

RESULTS OF STEP 7 MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

12/19/08

Listed below are management actions that will be taken if and when conditions are found that do not meet standards. In some cases, current conditions already don't meet standards. Think of this list as a toolbox of management actions for the manager to select. Generally, management strategies that are least intrusive will be implemented first. If actions taken are not effective, then managers will implement more intrusive or restrictive measures. Generally, no legal activity should be restricted due to illegal activity. An area closure should not be first choice if lack of funds - other avenues should be pursued first such as recruiting volunteers & other sources of funding. There will be closures when density standard exceeded or sensitive resources impacted.

SYSTEM TRAILS
Condition Class
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relocation of poor sections (i.e cc is exceeded) • Increase volunteer trail maintenance (adopt-a-trail, etc...) • Harden trails with appropriate materials for zone • Wet season closure for horses and bikes
Density (per 1,000 acres)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop trails management plan to help with closing user trails, developing new system trails, design, etc... • Do not add more system trail miles than allowed by LAC density standards
Illegal Use
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase education efforts about types of use permitted and trash removal • Increase Forest Service presence on trails by increasing volunteers, SCA, and other groups or organizations • Advertise more effectively where OHV use is permitted. Work with OHV vendors to disseminate information • Install signs at trailheads indicating allowable uses • Increase targeted enforcement to ticket illegal users • Install physical barriers to block illegal use
Muddy/Steep Sections
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify problem sections and work to mitigate if possible • Relocate problem sections
Other
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designate identified system trails as open to horse and bike after site-specific NEPA analysis (analyze in conjunction with broad evaluation of 6 identified horse loops). Provide adequate parking for horse trailers. • Analyze adding more system trail miles in SP, RN, and CU zones (SP zones are considered flexible when analyzing potential new system trails). Most new system trails involve an already developed user trail. • Analysis of potential new system trails must follow FS trail policies (restrictions on steep grades, riparian areas, wilderness, private lands, use of roads, NEPA, etc...) • Analyze feasibility of implementing a trail pass for horseback riding and mountain biking with revenues back to trail maintenance. • Tight Hollow will have no formal development. • Establish maximum group size of 10 in Clifty Wilderness (Forest Supervisor Order) • Designate which system trails are open to horse and bicycle (Forest Supervisor Order) • Consider developing separate trails if conflicts between users develops into a major problem • Develop visitor feedback mechanism to monitor social standards (80/80 rule) • Continue and expand trail blazing and directional signing

USER TRAILS

Condition Class

- Close and rehabilitate user trails that are causing unacceptable impact (i.e cc is exceeded).
- Transplant vegetation and install native barriers to minimize erosion

Density (per 1,000 acres)

- Develop trails management plan to help with closing user trails, developing new system trails, design, etc...
- Install signs indicating end of system trails to minimize creation of user trails
- Increase education efforts to encourage staying on system trails
- Use signage: to educate visitors, to direct to proper trails, to explain restoration
- Close and rehabilitate user trails to reach standard
- Consider relocation of trail if only reason to close is to avoid sensitive site (must still keep mileage below standards)
- Close parking pull-offs that direct use to user trails where use is not desired (boulders, guard-rails, signs)
- Implement "parking in designated areas only" along roads (similar to Tunnel Ridge Road)

Illegal Use

- Increase education efforts about which trails are official system trails and types of use permitted
- Increase targeted enforcement to ticket illegal users
- Increase Forest Service presence on trails by increasing volunteers, SCA, and other groups or organizations
- Install physical barriers to block illegal use

Muddy/Steep Sections

- Close and rehabilitate user trails that are causing unacceptable impact

Other

- Analyze designating certain user trails as system trails in appropriate zones (must follow NEPA procedures & meet USFS trail standards). May need to relocate.

CAMPSITES

Condition Class (per campsite)

- Close & rehabilitate campsites that are on terrain creating unacceptable erosion (i.e cc is exceeded).
- Transplant vegetation and install native barriers to minimize erosion

Density (per 1,000 acres)

- Develop camping mgmt plan to help with closing sites, designating sites, design, etc... LAC task force has agreed to a camping strategy that includes a combination of designated sites and non-designated sites.
- Close and rehabilitate campsites to reach standard
- Increase education efforts to encourage camping on sites already impacted or designated (not creating new)
- Designate campsites along road corridors (could be within 300' of roads or first 300' of trails from road).
- Consider walk-in campgrounds for designated camping areas along roads
- Develop camping access trails to designated sites (any minimum distance camping order does not apply to these access trails)
- Designate campsites along system trails away from roads. These designated campsites could be within 300' of system trails. A camping management strategy should be developed to specify guidelines for designating campsites. (Forest Supervisor made decision since no consensus from LAC group)
- Maintain designated campsites so that they remain desirable to visitors (avoid creation of new sites)
- Make camping regulations consistent across all of LAC area (include left side TR Road & Indian Creek with Geological Area)
- Use signage: to educate visitors, to direct to proper campsites, to explain restoration
- Designate some parking areas as day use only (Whistling Arch, Angel Windows, Sky Bridge, Chimney Top)
- Close parking pull-offs that direct use to campsites where use is not desired (boulders, guard-rails, signs)
- Implement "parking in designated areas only" along roads (similar to Tunnel Ridge Road)
- If campsite proliferation and impacts continue, consider implementing a rationing permit system

Tree Damage (per campsite)

- Increase LNT education efforts specific to tree damage (nails, axes, size wood for fires, etc...)
- Consider lantern posts at designated sites near roads
- If impacts to trees continue, ban axes & saws

Size (per campsite)

- Designate group camping areas outside wilderness in RN and CU zones
- Install barriers such as rocks or logs to minimize campsite sprawl
- Construct sidehill campsites to minimize expansion

Fire Sites (per campsite)

- Dismantle and scatter if > 1 fire ring at campsite
- Increase LNT education on proper fire use
- Anchor rock fire rings in ground to prevent fire rings from moving
- Install metal fire grates at designated sites
- If impacts from campfires continue, ban fires in certain areas of RRG

Illegal Campsites (per zone)

- Close and rehabilitate campsites to reach standard
- Increase targeted enforcement to ticket illegal users
- Increase Forest Service presence on trails by increasing volunteers, SCA, and other groups or organizations

Other

- Place all camping rules & LNT messages on camping permit hang tag (only 100' rule now)
- Update Forest Supervisor Order for camping regulations
- Establish maximum group size at designated campsites
- Increase LNT education on trash removal and human waste management

DESTINATION POINTS

Condition Class (per destination point)

- Increase education about the importance of not defacing natural arches and other exposed rock
- Close and rehabilitate destination points that are on terrain creating unacceptable erosion (i.e cc is exceeded).
- Transplant vegetation and install native barriers to minimize erosion
- Harden and use zone appropriate techniques

Density (per 1,000 acres)

- Evaluate reason why location is a destination point and base management actions on desirability of maintaining vs taking action to discourage use
- Close and rehabilitate destination points in zones where prohibited (i.e. pristine), then others proportionally
- When desirable to maintain a destination point, evaluate upgrading with system trail access
- When it is determined to not maintain a destination point, remove user trail access & discourage use
- Use signage: to educate visitors, to direct to proper destination points, to explain restoration

Tree Damage (per destination point)

- Increase LNT education efforts specific to tree damage (nails, axes)
- If impacts to trees continue, ban axes & saws

Size (per destination point)

- Install barriers such as rocks or logs to minimize destination point sprawl

Fire Sites (per destination point)

- Dismantle and scatter all fire rings at destination points

Other

- Prohibit camping at certain vista destination points at top of cliff (safety reasons)
- Increase education about cliffline dangers (literature, video, Gladie Center)
- Consider alcohol bans if needed for safety
- Develop visitor feedback mechanism to monitor social standards (80/80 rule)
- Increase LNT education on trash removal and human waste management

ROCKSHELTERS

Condition Class (per rockshelter)

- Increase education efforts about importance of rockshelters: cultural resources, biological resources, etc...
- Remove all fire rings unless specifically permitted
- Remove any abandoned equipment or trash in rockshelters
- When other management actions are not effective, evaluate the feasibility of site hardening, installation of permanent fencing to mitigate impacts and protect the site.
- Increase education about the importance of not defacing exposed rock

Density (per 1,000 acres)

- Based on degree of impact & cultural & biological significance prioritize Rock Shelters for management actions: discourage use, targeted enforcement to ticket illegal users/uses, and mitigation of previous fire impacts, etc..
- Follow USFS/SHPO/ACHP Memorandum of Agreement requirements when analyzing management and archaeological investigation priorities and implementing management actions. Heritage Mgmt Strategy.
- Use signage: to educate visitors, to direct to proper trails, to explain restoration
- Increase Forest Service presence by increasing volunteers, SCA, and other groups or organizations
- Increase education about importance of rockshelters (literature, video, Gladie Center)
- Close and rehabilitate rockshelters in zones to reach standards
- Evaluate converting select rock shelters to designated campsites. Where a rock shelter has been converted to a designated campsite, apply campsite standards. Consider higher fees & reservation system.
- Continue to post signage and install temporary fencing to protect sites that are deemed significant.

Tree Damage (per rockshelter)

- Increase LNT education efforts specific to tree damage (nails, axes, size wood for fires, etc...)
- If impacts to trees continue, ban axes & saws

Illegal Activity (campfires)

- Consider a monitoring program with volunteers (similar to Kaibab NF) (must have training)

Other

- Evaluate the feasibility of converting selected rock shelters into interpretive areas. Must be accessible by system trail.
- Develop visitor feedback mechanism to monitor social standards (80/80 rule)
- Improve professional informative and interpretive signage about importance of rockshelters
- Increase LNT education on trash removal and human waste management

CLIMBING AREAS & CLIMBSITES

Condition Class (per climbsite)

- Transplant vegetation and install native barriers to minimize erosion
- Evaluate feasibility of implementing climbsite modifications to mitigate impacts (use native materials first)
- Evaluate feasibility of establishing new climbing areas to spread out impacts (follow Forest Plan standard).
- When other mgmt actions are not effective, evaluate installing fencing (except in Clifty Wilderness).
- When other mgmt actions are not effective, evaluate site hardening (native materials in Clifty Wilderness).
- Close and rehabilitate climbsites that are on terrain creating unacceptable erosion (i.e cc is exceeded)

Density (per 1,000 linear feet of cliffline)

- Develop a Climbing Management Plan that includes new route development guidelines in existing areas, procedures for new climb areas, trail access, route maintenance.
- Appropriate communication means are developed. Could be post signage at trailheads and at climbing areas about cliffline camping and fire prohibitions. Explain that this is an LAC area.
- Develop & install educational signs at trailhead & climb areas
- Encourage climbing specific Leave No Trace education programs to be conducted in Red River Gorge
- Renegotiate/Update Memorandum of Understanding between the USFS and the Red River Gorge Climbers' Coalition to include results of LAC process
- Process applications for new climbing development per Forest Plan standards & LAC standards

Tree Damage (per climbsite)

- Increase LNT education efforts specific to tree damage (nails, axes, size wood for fires, etc...)
- If impacts to trees continue, ban axes & saws

Size (per climbsite)

- Evaluate feasibility of implementing climbsite modifications to minimize expansion (use native materials first).
- Evaluate the feasibility of constructing a trail downhill from the climbsite to discourage people to hike through climbsite.
- Establish new climbs of the same grade (difficulty) to spread out use.

Fire Sites (per climbsite)

- Remove fire rings from climbing areas and mitigate previous fire impacts.
- Work with climbers on reporting illegal use (camping/fires/looting).

Unauthorized Development (per zone)

- Close unauthorized development when LAC standard exceeded.

Other

- Evaluate user trails that access climb areas and consider upgrade to system trail
- Encourage use of chalk that blends with color of rock
- Encourage use of fixed anchors that blend with rock
- Establish Forest Supervisor Order for no new fixed anchors in Clifty Wilderness (per Forest Plan)
- Develop visitor feedback mechanism to monitor social standards (80/80 rule)
- Increase LNT education on trash removal and human waste management