



Integrated *Interpretive Services and Conservation Education Planning*

A Region 1 Workshop

Bozeman, MT

May 28-29, 2008

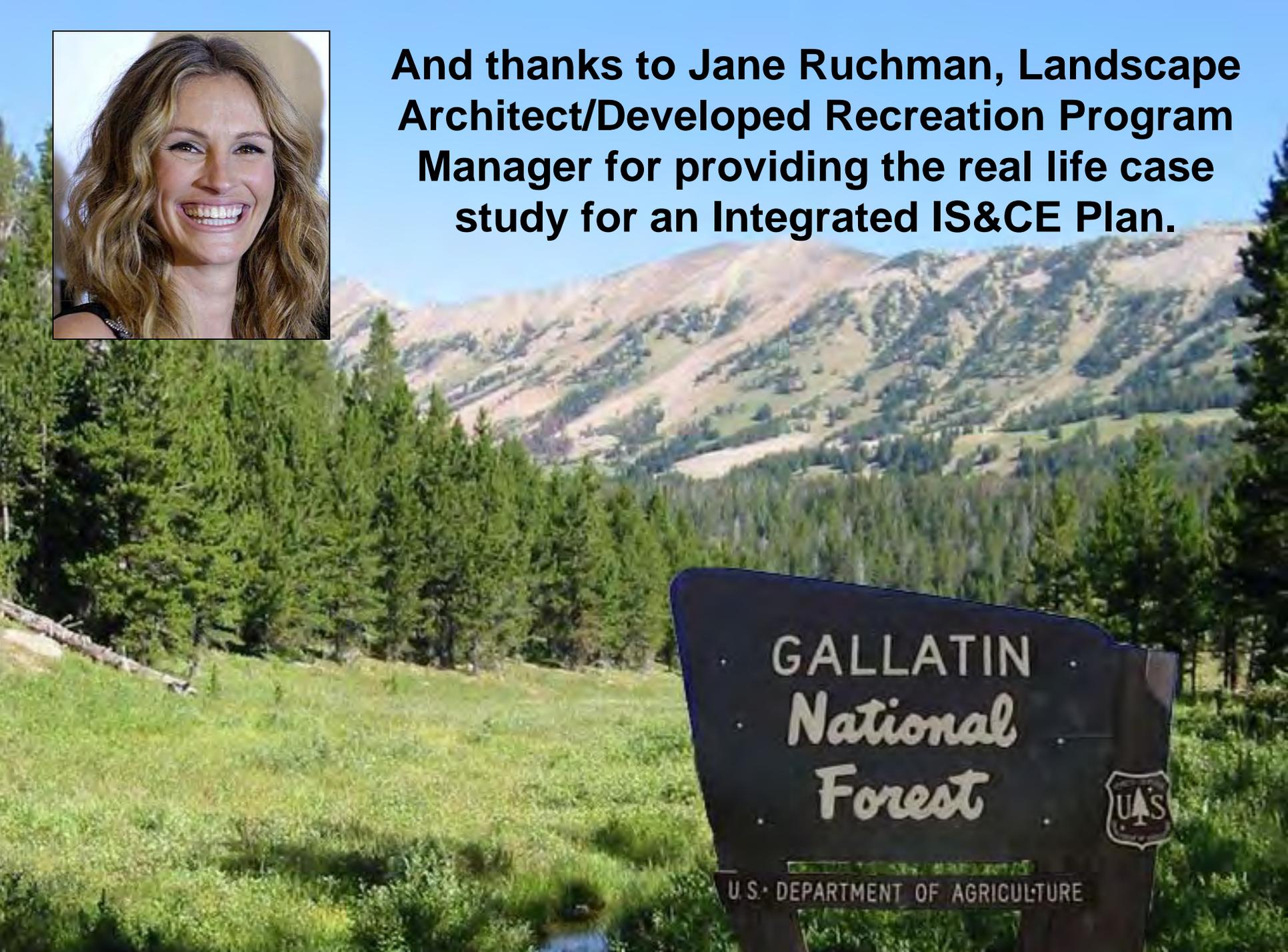
Region 1 Interpretive Services

Thanks to Margaret Gorski for her support in putting on this Workshop.





And thanks to Jane Ruchman, Landscape Architect/Developed Recreation Program Manager for providing the real life case study for an Integrated IS&CE Plan.





Alexandra Botello

R1, Natural Resource Planner

Rocky Mountain Region



CENTER for
DESIGN &
INTERPRETATION



Lois Ziemann

R2, Interpretive Planner



**The Rocky Mountain Region's
Center for Design and Interpretation
(CDI) is a service team bringing
together the design disciplines of:**

- Architecture
- Landscape Architecture
- Interpretive Planning
- Graphic Design
- Engineering



www.fs.fed.us/r2/cdi

Terminology

Interpretation

- ✓ “Helps the visitor feel sensitivity to beauty, complexity, a sense of wonder, a desire to know . . . It should help the visitor develop perception.” (Harold Wallen)
- ✓ A communication process that forges emotional and intellectual connections between the interests of the audience and the meanings inherent in the resource (NAI)
- ✓ A management tool that can be used to increase visitors’ appreciation for, and sensitivity to, the natural and cultural resources of the area (FSM 2390)
- ✓ A service that teaches and entertains

Conservation Education

- ✓ Characterized by structured and formal series of experiences
- ✓ Are often curriculum-based
- ✓ Programs targeted for a specific age groups, usually K-12, with captive audiences
- ✓ Contributes to an individual’s “*Environmental Literacy*,” having the knowledge of environmental processes and issues needed to make informed decisions environmentally sound choices

Examples

Interpretation

- ✓ A campfire program about the role of snakes in the ecosystem, and their intrinsic value and beauty (*emotional and entertaining*)
- ✓ A guided nature hike along a stream to interpret the interrelationships among aquatic flora and fauna (*developing relationships, describing complexity*)
- ✓ An interpretive panel that describes the geologic processes that formed Old Faithful (*instilling wonder*)
- ✓ A brochure that explains the adaptations of seeds that cause them to cling to your socks, how this contributes to noxious weed problems, and what you can do about it (*teaching and management tool*)

Conservation Education

- ✓ GNF Biologists work with a group of Boy Scouts to conduct field surveys of the slit-eyed salamander, an MIS (*structured and formal series of experiences*)
- ✓ Ranger Jane leads 3 Project Wild activities in the 6th grade classroom that support the state science standards (*curriculum-based*)
- ✓ Ranger Steve takes a group of 5th graders through a series of "Leave No Trace" stations at the school's Outdoor Field Day (*targeted, captive audience*)
- ✓ The Gallatin NF and The Nature Conservancy co-sponsors a 3-part series of workshops at the Yellowstone Field Institute present findings and discuss implications of a recent climate change study conducted in the GYA (*developing environmental literacy*)

And then there is VIS

Visitor Information Services

Visitor information services provide information, orientation, and awareness of Forest Service programs, activities, and services.

Services can be personal (frontliners, VC staff) and non-personal (maps, permits, brochures, websites)



Interpretation and Conservation Education programs and services are rarely distinguished from each other in clear cut terms.

Rather, there is a ***continuum of learning*** that can occur, mixing and matching elements from both interpretation and education.

Learning Outreach Continuum*

Interpretation		Conservation Education
Interactive, thematic, often entertaining	Presentation Method	Facilitated, more structured, curriculum or outline driven
Provoke, motivate, spark interest in additional learning and discovery	Desired Outcome	Cognitive gains, desired attitude and/or behavioral change
Usually NF sites, sometimes community locations	Location	Classrooms, outdoor sites
NF visitors, sometimes community members	Audience	Students, members of organized groups. Sometimes visitors.
During leisure Usually shorter in durations (15 min – 3 hrs)	Time	During a dedicated time period, i.e. a class, Scout meeting, etc. which a person commits to attend. May be one program, usually 30-60 min; or may be longer, for instance 20, one hour-classes with the same audience.
Intrinsic (usually for enjoyment)	Rewards	Extrinsic (Often for a grade or a badge or some other reward).

*(Based on continuum perspective presented by Marcella Wells, Wells Resources, Inc., at 2004 National Association for Interpretation Workshop. Synthesized by Kristi Kantola, Alaska Region, 3/05. Modified by Marcella Wells and used with permission, 3/07.)



Why Do We Do It?

Our Mission

The mission of the USDA Forest Service is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the Nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations.

This mission includes – among other things - *advocating a conservation ethic in promoting the health, productivity, diversity, and beauty of forests and associated lands.*



Forest Service *Interpretive Services* Objectives

1. To assist those visitors to the National Forests, research projects, and State and Private Forestry locations in **gaining a greater appreciation of the role of conservation** in the development of the Nation's heritage and culture.
3. To **inform visitors** of recreation opportunities and facilities on the National Forests.
4. To help visitors **know and experience** the natural environment.
5. To implement an interpretive program that helps **solve management problems** and aids in the **development of public understanding** of Forest Service management.
7. To **increase visitor understanding** of natural and cultural history principles and their relation to land management techniques.



**Interpretation “sparks
imagination and
makes connections.”**

*Source: The USDA Forest Service
Interpretive Services Strategy, 2003*



Forest Service *Conservation Education* Objectives and Policy

1. To **promote public awareness and understanding** of the importance of natural resources and call attention to particular issues related to forest productivity, protection, and use.
3. To **enlist the cooperation** of institutions and organizations in developing broad public understanding of and support for the wise management and use of forest, range, and prairie resources.
4. Whenever appropriate, link presentations to **global** resource problems and potential solutions.
7. Ensure that the Conservation Education Program **reaches nontraditional audiences**, such as urban groups, minorities, underserved communities, and American Indians and Alaska Natives.



The ultimate measure of success for Forest Service conservation education is an informed and engaged citizenry able to participate effectively in the actions and decisions needed to sustain the values of our natural and cultural resources for present and future generations.

(Source: USDA Forest Service Conservation Education Learner Guidelines, 2002)

TEST

Who's Running the Show?

Recreation, Heritage, & Wilderness Resources

- IS
- Scenic Byways
- LNT
- Tread Lightly
- Passport in Time

Research and Development

- The Natural Inquirer

State & Private Forestry

- CE
- Smokey Bear & Woodsy Owl
- PLT

Wildlife, Fish, & Rare Plants

- NatureWatch
- Taking Wing
- Fisheries Education
- Partners in Flight

Public Affairs

- Frontliners
- Communication Strategies and Key Messages
- Talking points and white papers

Integration?

Media (programs, structures, publications, websites, etc.)



PAO Key
Messages

LNT

PLT

NatureWatch

Scenic Byway
Waysides

Integration?

Service Providers



Public Affairs Officer

Chambers

7-11 Clerks

CG

Volunteers

Frontliners

Outfitters



What IS Integration?

MESSAGES – The “stories that we tell” are all coordinated, consistent, non-conflicting, and tier to the same overarching theme, forest vision statement, or other umbrella statement.

“STORYTELLERS” – Our message providers are familiar with each other’s messages, programs, and activities, and work to support each other.

STAFFING, FUNDING, & PLANNING – Wherever possible, staffs are organized to share IS &CE responsibilities. Funded projects address priorities that are identified in an interdisciplinary manner.

PROFESSIONALISM – Clear and consistent professional standards apply to all IS & CE media and staff.

MONITORING & EVALUATION – Standardized measures of success are used to evaluate our IS & CE media and providers.



Benefits of Integration

- Messages are clear, consistent, and targeted to specific audiences.
- CE activities and programs are aligned with interpretive themes, forest key messages, and state core educational standards.
- Media and “storytellers” are professional and adhere to standardized measures of success, thus promoting a positive corporate image and agency integrity.
- Storytellers are able to help each other with materials and content.



MORE Benefits

- Forest staff are better able to develop partnerships, secure grants, and work with cooperating organizations and agencies.
- Forest employees become more aware and informed of forest activities, management practices, key messages, and “what we’re all about.”
- Duplication is minimized – of staff time, materials, and audiences served.
- We are more cost-effective; funds are spent in the highest priority areas.

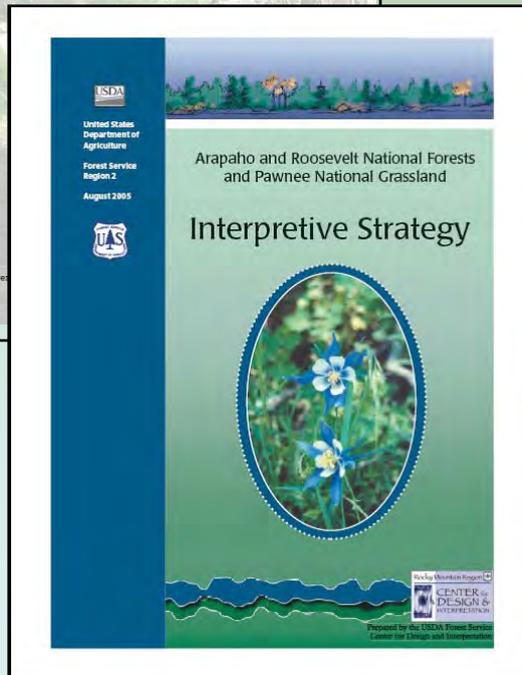
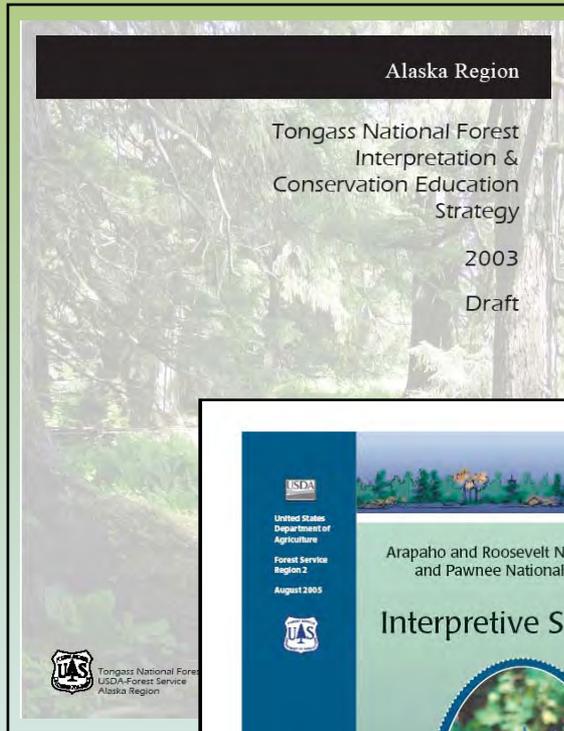


***Don't be a
Lone Dog!***

A large flock of white birds, possibly swans or geese, is captured in flight against a clear blue sky. The birds are densely packed, filling most of the frame, and are shown in various stages of wing movement, creating a sense of dynamic motion. The lighting is bright, highlighting the white feathers and the dark wingtips.

Integrate!

Types of Plans



Master Plan or Strategy

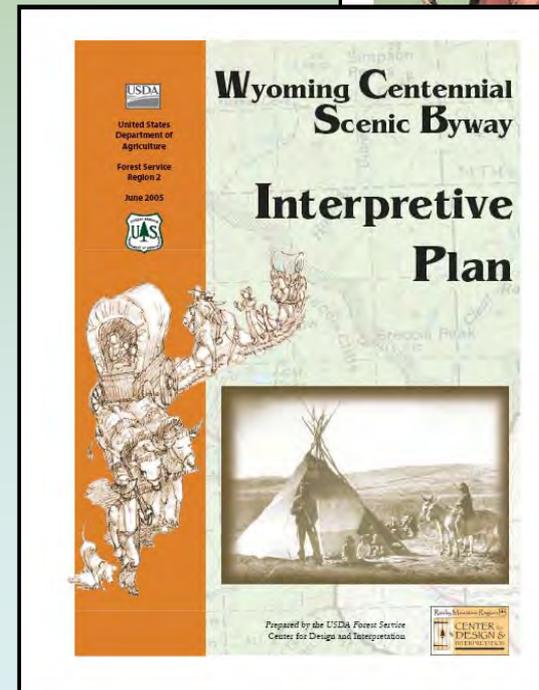
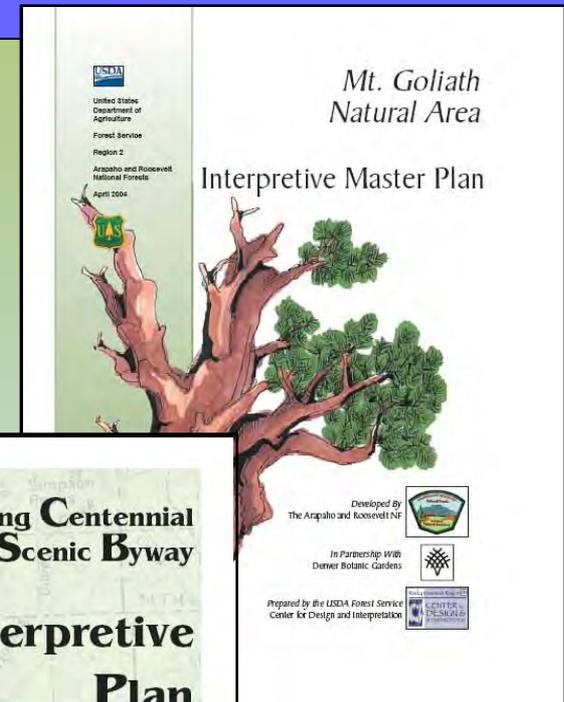
Is a Forest-level effort, but may include district-specific objectives/action items

- Describes overall goals, objectives, forest-wide themes
- Analyzes the audience and focuses efforts on target segments
- Addresses IS & CE programs, facilities, structures, and services
- Includes management strategies, staffing responsibilities, timelines, and priorities

Types of Plans

Site, Facility, or Area Plan

- Focuses on a facility, site, or special interest area
- More detailed with recommendations for specific media
- Includes cost estimates for development, design, fabrication, implementation, operations, and maintenance
- Outlines a timeframe with assigned responsibilities.



Types of Plans

Exhibit Plans

- Specific to a set of exhibits
- Includes goals and objectives for each exhibit, specific text outlines, recommendations for graphics and images, and cost estimates
- Depending on the scope and complexity, may include draft text and conceptual designs



Site 3: Silverdale/ Byway Entrance

Topic: Cultural and historical use of Silverdale and modern day low-impact, non-vehicular recreation opportunities.

Themes: Human development/historic resources/ recreation

Objectives - As a result of this exhibit visitor's will:

- Understand and appreciate past mining activities and cultural and historical use of Silverdale
- Be educated in current use of this portion of the valley for pleasant non-motorize summer and winter recreation. Include map of trails.
- Realize that a loop trail system exists providing for hiking, snow shoeing and cross country skiing.

Graphic Needs:

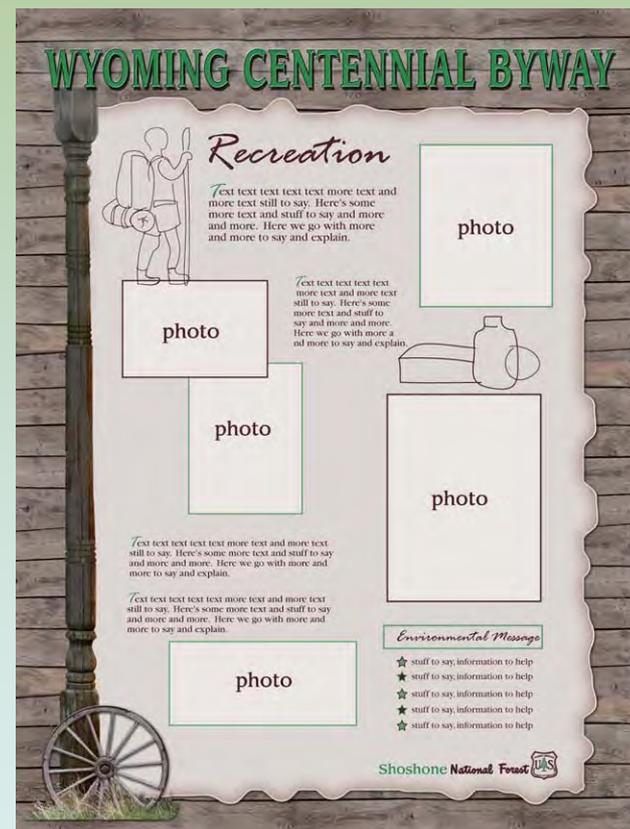
Early photos of Silverdale, map of trails. Need site map of trails
Need hiking and trail information/driving regulations, etc.

Design Narrative: 1 low profile sign, 36" x 24" with the main focus of the sign as an orientation map of trail use in the area, with some minimal information about the historic mining at Silverdale and 1-2 historic photo images. Use of colors that match and blend with entry byway signs.

Title: Silverdale Recreation

Text:

Once the site of a small mining community, the town of Silverdale is now a memory, recorded by historic images and writings. For Coloradoan's today, it's a popular site for recreation on the old roads and trails from long ago. Recreation users will find numerous trails to enjoy. Respect the surrounding private property and follow Leave No Trace guidelines wherever you go



Types of Plans

Interpretive Prospectus

- Used to garner support through the funding cycles/partnerships/grants
- An instrument to solicit bids for design and/or construction of interpretive media.
- Contains themes, objectives, desired outcomes, bubble diagrams, design narrative, budget and funding plan, O&M costs, project schedule, and project team.



Why do you need a plan? (Purpose and Need)

Maybe because →

- **IS & CE efforts are being conducted independently of one another with no continuity or evaluation of needs based on area/Forest goals (i.e. there's no *INTEGRATION*).**
- **There is a need to improve the forest's public image, and create consistency of key messages and communication strategies.**
- **There is a desire to improve the public's understanding of, and appreciation for, the resources of the national forest and why they are managed the way they are.**



Why do you need a plan? (Purpose and Need)

More potential reasons →

- **The forest wants to improve public involvement, garner new partnerships, or promote community commitment to public lands management.**
- **There is a need to develop a heightened sense of individual stewardship.**
- **Current interpretive, educational, and information service programs lack adequate funding and/or prioritization.**
- **Staff needs a tool to help in recruiting partners in interpretation.**
- **Other reasons?**



Let's Build a Plan

Part 1

What's your purpose and need?

- Articulate clearly and get buy-off from Leadership
- Be very clear on what type of plan you're creating, how long it will take, and how much it will cost

Who gets involved?

- **Core Team** – 3-4 people who can shake, rattle, and roll, with one assigned as the Project Leader
- **Technical Advisory Group** – resource specialists, frontliners, engineer
- **Key Participants** – internal and external
- **Public**
- **Decision Maker(s)**

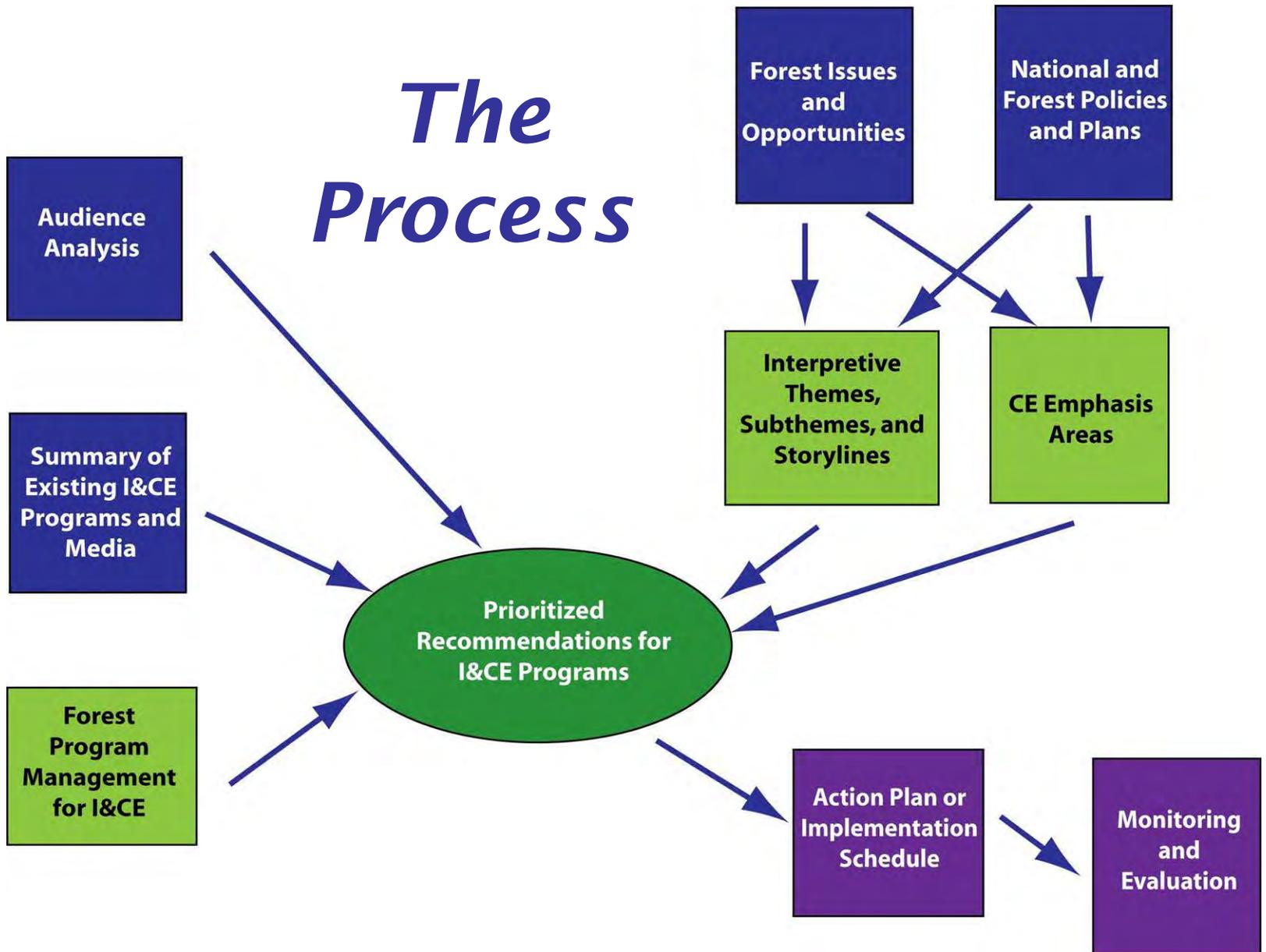


Let's Build a Plan

Part 2

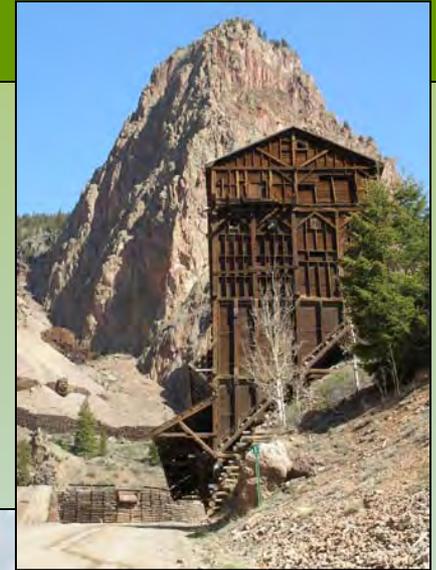
- **What do we already have?**
- **What do we want?**
- **How much will it cost?**
- **What are our priorities?**
- **Who's responsible for getting them done and when?**

The Process



Inventory

- Important resources or “statements of significance”
- Current interpretation and education programs
- Audience
- Partners



All information collected should be tested against the “So What?” question.

Inventory

- Existing policies and plans
- Issues, initiatives, and opportunities



Program Management

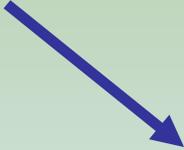
- Goals/objectives/strategies for how the IS & CE programs are managed across the Forest
- Goals/objectives/strategies for what you want IS & CE to accomplish



Interpretive Themes

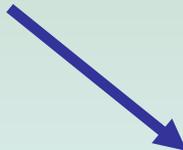
Theme

A *theme* is the plot to the movie. It provides an over-arching umbrella to all I&CE programs and media of a large scale and/or general nature. It can also serve as a basis for the development of current forest key messages, as a way of uniting them across issues and resource areas.



Subtheme

Subthemes further develop the central theme, and allow a logical progression into storylines.



Storyline or Key Message

Storylines carry the threads of the stories that will be told with the interpretive media or program. They can be used in support of site-specific programs and issue-specific media.

Interpretive Themes

Theme

The Daniel Boone National Forest is an innovative leader who will meet the needs of present and future generations by sustaining the integrity of its spectacular scenery, exceptional geology, ecological diversity, and rich cultural history.

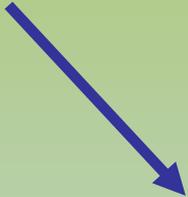


Subtheme

The Daniel Boone NF is in the conservation business.

The Forest Service manages public lands under the philosophy of conservation, defined by Gifford Pinchot (the first chief of the Forest Service): to provide the greatest amount of good for the greatest amount of people in the long run."

Interpretive Themes



Storyline or Key Message

The Daniel Boone NF protects watersheds from erosion and sedimentation so that they may continue to be used and enjoyed for recreation and as a municipal water source. OHV users, in particular, play a large role in the protection of these critically important watersheds.



CE Emphasis Area

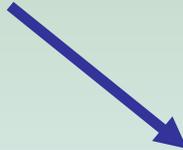
CE Learner Objective

Awareness and knowledge - CE should provide the knowledge necessary for interpreting the complex phenomena that shape the environment.



National Emphasis Area

Informed resource management encourages a sustainable environment and economy.



Forest Emphasis Area

The Gallatin NF will target students in grades 10-12 with science-based curriculum on the affects of climate change on forests, as well as the affects of forests on climate change.



Recommendations

Example of how recommendations could be displayed:

Interpretive <i>Subtheme, Storyline, Key Message</i>	CE Learner Objective	Interpretive Service	CE Program	Issue Addressed
<i>The DBNF is in the conservation business</i>				
The DBNF protects watersheds ...	Awareness and knowledge	PSA on local stations; create poster for local OHV retail outlets and state DMV offices	Project Wet "Color Me a Watershed" for 4 th graders	Illegal and improper OHV use
The DBNF uses prescribed fire and mechanical treatments to reduce the risk of wildland fire, improve wildlife habitat	Values and attitudes	Interpretive panel at SO	Smokey visits 3 rd graders in Lexington	Lack of public support of prescribed fire

Prioritizing

Examples of Prioritization Criteria

Will the recommendation:

- Address an identified issue?
- Respond to a need identified in the audience analysis?
- Increase consistency of our corporate image and improve our professionalism of IS &CE program delivery?
- Encourage partnerships?
- Promote land stewardship and critical thinking about behavioral choices?
- Integrate I&CE subthemes, storylines/key messages across staff and program areas?



Prioritizing

More Examples

Will the recommendation:

- Respond to the objectives of the Region's CE Strategy or a Forest CE Emphasis Area?
- Provide a cost-effective solution?
- Respond to an emerging national issue such as climate change?
- Be implementable with existing staff?
- Generate support within the local schools?

Focus on the important stuff!



Making it Happen

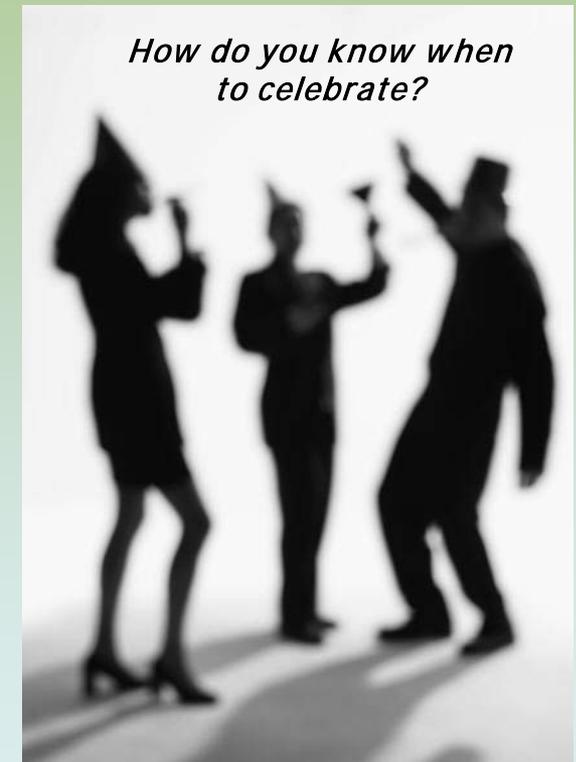
Example of an Action Plan

Action Item	Priority	Who's Responsible	Funding	Done?
OHV "Ride for Keeps" Poster	High	SO Recreation Staff for design contract; partner will print	\$4,000 NFRW poster + printing costs from OHV Club	X
Project Wild Activities 24 & 26 to local 3 rd graders	Med.	Sunrise District Wildlife Biologists	\$6,500 NFXF (salary)	X
Interpretive panel Sunset Lake Overlook	Low	Sunset District Fisheries staff	\$6,000 NFIF; installed by local Eagle Scout	

Did it Happen Right?

Measures of Success

- Implementation of the Plan
- Adherence to Meaningful Measures Standards for Interpretation
- NAAEE Guidelines for Excellence
- Number of visitors, students, contacts made
- Observation and evaluation of personal services
- Exhibit evaluation checklists
- Post-activity tests
- Observable changes in behavior
- Focus groups





Keep in Mind Why We Do It

“We also recognize that the growing disconnect between people and the land is a significant threat to the long term stewardship of our public lands – and the relevancy of the Forest Service.”

Former Chief Dale Bosworth

