

SNAPSHOT: DESIGNATED AREAS

1 Status

- About 70% of the Forest lies within some type of designated area including Wilderness, Inventoried Roadless Areas, Research Natural Areas, and Wilderness Study Area.
- Nearly 18% of Forest users are utilizing designated Wilderness opportunities.
- See the separate map and list of existing designated areas.

3 Information Gaps

- Wilderness Management Plans are in a draft stage.
- 20 years of Limits of Acceptable Change information needs to be analyzed to develop management direction.

4 What is Not Changing

Congressional Designations

The Forest Plan revision process cannot change boundaries or purposes of areas designated by Congress. Management direction established in the revised Forest Plan must be within the purposes of the laws designation these areas. Boundaries of the following areas cannot be changed:

- Existing wilderness boundaries (Lee Metcalf and Absaroka Beartooth Wilderness)
- The Hyalite Porcupine Wilderness Study Area boundary
- The Cabin Creek Wildlife and Recreation Management Area boundary
- National Scenic Trail and National Heritage Road cannot be modified in Forest Plan Revision.

Inventoried Roadless Areas

The Forest Plan revision process cannot change boundaries of Inventoried Roadless Areas (IRAs) as defined in the 2001 Roadless Area Conservation Rule (Roadless Rule). Management direction established in the revised Forest Plan must be within the Roadless Rule prohibitions and permissions on road construction, road reconstruction, and timber harvesting. The Roadless Rule can only be modified through a subsequent rulemaking process by the Department of Agriculture or by legislation from Congress.

Other Special Designations

Other special designations such as Research Natural Areas, Special Interest Areas, National Natural Landmarks, and the Pryor Mountain Wild Horse Territory is governed by existing law and regulations.

2 Need to Change Existing Forest Plans

- Conduct the wilderness evaluation process to determine which areas of recommended wilderness, if any, should be included in the revised forest plan as required in the 2012 Planning Rule.
- Conduct the Wild and Scenic Rivers inventory and eligibility studies for all free flowing, named streams within the planning area as required in the 2012 Planning Rule.
- Incorporate meaningful wilderness standards as appropriate at the Forest Plan level, per national policy and wilderness performance elements to meet requirements of the law (natural processes, integrity, solitude etc.).
- Incorporate direction for the management of the Beartooth National Scenic Byway and All American road consistent with its comprehensive management plan.
- Incorporate direction for management for the 13 designated National Recreation trails and one National Scenic Trail.