

White Mountain National Forest



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

**Eastern
Region**



Land and Resource Management Plan



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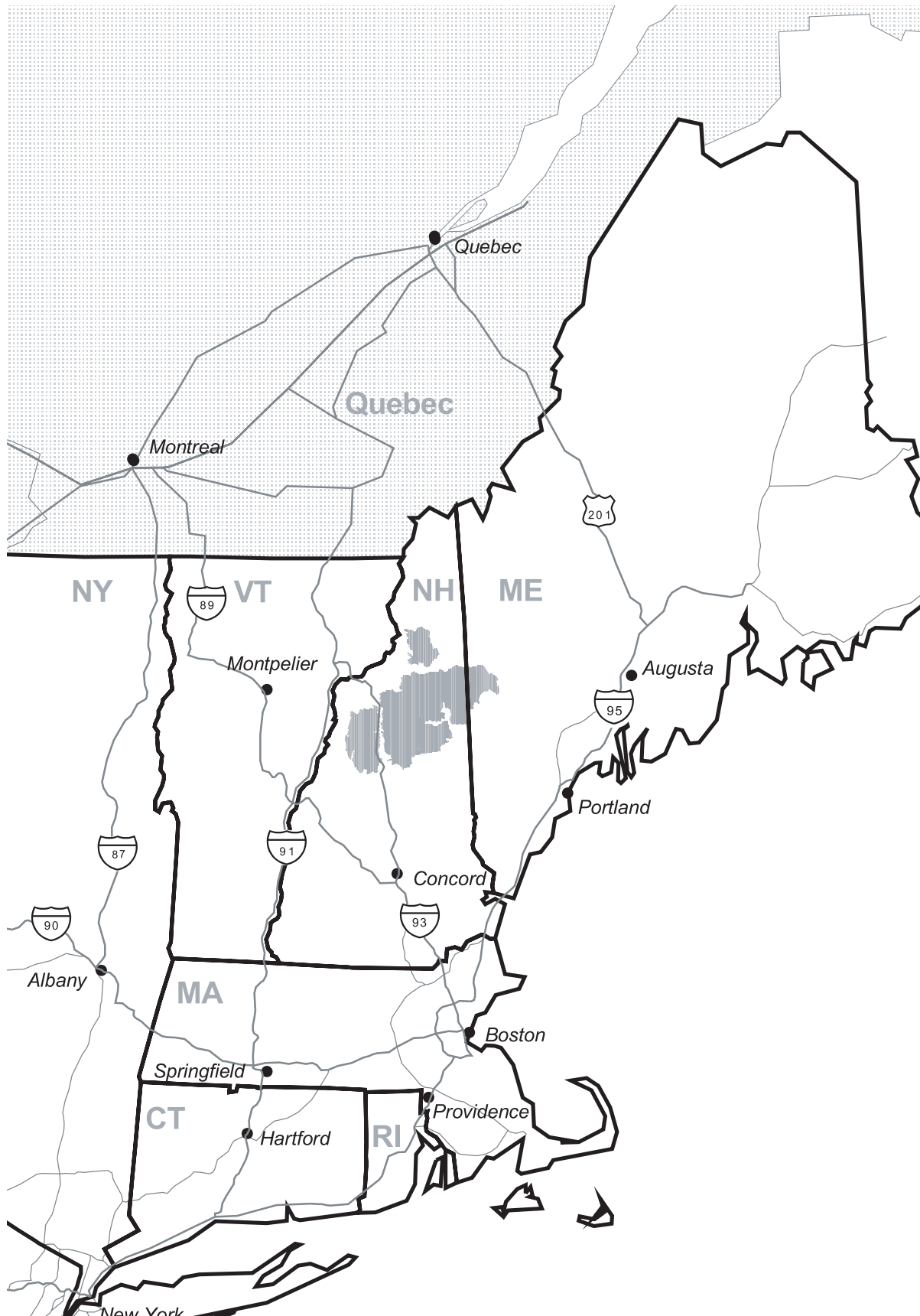
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Preface

Purpose of the Forest Plan

The White Mountain National Forest's Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan) provides guidance for managing and protecting natural resources and our visitors' experiences on all Forest lands. Six programmatic decisions are made in the Forest Plan that will govern the landscape-scale management of the Forest. Project-level decisions are made within the established framework of the Plan.

1. Forest-wide multiple-use [goals](#) and [objectives](#) (36 CFR 219.11(b)).
2. Forest-wide management [standards](#) and [guidelines](#) (36 CFR 219.13-27).
3. [Management area](#) direction (36 CFR 219.11).
4. Lands suited for [timber production](#) (36 CFR 219.14), and establishment of an [allowable sale quantity](#) (36 CFR 219.16).
5. Monitoring and evaluation requirements (36 CFR 219.11(d)).
6. Recommendations to Congress (e.g., recommendations for Wilderness (36 CFR 219.17)).

Management Direction

The Forest Plan provides guidance for managing resources and uses on the National Forest. All applicable laws, regulations, policies, and national and regional direction, as detailed in the Forest Service Manual and Forest Service Handbook, are part of Forest Plan management direction. This higher-level direction is only occasionally repeated in the Forest Plan.

In the Forest Plan, goals, objectives, and desired future conditions present a picture of what the Forest will look like, and what services, products, and experiences it will provide, in years to come. These are not absolute; rather they are a conceptual framework within which decisions can be made. Standards and guidelines provide more concrete direction for implementing projects and activities. Monitoring evaluates whether the goals and objectives are being met, and determines if additional or different management direction is necessary.

Chapter 1 — Goals and Objectives

Goals are broad statements that describe the conditions the Forest Service will strive to achieve through implementation of the Forest Plan. They are generally timeless and not measurable, and their achievement is not required. Goals should be considered when planning projects and activities, and management should move the Forest toward these desired conditions.

Objectives are measurable accomplishments intended to move the Forest toward the desired conditions described in the goals. Objectives are generally achieved through site-level projects or activities.

Three Forest Plan goals were developed to provide overall guidance to Forest management. More specific Forest-wide goals and objectives are presented by resource, such as recreation or wildlife, in alphabetical order.

Chapter 2 — Forest-wide Management Direction

Standards and guidelines are the specific, technical direction for managing resources. They provide another link in moving toward the desired conditions. Forest-wide standards and guidelines apply across all White Mountain National Forest lands and management activities, regardless of management area, unless more restrictive direction exists for a management area (see Chapter 3). They are presented by resource in the same alphabetical order used for goals and objectives.

A standard is a course of action that must be followed, or a level of attainment that must be reached, to achieve management goals and objectives. In general, standards limit project-related activities. Standards are preceded by the identifier S-# for each resource, and include words or phrases such as *must*, *is prohibited*, or *will* to indicate that adherence to the direction is mandatory. Deviations from standards must be analyzed and documented in a Forest Plan amendment.

A guideline also is a required course of action or level of attainment. It is intended to move the Forest toward desired conditions in a way that permits operational flexibility to respond to variations in conditions. Guidelines can be modified or not implemented if site-specific conditions warrant a deviation. This greater flexibility is indicated by the words *should* and *may*. The rationale for deviating from a guideline must be documented in a project-level analysis and signed decision. Guidelines are preceded by the identifier G-# for each resource.

In some cases, a standard or guideline will make a general prohibition, such as “Chainsaws are prohibited.” This may appear at odds with a more specific standard or guideline that says something like “Use of chainsaws may be allowed.” These standards and guidelines are not in conflict. The intent with the more specific direction is to identify exceptions to the general direction.

Chapter 3 — Management Area Direction

The Selected Alternative in the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) allocates National Forest land among 15 management areas (MAs). The Forest Plan identifies a purpose, desired condition of the land, and standards and guidelines for each of these MAs. The purpose and desired condition for each MA describe the role of the MA in moving the Forest toward the Forest-wide goals. Management Area standards and guidelines are defined the same way as their Forest-wide counterparts, except that they apply only to land allocated to a specific MA. When conflicting direction is given in Forest-wide and MA standards and guidelines, the more restrictive direction applies. Standards and guidelines are presented by resource in the same alphabetical order used for Forest-wide direction. If there is no direction specific to an MA for a resource, there is a reminder that Forest-wide standards and guidelines still apply, which is true for all resources. When a given piece of land is allocated to more than one MA (e.g., Wilderness, Research Natural Area), all standards and guidelines for both MAs apply. If any standards or guidelines are in conflict, the more restrictive direction applies.

The Appalachian National Scenic Trail management area (MA 8.3), the Alpine Zone (MA 8.1), and Alpine Ski Areas (MA 7.1) will not overlap. Although the AT management area will not overlap the Wildcat Ski Area (MA 7.1), the recreation values of the Appalachian National Scenic Trail that runs along the upper boundary of the Wildcat Ski Area must be considered in management actions in the Wildcat Ski Area management area. Although the AT management area will not overlap the Pinkham Notch Scenic Area, the recreation values of the Appalachian National Scenic Trail that runs within the scenic area must be considered in management actions in the Pinkham Notch Scenic Area management area.

Chapter 4 — Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation are necessary to determine whether Forest Plan management direction is being met, if standards and guidelines are achieving the desired results, and whether the Forest Plan needs amending or revision. Chapter 4 provides a strategic plan that identifies the broad monitoring items and questions to be addressed. This monitoring plan can only be changed through a Forest Plan amendment. A separate Monitoring Guide, that accompanies the Forest Plan, details specific monitoring efforts and protocols.

Relationship of the Forest Plan to Site-level Projects

The Forest Plan is a strategic, programmatic document that does not make project-level decisions. All Forest management, including project plans and decisions, outstanding and future contracts, agreements, and permits, must comply with the Forest Plan as soon after it is issued as practical.

Site-level project planning would start with evaluation of how the site can contribute to meeting the Forest-wide goals and objectives and the purpose and desired condition of the management area within which the project is proposed. Projects that would move the Forest toward those goals and desired conditions would be developed with Forest-wide and MA standards and guidelines included. The site-level project environmental analysis would tier to the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the Forest Plan. This means that a project's environmental analysis document would incorporate, by reference, the information in the FEIS without having to repeat it. Project-level analysis may indicate the need for site-specific mitigation in addition to Forest Plan standards and guidelines, and these additional measures would be detailed in the project-level analysis.

Forest Plan Amendment and Revision

Most proposed activities will be consistent with Forest Plan direction. However, adjustments may be required when necessary management actions are determined to be inconsistent with the Plan or if an error in the Plan is identified. The goal is to keep the Plan up-to-date with new information and the changing needs of the Forest over time. Adjusting the Forest Plan requires an amendment, and the need to amend may result from:

- Changes in physical, biological, social, or economic conditions or information.
- Results of monitoring and evaluation.
- Determination by the Forest Supervisor that existing or proposed projects permits, contracts, etc. are appropriate and necessary, but not consistent with Forest Plan management direction.
- Identification of errors in the Forest Plan.

The Forest Supervisor is required to review conditions of the land at least every five years to determine if the Forest Plan needs to be revised. If conditions or monitoring indicate that changes are too substantial to be handled through an amendment, the Forest Plan may need to be revised before the required 10 to 15 year planning cycle.

Note:

The Forest Service uses the most current and complete data available. GIS data and product accuracy may vary. They may be: developed from sources of differing accuracy, accurate only at certain scales, based on modeling or interpretation, incomplete while being created or revised, etc. Using GIS products for purposes other than those for which they were created may yield inaccurate or misleading results. The Forest Service reserves the right to correct, update, modify, or replace GIS products without notification.

Note also that, generally, numbers used have been rounded, and this may yield some inconsistencies.

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