

Lincoln National Forest

Wilderness Process Step 1: Inventory

Preliminary Inventory Criteria

The first step in the wilderness process for Forest Plan Revision is to take an inventory of lands that will be evaluated for wilderness recommendation later in the process. Taking an inventory requires that National Forest System lands on the Lincoln National Forest measure up to certain criteria. For the purposes of this exercise, inventory criteria fall into three broad categories. These are:

Size

Blocks of land must be 5,000 acres or larger to be included in the inventory. Smaller can be considered, but only with good justification, such as blocks of land contiguous to an existing wilderness, wilderness study area, or wilderness inventory of other Federal ownership.

Roads

Blocks of land are also removed from the inventory based on the presence of certain roads. Open roads per the forest's travel management decision are removed from the inventory. Other jurisdiction roads open to the public, such as county roads and state roads, which pass through National Forest System lands will also be removed from the inventory. Removed roads will have a buffer of about 100 feet on either side of the road centerline to account for the road width, right-of-way maintenance, and potential geospatial data inaccuracies.

Improvements

Improvements (built features such as structures, etc.) get to be a little tricky. Only those improvements that are not substantially noticeable in the area as a whole are included in the inventory. The Lincoln National Forest has defined substantially noticeable to mean that an improvement is substantially noticeable when it creates a noticeable difference in form, line, color, texture or pattern in the surrounding natural landscape at a size, scale, or concentration that contrasts with the surrounding natural landscape. To be substantially noticeable in the area as a whole, the improvement or concentration of improvements must be more dominant than the surrounding natural landscape scene or visually apparent using aerial imagery at the forest-wide scale of one inch to one mile. The list below includes improvements that would be substantially noticeable and would be removed from the inventory. Improvements mapped as point features in geospatial data may be documented as areas, with 100 feet around that single feature to account for footprint and geospatial mapping errors.

- Surfaced runways or landing pads with permanent structures
- Vegetation treatments that are substantially noticeable using the definition above such as clear cut forested areas, regeneration harvests, fuel breaks, and areas of pinyon-juniper chaining
- Vertical structures that (1) extend above the surrounding tree or shrub height, (2) require regular access for maintenance, (3) where the associated ground disturbance is 1 acre or greater, or (4) occur in a concentration
- Range developments with improvements (such as windmills) that extend above the surrounding tree or shrub height and (1) have associated ground disturbance of 1 acre or greater or (2) occur in a concentration that is substantially noticeable
- Areas of commercial open pit mining, active mining operations, or gas extraction wells
- Developed recreation sites (such as ski areas, campgrounds, or interpretive sites) as defined by management areas or special use permit boundaries

- Powerlines or other utilities with cleared rights-of-way, other permanently installed linear right-of-way structures (such as a tramway), permanent above ground pipelines over 6 inches in diameter
- Non-earthen dams, post-fire flooding control improvements (i.e., filter dams made of non-natural materials), and terraced areas
- Structures with a modern appearance whose primary function of the area is dedicated to housing or a concentration of other permanent building structures including developed recreation improvement structures

We want to know what you think

Please let us know what you think of the criteria. Specifically:

1. Is this the right list of criteria?
 - a. Are there additional improvements that should be included?
 - b. Should some of these improvements be removed from the list of criteria?
2. Is there another way you would like to see us apply this list of criteria?

We would like to have your feedback on the criteria by July 31, 2019 so that we can complete the final criteria and create an inventory map (which will be available for public comment in the near future). Please submit your comments at any of the public meetings, via e-mail lnf_fpr_comments@fs.fed.us, or U.S. mail.

LINCOLN NATIONAL FOREST -- FOREST PLAN REVISION

Questions, Comments, Input?

Contact us:

Lincoln National Forest

3463 Las Palomas

Alamogordo, New Mexico 88310

575-434-7200

For information and updates on our forest plan revision process visit our website at:

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/lincoln/landmanagement/planning/?cid=STELPRD3814307>