

Recreational Commercial Services Analysis Feedback: Needs Assessment

The U.S. Forest Service is seeking public input as we review the recreational commercial services program on the Superior National Forest (Forest). This process will determine the amount and types of recreational commercial use permitted on the Forest. This worksheet will be part of the process to gather public input that will help inform the project.

It would be helpful if you could submit this worksheet by October 9, 2019 so that we may consider your input during our review and planning efforts. If you have further input after October 9, 2019, please continue to submit your worksheet comments. If you have questions regarding this project, please contact Lee Stewart, acting Public Services Staff Officer at 218-626-4305.

To complete this form electronically, please save it, fill it out and send it to lee.stewart@usda.gov or print, fold, and send to the following physical address: Superior National Forest, c/o Lee Stewart, 8901 Grand Avenue Place, Duluth, MN 55808. If you do not have enough space, please use the last page for comment.

1. Are you an outfitter or guide currently under permit with the Forest Service? __Yes __No
2. If you are a currently permitted recreational commercial services provider, how do you use the Forest?

3. If you are not a recreational commercial services provider currently under a special use permit with the Forest Service, how do you use/enjoy the Forest?

4. Are you otherwise involved in the tourism industry in Northeastern Minnesota? If so, where and how?

5. Do you think recreational commercial services are needed? If yes, why, what kind and how much?

Amount and Type of Use

6. Are there places where you think there is excessive use/crowding? __Yes __No __Not Sure

7. If yes, please answer the following:

a. Specific Location:

b. Season/Dates:

c. Describe type of use considered excessive:

8. For the uses you listed above in Question 7, please describe WHY you consider them to be excessive:

Campsite Conditions

9. Have you noticed heavily impacted sites (bare ground, sites enlarging, exposed roots, garbage, human/dog animal waste, full latrines, cut green branches, camp “furniture”, new tree scars from camping tools, etc.) on the Forest? If yes, where?

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10. Are there any camping areas where you think it is NOT appropriate for recreational commercial services? WHERE and WHY?

11. Are there any places that you think can support new or additional recreational commercial services? WHERE and WHY?

12. As you see upcoming trends in Outdoor Recreational experiences, what are you interested in participating in or having provided on the National Forest and why?

13. Are there places that you have concerns about negative effects to the social, (social conditions such as opportunities for solitude (natural sights/sounds), self-reliance, risk, self-discovery), physical (conditions of individual components such as air, water, soil), or biophysical (condition of plant/animal species and communities, ecosystem functions) resources regarding recreational use? WHAT CONCERNS and WHERE?

14. What do you see as possible management actions if the social, physical and biophysical (those mentioned in question 13 directly above) resource thresholds are exceeded causing conditions and experiences to degrade?

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15. Do you see any issues with the current visitor use? If yes, what are they?

16. Are there areas of concentrated use that need to be reevaluated? If yes, where and what type?

17. What type of current recreational commercial services offered on the Forest do you utilize, and do you have any feedback about your experiences with the Forest conditions and the commercial provider?

18. Are there activities you would like to participate in on the Forest, but do not have the skills/equipment/transportation/other reason to do so? Would you consider using a recreational commercial service in order to participate?

Visitor Encounters

19. During the last twelve months of recreating or traveling within the Superior National Forest, how many trips did you take on or near the National Forest?
20. We are interested in what you thought about the number of people who were using the same recreation areas as you. Please rate your perception on a scale of 1-5 where 1 means hardly anyone there and 5 means the area was very overcrowded.
- a. General Forest Area (remote or undeveloped areas/camping or recreating outside a developed campground). At which location(s) did this occur?
 - b. Developed Campgrounds. At which location(s) did this occur?
 - c. Forest Roads. At which location(s) did this occur?
 - d. Lakes/dock sites. At which location(s) did this occur?
 - e. Trails (motorized and non-motorized). At which location(s) did this occur?
22. Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness (entry points, lakes, trails/portages, off-trail/portage locations, etc.). What was the HIGHEST number of encounters per day with other groups of people you had in the following locations (meaning, how many groups of people did you see near/at your destination)? Were they large or small groups? Quiet or loud? Specific organizations?
- a. Encounters while camping groups observed per day (Answer choices: 0-1, 1-2, 2-3, 2-4 or Not Sure). At which location(s) did this occur?
 - b. Encounters while traveling groups observed per day (Answer choices: 0-2, 3-5, 5-8, 6-10 or Not Sure). At which location(s) did this occur?

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23. What other items of concern, resources or elements should be considered in the needs assessment document? Please describe below and attach additional comments as needed.

Thank you!