

## Forest Service Wilderness Management Meeting

CMC Building, Classroom

Dec 1, 2006

8:30 – 12:00

***Goal: prepare a summary report for regional forester that presents recommended solutions for high recreation use in Colorado magnet wilderness by December 18***

### **Draft Recommendations (discussed at this meeting):**

- 1) We recommend that the forest service continue its registration system to 1) obtain accurate wilderness visitor use and 2) educate visitors, using a regionally-coordinated rolling system that encompasses low use to busy wilderness access points
  - a) Use free registration to prepare users for required permits in future
- 2) In order to provide good science for future decisions, complete a comprehensive study of magnet areas (both in literature and in the field) that identify:
  - a) Identify existing data and data gaps
  - b) “magnet” areas
  - c) Current conditions
  - d) Site specific prescriptions
  - e) Cost of implementing prescriptions and maintaining over time
  - f) Use standardized protocols
- 3) Because wilderness is so popular and suffers without adequate and consistent management, it is fundamental that Congress must consistently appropriate adequate funds to maintain our world-class wilderness areas, especially before conditions cross a threshold where recovery costs increase dramatically. We do not recommend fees for wilderness access; fees for wilderness access are not consistent with REA and we recommend that it should stay this way.
- 4) Develop a comprehensive mountain peak protection plan
  - a) That identifies peaks from pristine to urban
  - b) Hold the line on pristine areas
  - c) Develop non-wilderness recreation opportunities that will relieve pressure on magnet areas

### **WORKING GROUPS**

- 1) **GROUP A: Volunteers & Partnerships (Anne, Walt, Lee)**
  - a) Organize uniformed volunteer wilderness rangers in each wilderness
  - b) Hire out of the Regional Office a Forest Service coordinator for Wilderness Ranger Volunteers
  - c) Institute a program to train urban youth as voluntary wilderness rangers
  - d) Continue to develop formal partnerships/agreements with volunteer organizations/non-profits to support/implement management of wilderness areas, including:
    - i) Volunteer wilderness rangers
    - ii) FS wilderness ranger volunteer coordinator
    - iii) Urban youth wild rangers
  - e) Extend the mandate of the core team into 2007
  - f) Continue to host wilderness forums that bring in speakers
- 2) **GROUP B: funding & fees (Vera, Kim, Tom)**
  - a) The user groups represented on the Core Team are not ready to support fees or permits, other than overnight camping permits, for access

- b) In magnet areas, such as 14ers, implement management tools based on ecosystem protection rather than on solitude
  - c) Increase funding from the Regional Office for Forest Service wilderness rangers, wilderness management tools such as designated campsite; camping permits; hardening landscapes, parking; and camping facilities
  - d) Fee revenues go, in part, to wilderness management and protection
  - e) Increase FS presence and law enforcement in wilderness areas
  - f) Extend the mandate of the Core Team into 2007
  - g) Continue to host wilderness forums that bring in speakers
  - h) Because wilderness is so popular and suffers without adequate and consistent management, it is fundamental that Congress must consistently appropriate adequate funds to maintain our world-class wilderness areas, especially before conditions cross a threshold where recovery costs increase dramatically. We do not recommend fees for wilderness access; fees for wilderness access are not consistent with REA and we recommend that it should stay this way.
- 3) **GROUP C: Tools (Craig, Lee, Dave, TJ, Julie, Ann)**
- a) Recommend management tools to reduce and/or prevent ecological damage; controlled parking areas; hardening landscapes; designated campsites' overnight; overnight camping permits, wilderness zones
  - b) Mandate stoves and no campfires in all Colorado wilderness areas
  - c) Institute a consistent policy regarding dogs across Colorado wilderness
  - d) Require all visitors to pack out toilet paper in wilderness areas (this is part of LNT)
  - e) Tailor recommendations to site specific areas
  - f) Anticipate impacts/set thresholds for field action
  - g) Extend mandate of core team into 2007
  - h) Continue to host wilderness forums that bring in speakers
  - i) We recommend that the forest service continue its registration system to 1) obtain accurate wilderness visitor use and 2) educate visitors, using a regionally-coordinated rolling system that encompasses low use to busy wilderness access points
- 4) **GROUP D: Landscape Level Planning Tools (Vera, Steve, Dave, Mark)**
- a) In magnet areas, such as 14ers, implement management tools based on ecosystem protection rather than on solitude
  - b) In order to prevent "displacement activities" management changes for a magnet area, must involve all districts which have responsibility for that wilderness area
  - c) Social standards should be tiered: on-trail & off-trail
  - d) Use landscape approach to planning and implementation w/ tiers (zones) of recreation opportunities and experience
  - e) Through the forest plans, designate more areas suitable for wilderness, particularly if near magnet areas
  - f) Develop non-motorized, non-wilderness opportunities, especially near busy/magnet areas
  - g) Apply recommendations to all Colorado wilderness areas to protect future ecosystem damage
  - h) Extend mandate of core team into 2007
  - i) Continue to host wilderness forums that bring in speakers
  - j) Reconfigure prescriptions to maximize pristine and primitive management goals
  - k) We recommend that the forest service continue its registration system to 1) obtain accurate wilderness visitor use and 2) educate visitors, using a regionally-coordinated rolling system that encompasses low use to busy wilderness access points

- l) In order to provide good science for future decisions, complete a comprehensive study of magnet areas (both in literature and in the field) that identify:
  - i) Identify existing data and data gaps
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  - iii) Current conditions
  - iv) Site specific prescriptions
  - v) Cost of implementing prescriptions and maintaining over time
  - vi) Use standardized protocols
- m) Develop a comprehensive mountain peak protection plan
  - i) That identifies peaks from pristine to urban
  - ii) Hold the line on pristine areas
  - iii) Develop non-wilderness recreation opportunities that will relieve pressure on magnet areas