

The background of the slide features a pattern of overlapping autumn leaves in various shades of orange, yellow, and brown. The leaves are stylized and scattered across the entire frame, creating a warm, seasonal atmosphere.

# Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS)

# ROS

- **WHAT** is it?
- **WHY** do we care?
- **HOW** was it developed?
- **HOW** will we use it?

# WHAT IS IT?

## ROS

### (RECREATION OPPORTUNITY SPECTRUM)

A classification tool developed back in the 70's to classify and monitor existing and desired recreation settings.

- and -

The primary tool for providing recreation input to Forest planning

# *The premise...*

**Activity + Setting = Experience**

- ❖ **Our visitors engage in an activity**
- ❖ **We provide the setting**
- ❖ **The end product (outcome) is the experience**

*By managing for certain setting characteristics, we will provide specific recreation opportunities and experiences.*

The settings we provide  
influence the types of experiences  
our visitors can have.

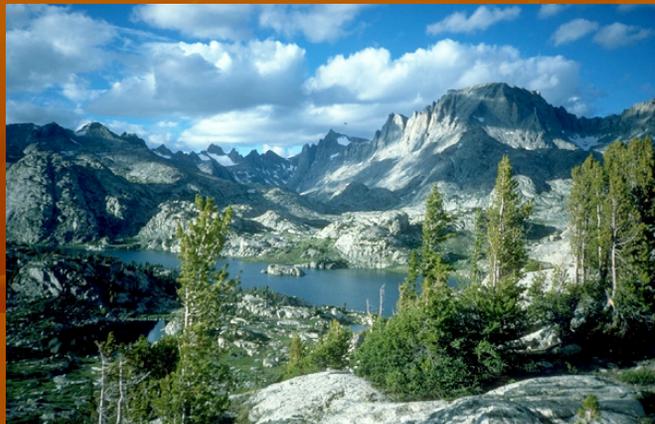
For example.....



These people are enjoying the same activity, but very different experiences due to the setting in which the activity occurs.



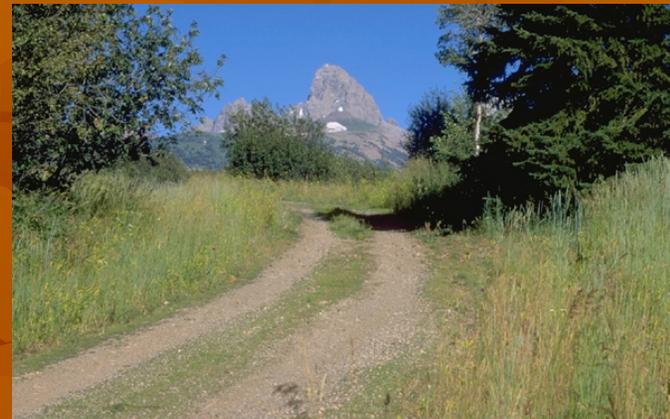
# There are 6 main ROS classes



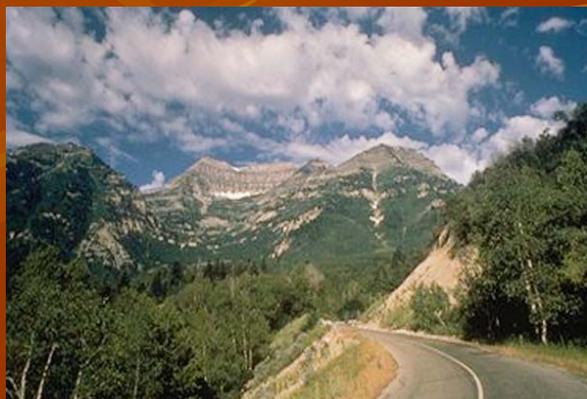
Primitive



Semi-Primitive  
Non-motorized



Semi-Primitive  
Motorized



Roaded Natural



Rural



Urban

# Setting attributes that define the 6 ROS classes:

## Physical

- **Remoteness:** distance from the nearest road, access point, or development
- **Size:** minimum acreages for P (5,000 acres) and SP (2,500 acres) settings.

## Social

- **User density:** number of people you'll encounter.

## Managerial

- **Visitor Management:** regulations, information, interpretation
- **Facilities and site management:** level of development
- **Naturalness:** degree of visitor impacts and or management activities: roads, timber harvest, mining, etc.

**ROS classes are arranged along a continuum, as are the individual criteria.**

**P      SPNM      SPM      RN      R      U**

**Minimal**



**High**

**Level of Access, development, & social encounters**

**High**



**Minimal**

**Level of Remoteness**

**Access** - Includes the type of transportation used and the level of access provided.

**Examples from the two ends of the spectrum...**

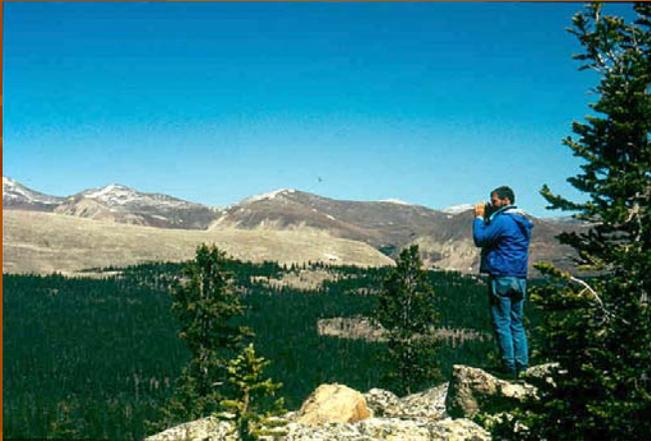
Primitive - a trail, typically not well marked and at times, difficult to find. Limited to non-motorized travel.



Urban - well delineated, typically asphalt, roads. Accommodates vehicular use: public & commercial vehicles



# Remoteness...distance from the nearest road, access point or development.



**Primitive** settings are *at least 3 miles* from roads

**Semi-primitive non-motorized** settings are  $\frac{1}{2}$  to 3 miles from roads

**Semi-primitive motorized** settings are within  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile of *primitive* roads

**Roaded natural** settings are within  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile of *better than primitive* roads



# Degree of Human Alteration, Naturalness, Development Level....

looking at the two ends of the ROS spectrum:

Primitive settings have no  
(or extremely little) evidence of  
human alteration.



Rural and urban settings  
are dominated by man-made  
features



# Social Encounters... how many other people do you run into?

In **Primitive** settings, you won't see many other people.



As you move toward the **urban** end of the spectrum, you'll see and interact with many other people



By changing one or more of these site conditions...we change the type of setting and ultimately, the type of recreation experience of those using the setting.

## The KEY...

Understanding what the *existing setting is*, and what the *desired setting is* so that our actions either maintain what we have (if existing and desired are the same) or narrow the gap between existing and desired.

# Why use ROS ?

## A visitor's perspective...

### ROS links people

- Where can I go?
- What type(s) of transportation can I use?
- What will the area look like?
- What types of activities can I engage in?
- How many other people will I run into?
- How much development /what amenities will be present?
- What type of experience can I expect to have?

**with the landscape.**

# Why use ROS?

## A manager's perspective:

### ROS informs decisions...

- What opportunities do we currently provide?
- How will our projects affect those opportunities?
- Are we meeting public demand?
- Are recreation objectives consistent with other management objectives in the same area?
- What opportunities do we want to provide in the future?

**...and makes recreation management purposeful.**

# A common R4 phenomenon...the Development Creep



➤ Improvements to an access road (either through maintenance practices or reconstruction) have: increased use, changed the types of uses / activities, and/or changed the traditional user group of an area.  
*Change from SPM to RN.*

➤ The incremental hardening and development of a popular dispersed area...first the camp sites are hardened...then some fire rings are installed...then some tables are put in...then a toilet...then...a development level 4 or 5 campground in what was once a SPM setting.  
*Change from SPM to RN.*

**WHEN & HOW  
ROS  
fits into  
a plan revision**

# ROS can contribute on several levels:

- At a minimum, it provides baseline data on what we have now
- Also helps us display effects of planning options on future recreation opportunities
- Will be very useful in writing desired conditions so that people understand and can visualize them
- Can be used to anticipate effects on more than just recreation

# There will be a strong correlation between Recreation Niche settings & desired ROS settings:

- Flaming Gorge
- Vast Backyard
- Rugged Backcountry
- High Uintas
- RN w/ SPM & SPNM
- RN, SPM, SPNM
- SPNM, Primitive
- Primitive

# There will also be a correlation between SMS and ROS

- SMS = Scenery Management System (replaces VMS)
- Provides a way to evaluate aesthetics and social values associated with scenery, provide the attractiveness rating recommended in the ROS protocol
- Desired conditions for SMS and ROS should be complementary; need both to complete the recreation picture
- SMS handbook defines which scenic values are appropriate for each ROS class

# It's all coming together...

ROS

SMS

NICHE

Converging  
to define  
what the  
Ashley is  
and will be in  
terms of  
recreation

