

Forest Niche

The Siuslaw National Forest developed the following recreation niche statement and setting map through the recreation facility analysis process. The niche statement describes the unique characteristics, opportunities, settings, and activities of the forest's recreation program. Outfitter/guide services should be aligned with niche opportunities and settings. The forest niche speaks to providing diverse recreation opportunities and providing natural resource learning opportunities. When evaluating proposals for new guided services, it is critical to account for how the activity or service supports the forest recreation niche and supply. Evaluation criteria has been developed to assist in the analysis of the need for an outfitter/guide activity; this criteria addresses niche alignment in the categories of education and knowledge, skills and abilities.

Siuslaw National Forest Recreation Niche

Connecting Communities from the Forest to the Sea

The Siuslaw National Forest is home to a variety of special areas, unique habitats, and natural settings that provide for outstanding recreation opportunities and world renowned tourist destinations. The forest offers a continuous thread of diverse recreation opportunities, cultural landscapes, and natural resource learning opportunities, linking dynamic seascapes, temperate old growth forests, and diverse communities along scenic highways and river corridors. Recreation on the Siuslaw National Forest contributes to the physical, mental, and spiritual health of individuals, instills pride in communities and heritage, and provides economic benefits.

Settings, Special Places, and Experiences: 135 miles of stunning Pacific Coast distinguishes the western edge of the Siuslaw National Forest, while the eastern edge provides a forested backdrop for the Willamette Valley. Scenic Hwy 101, an All American Road, stretches the entire length and ties together history, communities, and natural landscapes, and provides visitors year round opportunities to explore the coast. These recreation opportunities facilitate visitor enjoyment and learning about the forest and natural resources, in partnership with other providers, and support the economic health and vitality of adjacent communities.

Coastal Corridor: The coastal corridor with diverse picturesque landscapes including expansive wind-sculpted sand of the Oregon Dunes National Recreation Area and Sand Lake Recreation Area. Within the dunes are thick forests, tree islands, open dunes, marshes, and ocean beaches; providing a variety of motorized and non-motorized recreation opportunities that are unmatched in the nation. Cascade Head and Cape Perpetua provide opportunities for sweeping ocean vistas, hiking, and opportunities for nature study, wildlife viewing, and birding through old growth forests and along rugged bluffs and rocky shorelines. Tidal influenced fresh water creeks, lakes, and estuaries provide outstanding habitat for fish and birds, and gentle water to explore through fishing and boating. The coastal corridor offers highly developed amenities and unique interpretive opportunities highlighting the diverse coastal ecosystems, history, as well as the ecological connection between the forest and the sea and the wildlife species it supports.

Coast Range and River/Travel Corridors: The rugged Coast Range and interior river/travel corridors, including the Marys Peak to Pacific Scenic Byway, connect local communities to the national forest, and provide recreation opportunities to visitors. The interior of the Siuslaw National Forest is defined by clear, clean rivers and streams providing essential habitat for the survival of native steelhead and salmon, and opportunities and settings for forest visitors to fish, boat, swim, or escape the valley heat. The Coast Range is interspersed with pockets of old growth forest and lush, dense understory vegetation providing habitat for fish, wildlife, and plants, and the physical setting for year-round recreation.

A network of forest, county and state roads provide access to the community for gathering forest products, hunting, fishing, camping, picnicking, and traditional uses, and have limited development. Drift Creek, Cummins Creek, and Rock Creek Wildernesses show the Coast Range as it once was, primitive & untrammelled. Mt. Hebo and Marys Peak offer breathtaking, 360 degree views of the Cascade Range and the Pacific Ocean, and gorgeous wildflower communities.

Connections: Trails on the Siuslaw National Forest are a primary means for connecting people to their public lands; fostering citizen stewards; and generating social, environmental, and economic benefits for individuals and communities. The Siuslaw National Forest strives to provide a resilient trail system, offering diverse opportunities from long distance trail travel on the Oregon Coast Trail and Oregon Coast Bike Route, mountain bike and equestrian trails, off-highway vehicle sand routes, and hiking trails accessing the coastal headlands, remote wilderness travel in temperate old growth forests, and spectacular waterfall vistas. The trail system is supported by a mosaic of public and private interests and inspires shared stewardship and invites people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds, to enjoy trails and use them to connect to their public lands while protecting and conserving natural and cultural resources.