel welcome by the service they receive from employees who exemplify the good host attitude.

We recognize and accommodate the different needs of our visitors by providing facilities for differing--and sometimes conflicting-recreation uses. We give emphasis to specialized types of recreation, such as trail networks for cross-country skiing, mountain biking, hiking, horseback riding, motorcycling, and snowmobiling. Special biological areas and unique resources, such as lakes and rivers, are managed to recognize and protect their fragile ecosystems. Day-use facilities are provided near local communities. Recreation sites are clean, safer, well maintained, and provide universal access.

We actively work with communities and individuals to help them develop services and facilities which complement recreation opportunities on the National Forests. Partners and opportunities are sought to provide National Forest Services and facilities.

We employ a diverse, "people oriented" workforce with skills, education, and background to deliver quality service to our customers. Highly trained, equipped, and visible forest personnel and law enforcement officers insure that visitors have a safe, enjoyable, and enriching recreation experience.

We are charged with stewardship of some of our Nation's most precious resources. Carson National Forest lands will continue to meet the growing recreational needs far into the future.

This looks into the future, although some may be happening now. It is stated in the "present tense" as if it is already that way. This gives a feel of where we are heading. It paints a general picture with a broad brush.

MANAGEMENT HIGHLIGHTS

- Provide a balanced level of developed and dispersed recreation experiences (515 MRVD's developed recreation and 390 MRVD's dispersed recreation).
- Help the public enjoy their Forest visit and instill an understanding of the resources and uses of their National Forests.
- Establish a full spectrum of trail opportunities, considering all modes of travel, ranging from opportunities for challenge and adventure to opportunities for people with disabilities, and give special emphasis to the protection, development and management of specially designated areas and trails.

Wilderness:

- Maintain an enduring high quality wilderness and provide a quality recreational experience.
- Allow wildfire to play a more natural role.
- Protect the current status of air quality related values in wilderness areas.
- Identify and protect areas that contain threatened, endangered, and sensitive species of plants.

C. Forest-wide Prescriptions

This snaps a more detailed picture. It gives a feel of the intent, purpose and goals. It is the framework for the standards and guidelines.

Setting The Stage

The Carson National Forest provides a variety of recreational experiences for people from throughout the southwest, many other states and foreign countries. The Forest is a haven for those from Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas and New Mexico that seek climatic relief during the summer months. It is also the playground for many of the same people during the winter because of excellent Nordic and Alpine skiing and snowmobiling opportunities.

Management Area 15 -- Potential Recreation Sites, Management area 16 -- Existing Recreation Sites, Management Area 17 -- Wilderness, Management Area 19 -- Special Areas and Management Area 20 -- Semi-Primitive Areas all provide much of the guidance for management of the recreation program on the Forest.

Standards And Guidelines

RECREATION EXPERIENCE:

Provide the opportunity for the public to obtain a variety of recreation experiences by managing the natural resource setting and the activities that occur within it. Provide a spectrum of opportunities on the Forest from Semi-primitive to Urban, with emphasis on the less developed end of the spectrum. Within the wildernesses, utilize the Wilderness Opportunity Spectrum as outlined in the wilderness prescriptions. For the remainder of the forest manage according to the following guidelines.

RURAL AND URBAN (R and U)...

Location - manage areas within 1/4 mile of administrative sites, the Ghost Ranch Living Museum, winter sports sites, and other recreation sites adjacent to villages and towns to provide R and U recreation opportunities.

Setting - The natural environment may be substantially modified. Timber harvest and other resource practices should enhance the associated recreation use. Sights and sounds of other users may be readily evident, and human interaction is high. Facilities should be provided for intensified motorized recreational use.

Experiences and Activities - Group and individual interaction are emphasized, as are user conveniences. Controls, regulations, and law enforcement are obvious. Associated activities are motorized and mechanical in nature. Developed recreation activities predominate.

ROAD NATURAL (RN)...

Location - Manage areas within 1/2 mile of paved highways and Forest all weather and heavily used dirt roads to provide a RN recreation opportunity. This will include most of the recreation sites that are not near villages and towns.

Setting - The environment should be predominantly natural appearing with moderate evidence of human intervention. Resource modification and utilization practices may be evident, but should be in harmony with the natural environment. Interaction between users should be low to moderate, but evidence of other users

may be prevalent. Facilities should be designed for conventional motorized use, ranging from travel trailers to passenger cars to moderate clearance two wheel drive trucks.

Experience and Activities - Manage for a high opportunity for interaction with the natural environment, both passive (sightseeing) and active activities. Both motorized and non motorized forms of recreation are possible and should be accommodated by convenience facilities. Regulations on user behavior is high at recreation sites and along heavy use corridors, but less than in the Rural/Urban class.

SEMI-PRIMITIVE MOTORIZED (SPM)...

Location - Manage areas within 1/2 mile of lower standard Forest roads and areas where off road vehicles are permitted to provide a SPM recreation opportunity. This includes Forest system roads where use is light and maintenance levels are low. Remote recreation sites where few facilities are provided are also included in this category (Goose Lake and Middle Fork fishing sites, etc.). Areas designated on the Travel Management Map as Area 2 may change from Semi-Primitive Non Motorized (SPN) to SPM during the winter season.

Setting - The areas should be predominately natural appearing. Resource modifications should blend with the surrounding landscape character. User interaction should be low, but evidence of other users may be apparent. On-site controls and restrictions of use may be present but are subtle. Facilities should be designed for four wheel drive and/or high clearance rugged vehicles.



Experiences and Activities - There should be a high opportunity for interaction with the natural environment and a moderate opportunity for isolation from other people. User conveniences should be limited, users should experience self-reliance, challenge, and risk. Associated activities may be motorized, nonmotorized, including jeep driving, bicycle riding, horseback riding, and foot travel transportation modes. Dispersed recreation activities predominate.

SEMI-PRIMITIVE NON MOTORIZED (SPN)...

Location - Manage areas for an SPN recreation experience that are farther than 1/2 mile from motorized use roads, trails and areas. These areas are shown on the travel management map. Except for the road corridors, Area 1 on the map should be SPN year round. Except for the road corridors, Area 2 should be SPN in the spring, summer and fall. Snowmobiles are permitted in Area 2. Area 9 is SPN from January 1 to August 15, and SPM the remainder of the year.

Setting - The environment should be natural appearing with little or no evidence of human intervention. No resource manipulation projects will occur in Management Area 20. In other areas, resource modification and utilization practices should emphasize recreation and wildlife concerns. Recreation user interaction should be low but there may be evidence of other users.

Facilities should be designed for nonmotorized uses, including foot travel, horseback travel and bicycles. On site controls and restrictions of use should be subtle.

C. Forest-wide Prescriptions

Experiences and activities – There should be a high opportunity for isolation from other people, independence, closeness to nature, tranquility, self reliance, challenge and risk. Activities may be mechanical but must be nonmotorized. Dispersed activities predominate.

PRIMITIVE (P) ...

No primitive experiences are provided outside of the wildernesses.

OPPORTUNITIES / CONTACTS:

Maintain the Forest environment to provide the full range of recreation opportunities. Make public contacts during the peak use season(s) for visitor education and provide for clean-up and public safety at dispersed use sites.

RECREATION OPPORTUNITY GUIDE... Complete a Recreation Opportunity Guide for each Ranger District.

MOTOR VEHICLE USE MAP (MVUM) – Provide a Forest MVUM for the public.²

SIGNING... Install and maintain signing in conjunction with the Forest Travel Management Plan.

PATROLS... During peak use season provide regular patrols to provide public education and law enforcement in travel restriction areas. Provide occasional patrols during other periods of the year.

VOLUNTEERS... Provide supervision, training and incidental needs to develop and maintain an active volunteer program in connection with dispersed recreation programs such as trail maintenance, sign installation and maintenance, clean-up, and monitoring of use.

OUTFITTER/GUIDE:

CAPACITIES... Establish capacities when needed for outfitter guides and limit use to the established capacity.

Species	Outfitters/Guides	Service Days
mule deer	10	500
elk	7	300
mountain lion	7	350
Barbary sheep	not limited at this time	not limited at this time

If conditions warrant, the permitted outfitter/guide and service days can be adjusted up or down. Permits will be converted to “priority use permits” when possible.¹

APPLICATIONS... Encourage applications for outfitter guides to provide needed recreation opportunities, issue permits, monitor activities, make performance evaluations and issue priority use permits when warranted.

EDUCATE PUBLIC... Enlist outfitters to exercise responsibility to educate the public they guide and serve about natural resources management and protection.