

## **Forest Service Sustainable Recreation Program Overview:**

### **Forest Service Mission**

To sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations.

### **Recreation Vision**

We provide recreation on treasured lands that brings health and vitality to individuals and communities and showcases our country's natural abundance. Recreation on the national forests and grasslands invokes feelings of connection to the natural world and inspires responsibility to care for it. This is embodied in our Vision: *Renewing body and spirit, Inspiring passion for the land.*

### **Sustainable Recreation**

Sustainable recreation is about appropriate management of recreation use on National Forest System lands and identifying recreation's contribution to forest and community sustainability: *The set of recreation settings and opportunities on the Tonto National Forest that is ecologically, economically, and socially sustainable for present and future generations.*

### **Recreation Sustainability strategic direction**

To unite diverse interests, create and strengthen partnerships, focus scarce resources on mission-driven priorities, connect recreation benefits to communities, provide for changing urban populations, and most importantly, sustain and expand the benefits to America that quality recreation opportunities provide.

### **Sustainable Recreation Guiding Principles**

- Connecting people with their natural and cultural heritage
- Promoting healthy lifestyles
- Balancing societal, economic and environmental needs
- Cultivating community engagement
- Managing national forests and grasslands as part of a larger landscape
- Integrating recreation more deeply into the Forest Service mission

### **Our Goals**

Building on the foundation of the Mission, Vision, and Guiding Principles, we will strive to:

- **Provide** a diverse range of quality natural and cultural resource based recreation opportunities in partnership with people and communities.
- **Protect** the natural, cultural, and scenic environment for present and future generations to enjoy.
- **Partner** with public and private recreation benefit providers so that together we meet public needs and expectations.

## **Sustainable recreation guiding principles: how we view and deliver our recreation and tourism program as public land managers.**

1. Sustainability will be the lens through which we make ALL decisions. We will not invest if we cannot sustain.
2. We view our work and build our programs from an integrated forest and community perspective. We approach the community table not as managers with answers, but as community participants with questions and expertise.
3. We are conveners and facilitators in recreation management and our skill set contributes to maintaining a thorough network of relationships, partnerships and citizen stewards. We bring our expertise to help others become active participants in land stewardship.

### **Actions:**

- ***Restore and Adapt Settings***  
We will restore the condition and function of our recreation facilities, adapting them to reflect the diversity of cultures and activities in our ever-changing society. We will work to restore and improve access and quality for recreation settings that have been impacted by declining ecosystem health.
- ***Enhance Communities***  
We will work collaboratively with communities to develop a vision, define roles, and align our respective resources to foster sustainable recreation and tourism. Working together, we will evaluate recreation offerings in a regional context to meet recreation and tourism demands for the area.
- ***Data gathering***  
To effectively position our recreation program within our market destination areas, we will utilize market research, visitor use information from a variety of sources, and continuous engagement of community stakeholders and regional recreation providers.
- ***Partnerships and Volunteers***  
We will cultivate the energy, enthusiasm, and skills of private and nonprofit sector partners and volunteers to provide services and connect people to the land.
- ***Develop a Sustainable Financial Foundation***  
We will deliver programs using a balance of available mechanisms, including appropriated funds, user fees, volunteers, private providers, and partners in the nonprofit sector.

### **Conclusion:**

**Sustainability underlies all program decisions.** In order to sustain the benefits of outdoor recreation for present and future generations, the recreation program must address and work toward a sustainable balance among the three spheres of environmental, social, and economic conditions.

**Community engagement is essential for creating a sustainable recreation program.** Our role is to serve as planners, facilitators, conveners, and collaborators, tapping the enormous energy and creativity of people in communities that care for and benefit from public lands, including both the private and public sectors.