

Example Desired Conditions for Sustainable Recreation Resources

What this Document Is

These are example desired conditions like those that may be included in the National Forest (NF) Plan. Desired conditions (or goals) set forth the desired social, economic, and ecological goals of the NF. They attempt to paint a picture of what we (the public and the Forest Service) desire the forest to look like or the goods and services we desire it to provide. Desired conditions are generally expressed in broad, general terms; however, more specificity may be added to clarify the intent. Desired conditions are timeless in that there is no specific date by which they are to be completed. They may only be achievable over a long timeframe (e.g., several hundred years). In some cases, a desired condition matches the current condition, so the goal is to maintain the current condition. Desired conditions are the focus of this plan; management of the National Forest resources will be directed toward achieving the desired conditions. Desired conditions are the basis for the other plan components and describe the framework for future projects and activities. They are aspirations and not commitments or final decisions approving projects. Projects and site-specific activities must be consistent with desired conditions

Recreation Settings

- The diverse landscapes of the [Forest Name] offer a variety of settings for a broad range of recreational opportunities in all seasons and a place for visitors to escape into natural, wild places. Landscapes range from primitive settings that provide opportunities for solitude, to more developed, rustic settings that provide opportunities for social interaction and greater human comforts such as sources of drinking water, trash disposal, and boat docks at lakes. Recreation opportunities exist for people with a variety of abilities. As development and population in the region continue to grow and new forms of recreation emerge, recreation settings on the [Forest Name] are stable, retaining their natural character. Loss of remote, undeveloped settings does not occur in semi-primitive and primitive settings. Recreation activities are balanced with the ability of the land to support them and create minimal user conflicts. The [Forest Name] fulfills a unique and vital role as a place of learning and caring about the environment.
- Provide year-round outdoor recreation opportunities and experiences in a range of settings as described by the recreation opportunity spectrum (ROS). The desired distribution of forest-wide ROS settings are displayed in table--.

Recreation Opportunities

- Recreation opportunities are well adapted to a culturally diverse population making the benefits of outdoor recreation available to all and inclusive of underrepresented groups.
- Visitors to the national forest connect to nature and cultural heritage through a wide variety of quality, resource-based recreation opportunities which are sustainable and feature the unique qualities of the [Forest Name], protect the ecological integrity and stability of the natural, cultural

and scenic environment, and provide satisfying experiences that expand the visitors understanding of these resources and inspire a stewardship ethic.

- Growing demand for recreation is balanced with other forest desired conditions, unless increasing capacity results in unacceptable negative effects on natural resources. Managed recreation use stays within this capacity with the exception of holiday weekend use levels that may exceed capacity on a short-term basis so long as resources can recover from short-term increases in use. Recreation on the [Forest Name] enhances the quality of life for residents and provides tourist destinations, which contribute to local economies.
- Dispersed recreation activities on the [Forest Name] include driving, hiking, wildlife viewing, hunting, fishing, horseback riding, camping, and hunting, among others. Recreation activities do not significantly detract from the natural character of the forest; impact resources such as aesthetics, soils, vegetation, and wildlife; or contribute to user conflicts. Non-recreation activities that take place have minimal effect on recreation activities. For example, thinning projects do not result in slash piles that block trails, and projects that temporarily impact trails are followed up with trail restoration.
- The [Forest Name] provides wide and varied public use of forest resources and opportunities while protecting sensitive resources and the objects of interest. Recreation use throughout the year is promoted. Visitors find a rich and varied range of sustainable recreational, educational, and social opportunities enhanced by giant sequoias and the surrounding ecosystems. Partnerships are established, providing people with a connection to place and promoting a sense of stewardship.
- A variety of motorized and non-motorized winter and summer recreation opportunities are available. Well-designed and maintained trailheads exist and offer adequate parking and turnaround areas. Trails are designed and maintained for the given users (saddle stock, snowmobiles, OHV users, hikers, mountain bikers, etc.).
- Solitude and non-motorized experiences are available in remote settings. Non-motorized areas are of sufficient size and configuration to minimize disturbance from other uses. Non-motorized use is also available in more developed areas, but provides less opportunity for solitude and challenge than in the more remote settings. A well-maintained non-motorized trail network accesses locations of interest for a variety of users.
- A spectrum of high quality recreational opportunities are provided, while [Forest Name]'s natural setting as an outstanding recreation destination is maintained. (Pathway)
- Landscape-scale recreation opportunities encompass the many unique natural features available in the [Forest Name],.
- A diversity of recreation opportunities, programs, and facilities contribute to community vitality and the economic sustainability of local communities in the [Forest Name],.
- Recreation opportunities enable long-term connections between people and their public lands, and are adapted for a changing visitor base.
- Recreation projects are developed with the involvement of neighboring communities, partners, state and local agencies, tribes, and adjacent Forest Service units.

Access

- A (ecologically, socially, and economically) sustainable system of roads and trails provides access to recreation opportunities in settings people want to visit.
- The transportation system is connected to state, county, local public, and other federal roads and trails and provides reasonable access to recreation opportunities.
- A transportation system is in place that provides safe and efficient public access to recreation opportunities and is efficiently maintained, environmentally compatible, and responsive to public needs and desires. The transportation system and its use have minimal impacts on resources including threatened and endangered species, sensitive species, heritage and cultural sites, watersheds, and aquatic species. Newly constructed or reconstructed roads do not encroach into streams and riparian areas in ways that impact channel function, geometry or sediment delivery. Roads in intermittent stored service pose minimal risks to water quality and aquatic ecosystems. Drainage structures have a minimal risk of failure, and provide adequate drainage that prevents accelerated runoff, erosion, and sediment delivery to streams. In addition, stream crossings provide for passage of aquatic organisms. Unauthorized roads and trails are no longer created.
- Access to the national forest is provided to Tribal members for effective exercise of Treaty reserved hunting, fishing, and gathering rights, as well as cultural and religious practices.
- Encourage additional access where lawful and feasible to high-quality natural areas and shore zone consistent with desired resource conditions.

Scenic Character

- A wide variety of visually appealing, resilient landscapes are enjoyed by visitors. These inspiring landscapes feature the diverse ecosystems and outstanding scenic attributes of the [Forest Name]. High scenic integrity is evident in places people prefer to visit and view, and intact ecosystem functions enhance scenic stability.
- The scenic attributes of the [Forest Name] are conserved and enhanced. Visitors see that the forest is being actively managed through visual cues such as seeing firebreaks with native wildflowers, grasses, and forbs; some fire effects; and tree thinning to frame views from trails and developed recreation sites.
- Vegetation treatments are integrated with scenery management so that treatments contribute to the scenic integrity and scenic stability of the desired landscape character especially in highly sensitive areas. The scenic resources of the [Forest Name] compliment the recreation settings and experiences while reflecting healthy and sustainable ecosystem conditions.
- The Monument provides a wide variety of visually appealing landscapes, such as oak woodland, chaparral, a variety of mixed conifer forest, and giant sequoia groves, for the public to enjoy within the places they prefer to visit.
 - Scenery viewed from [Forest Name]'s major roadways, public recreation areas, trails and urban centers predominantly displays natural-appearing forest, meadows, mountains, and shorelines. Development, where visible, appears subordinate to and harmonious with the surrounding setting.

- Views of the night sky from the naturally-appearing areas of the [Forest Name] are conducive to star gazing. Light emanating from the built environment is carefully controlled to ensure safety and security and does not encroach upon the regional dark sky.
- Management activities promote scenic stability and increase resistance to visual disruption resulting from disturbance events. Landscape alterations complement and blend with the characteristic landscape of the [Forest Name]. Vegetation treatments produce natural appearing diverse forest structure.