

## 5.11 FOREST AND RANGELANDS - FOREST VEGETATION EMPHASIS

*Theme:* General forest and intermingled rangeland areas are managed to provide for a mix of forest products, forage, wildlife habitat, visual quality, recreational opportunities, and a variety of other goods and services.

### Desired Condition

#### *Physical/Biological*

Management focuses on vegetation associated with forest and grassland communities to provide a variety of goods and services. Maintain a variety of successional stages, plant communities, and associated wildlife through a combination of human manipulation and natural processes. Maintain suitable forested areas with commercially valuable species at ages, densities, and sizes which allow growth rates and stand health conducive to providing a sustained yield of forest products.

Maintain healthy and sustainable grassland communities and forested communities with grass/forb understories to provide livestock grazing, wildlife forage, and vegetation diversity. Maintain natural openings, meadows, riparian areas, and other plant communities to protect soils, water resources, and aquatic habitats; maintain key terrestrial wildlife habitat areas; and maintain vegetation diversity. Manage existing aspen acreage to enhance vegetation diversity. Forested area management gives priority to the conversion of overmature stands to young stands managed at stocking levels which maintain acceptable site occupancy and rates of growth conducive to sustained yield. Management practices include stand regeneration by natural or artificial methods, stocking-level control, and protection of stands from anticipated damage. Wildfires are suppressed in these forested areas to protect commercial forest products. Insect and disease populations are maintained at endemic levels and damage is only evident in small patches across the landscape, if at all. Disturbed areas are evident across the landscape and vary in size and shape.

#### *Social*

Provide a variety of motorized and nonmotorized recreational opportunities. Other compatible activities may occur in the area.

The settings depend on proximity to roads and management and are natural, natural-appearing, and/or modified. Improve areas to restore the desired appearance. Design vegetation changes to resemble natural patterns or to be less intrusive in the landscape. Other ecological changes may affect the appearance.

Encounters between individuals or parties on travelways are frequent. Limit use where frequent contact is not acceptable. Contacts away from trails are generally infrequent. Commonly

occurring sounds from people, motorized recreational activities and other resource-use activities are acceptable.

Limit restrictions and controls. Provide simple information facilities. Directional, regulatory and informational signs are minimal and foster safe use and resource protection.

#### *Administrative*

Blend existing facilities such as roads, primitive roads, trails, bridges, fences, shelters, signs or water diversions into the landscape where feasible or remove them if no longer needed. Design new improvements to be minimally intrusive into the landscape.

Facilities are present to aid primarily in product removal and are available for other uses where no conflict exists. The area has a well developed transportation system including roads and trails. Add new travelways for compatible activities when needed.

Design and conduct mineral exploration and operations to minimize impacts on, or to enhance use of, other resources.

Acquire lands that are required to achieve management area objectives. Retain parcels that are part of the suitable and available timber-harvest component or parcels where development would be incompatible with management area objectives. Dispose of parcels which do not meet management area objectives *and* other NFS purposes compatible with management area objectives; and dispose of parcels where potential development of such lands will be compatible with the management of remaining NFS lands. Acquire lands and easements needed to meet resource goals and objectives. Allow compatible special uses .

#### **Standards and Guidelines**

1. (GL) Protect range improvements and maintain natural barriers used to manage livestock movement.

### **5.13 FOREST PRODUCTS**

*Theme:* Lands are managed to provide commercial wood products. These areas are managed for wood products and water yield while providing for forage production, other commercial products, visual quality, diversity of wildlife, and a variety of other goods and services. Numerous open roads provide commercial access and motorized recreational opportunities, while closed roads provide nonmotorized opportunities.

#### **Desired Condition**

##### *Physical/Biological*

Management focuses on vegetation associated with forested ecosystems to produce forest products while providing for forage production, visual quality, wildlife habitat, recreational opportunities and a variety of other goods and services. While the major vegetation type is conifer forest, the area may contain meadows, natural openings, forested and nonforested riparian areas, and stands of hardwood vegetation. This management area prescription is usually found in lodgepole pine and spruce-fir forest types suited for timber production. Roaded areas where timber management practices have been applied in the past are likely to be the most financially efficient areas for timber production.

Maintain a range of successional stages from seedlings to mature stands to late successional stands. A full array of silvicultural systems may be appropriate to achieve this objective. Maintain suitable forested areas with commercially valuable species at ages, densities, and sizes which allow growth rates and stand health conducive to providing a sustained yield of forest products. Management will give priority to the conversion of decadent and overmature stands to young stands managed at stocking levels which maintain acceptable site occupancy and rates of growth conducive to sustained yield. Management practices include stand regeneration by natural or artificial methods, stocking level control and protection of stands from anticipated damage. Wildfires are suppressed in these forested areas to protect commercial forest products. Insect and disease populations are maintained at endemic levels and damage is only evident in small patches across the landscape, if at all. Disturbed areas are evident across the landscape and vary in size and shape.

##### *Social*

Provide a variety of motorized and nonmotorized recreational opportunities, from primitive to paved surface. Open roads provide commercial access and motorized recreational opportunities, while restricted roads provide nonmotorized recreational opportunities. There may be limits on access through the use of seasonal or year-long road closures.

Visitors can expect to see evidence of past and present timber harvesting and management practices. Some recently cut areas will show tree stumps, slash, and disturbed soil. These are only apparent for a few years as vegetation grows back on the disturbed areas.

Management activities remain visually subordinate along arterial and collector roads, and along primary trails. In other portions of the area, management activities may dominate in the foreground and middleground, but harmonize and blend with the natural landscape patterns.

#### *Administrative*

Facilities are present to aid primarily in product removal and are available for other uses where no conflict exists. The area has a well developed transportation system including roads and trails. Add new travelways for compatible activities when needed.

Design and conduct mineral exploration and operations to enhance or minimize impacts to other resources.

Dispose of parcels that do not meet the management area objectives, and other National Forest System purposes compatible with 5.13 objectives. Dispose of parcels in which potential development by others would be consistent with management area objectives. Retain parcels that are part of the suitable and available timber-harvest component or parcels in which potential development would not be compatible with management area objectives. Acquire parcels that will help achieve management area objectives. Allow compatible special uses.

#### **Standards and Guidelines**

1. (ST) Manage stands using treatments that maintain acceptable site occupancy and rates of growth, as well as favoring commercially valuable tree species.
2. (GL) Manage aspen stands to retain existing acres for enhancement of vegetation diversity.

### **5.31 EXPERIMENTAL FOREST - FRASER**

*Theme:* Management emphasis is on providing for long-term research and monitoring, experimental manipulation, and related activities to obtain, analyze, and disseminate scientific information about protecting, managing, and utilizing subalpine forest and alpine renewable resources.

#### **Desired Condition**

This area will be kept in a condition similar to that now present and found elsewhere on the Forest. Some portions will be kept in near pristine condition to serve as a reference ecological system for other research. Other portions of the area will be managed to a variety of levels as part of that research. Management of the Fraser Experimental Forest is for the express purpose of research on alpine and subalpine ecological systems. A variety of research projects will take place. The area will maintain a road system for access to research and monitoring sites. Evidence of timber harvest and other forms of forest disturbance may be present.

Vegetation will be managed on portions of the area. Habitat qualities will depend on both management alternatives and natural variability. Some planned or discretionary activity will degrade long-term soil productivity or water quality for experimental purposes. Some research activities may alter local (site-specific) soil and water condition for short periods.

Facilities will be minimal and primarily those needed for the conduct of research. Roads, to conduct or access research, will be present and well maintained. Trails available for public use will vary, based on the research objectives for the Experimental Forest. Restricted-use trails may be constructed to access specific research sites.

Resource uses will be limited to those needed to conduct research.

The settings may be natural, natural-appearing, or modified. The presence and evidence of humans will be kept minimal or infrequent.

#### **Standards and Guidelines**

1. (ST) Limit road construction to that needed for research, education and technology transfer.
2. (ST) Prohibit surface-disturbing use and occupancy for mineral-based operations.
3. (ST) Do not issue new special-use permits, and discontinue those in existence as opportunity arises.
4. (GL) Close existing grazing allotments as opportunity arises.

5. (GL) Manage recreational uses based on research plans.
6. (GL) Restrict recreation to that defined in the enabling administrative documents and their amendments.

## **5.5 DISPERSED RECREATION - FOREST PRODUCTS**

*Theme:* Management emphasis is on providing dispersed recreational opportunities and visual quality while also providing wood products, forage production, wildlife habitat, and a variety of other goods and services.

### **Desired Condition**

#### *Physical/Biological*

Maintain or improve forested communities to provide a pleasing appearance for visitors, complement the recreational values, and provide varied plant communities, structural stages, and habitat for associated wildlife. Emphasize the health and appearance of these communities, improving or restoring where needed to maintain their desirability for recreational use. Maintain insects and disease populations at endemic levels. Only limited areas of bare soil, scarred trees, compacted soil, erosion, litter, or other associated disturbances are evident. Accomplish vegetation management through a combination of human manipulation and natural processes. Harvest units and areas affected by fire, insects, and disease may be evident in the landscape, depending on their shapes and sizes. Riparian communities and aquatic ecosystems are healthy although evidence of disturbance and human use may be present. Maintain the health and appearance of these ecosystems to preserve their desirability for recreational use.

#### *Social*

Provide a variety of motorized and nonmotorized recreational opportunities. Other compatible activities may occur in the area.

Encounters between individuals or parties on travelways are frequent; limit use where frequent contact is not acceptable. Contacts away from trails are generally infrequent. Commonly occurring sounds from people, motorized recreational activities and other resource use activities are acceptable.

Limit restrictions and controls. Provide simple information facilities. Directional, regulatory and informational signs are minimal and foster safe use and resource protection.

#### *Administrative*

Develop facilities to meet dispersed recreational needs; facilities may include hardened sites for resource protection. Developed facilities, including campgrounds, picnic areas, and trailheads, may be provided to meet recreational demands.

A wide spectrum of travelways exist, from primary highways to primitive roads and trails that serve as recreational features themselves. Travelway densities may remain fairly constant. Open roads provide motorized recreational opportunities and restricted roads provide nonmotorized opportunities. Provide access to natural attractions, water features, and areas that offer desired recreational opportunities.

Acquire inholdings and adjacent parcels to improve and maintain recreational opportunities or to provide access. Acquire lands where development would be incompatible with achieving management area objectives on remaining NFS lands. Dispose if a dispersed recreational experience can no longer be provided because of development on adjacent private lands and further development would not affect the achievement of objectives on remaining NFS lands. Acquire rights-of-way that are needed to meet resource goals and objectives. Allow compatible special uses.

### **Standards and Guidelines**

1. **(GL)** Restrict vegetation management operations during periods of high recreational use (weekends, holidays, high-use seasons, etc.) as needed, to maintain the desired recreational setting or to reduce interference with the recreational activities.